



First-Order Representationalist Panqualityism

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Abstract

Panqualityism, recently defended by Sam Coleman, is a variety of Russellian monism on which the categorical properties of fundamental physical entities are qualities, or, in Coleman's exposition, unconscious qualia. Coleman defends a quotationalist, higher-order thought version of panqualityism. The aim of this paper is, first, to demonstrate that a first-order representationalist panqualityism is also available, and to argue positively in its favor. For it shall become apparent that quotationalist and first-order representationalist panqualityism are, in spite of their close similarities, radically different theories: quotationalist panqualityism locates qualities in the subject of an experience, while first-order panqualityism locates qualities in the world. I argue that this makes quotationalist panqualityism implausible and first-order, representationalist panqualityism a highly natural, elegant, and intuitive theory.

1 Introduction

Panqualityism is a version of Russellian monism on which the categorical properties of fundamental physical entities are experientiable *qualities*, rather than, as on panpsychism, experiential phenomenal properties. Since panqualityism distinguishes sharply between qualities, which are the properties of which we are made aware in phenomenally conscious experience, and phenomenal properties, which are the properties *of being aware of* such qualities, holding that only the former are fundamental, it must be committed to a reductionist account of the relation of awareness.

To date, the only defender of panqualityism has been Coleman, who offers a reductionist account of awareness in terms of a quotational variant of Rosenthal's

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higher-order thought theory of consciousness.¹ My purpose in this paper is, in part, to broaden the nascent panqualityist research project, by showing that Coleman's quotational panqualityism is not the only version available. In particular, I shall argue that a first-order, representationalist account of awareness is available to the panqualityist. But I shall not merely be neutral between the two, for my purpose is also to argue that the representationalist version of panqualityism is preferable to the quotational version.

I begin, therefore, with a brief overview of Russellian monism and its varieties. I then introduce panqualityism generally, and articulate Coleman's version of the view. With Coleman's quotational panqualityism on the table, I introduce a first-order representationalist version of panqualityism. I then argue that quotationalist panqualityism fails inasmuch as it violates the intuition of transparency, locating the qualities of which our experience makes us aware in the *subject* of an experience, rather than in its object, with implausible results. Finally, I consider Mihalik's recent argument against quotationalist panqualityism, and attempt to show that representationalist panqualityism is not threatened by an analogous objection. Concluding that representationalist panqualityism is preferable to Coleman's quotationalism as a way of giving substance to the panqualityist idea, I offer some thoughts on questions and objections that remain for the representationalist panqualityist to answer in future work.

2 Russellianism and Panqualityism

Russellian theories of consciousness have in common the idea that one could be a sort of physicalist about consciousness – holding that the consciousness of organisms such as ourselves can be explained without remainder by appeal to facts about the physical material out of which we are made – if only one had a sufficiently thick conception of the physical.² For Russellians, the promise of such an idea is made all the more appealing by the observation that the conception of the physical given by the physical sciences themselves is in fact quite thin – perhaps, even, too thin to stand. For what the physical sciences tell us about physical particles and systems is only that they are disposed to interact with one another in certain ways characterized quantitatively; and never what they are like, qualitatively, in themselves.

Using the standard jargon: call the intrinsic, qualitative, categorical properties of fundamental physical entities *quiddities*. The Russellian seeks to explain phenomenal consciousness by arguing that the materials for phenomenal consciousness have been present in physical systems *all along*, as their quiddities. It is no surprise, for the Russellian, that the physical sciences cannot account for phenomenal consciousness in their own terms, since the physical sciences are by their nature blind to quiddities, and deal only with the relational and dispositional properties of physical entities. Russellianism about consciousness thus cuts a sort of middle way between physicalism and dualism, conceding to the physicalist that an account of consciousness need

¹ Coleman (2017), pp. 518–596.

² *Vide* Russell (1917, 1954).

not appeal to the non-physical, and conceding to the dualist that no adequate account of consciousness can be given in the terms of physical science alone.³

Likely the best-known version of Russellianism about consciousness is panpsychism,⁴ which holds that quiddities are *phenomenal properties*. On this view, the quiddities of fundamental physical entities consist in the having of experience by those entities.⁵ Against panpsychism, Coleman defends the thesis of panqualityism. The difference between the two theories may be put this way: while panpsychism holds that fundamental physical entities have *experiential* properties, panqualityism holds that fundamental physical entities have *experienceable* properties. Those experienceable properties are called *qualities*.

A rigorous definition of what is meant by ‘qualities’ is likely not possible to give. The best we can do is to point attention in the right direction, until the reader grasps intuitively what is meant. Coleman suggests that we understand qualities as qualia conceived as unexperienced,⁶ Chalmers that we understand them as a kind whose paradigmatic members are Edenic color properties.⁷ Another strategy is to work backwards from the more familiar expression ‘phenomenal properties’, and say that qualities are those things to which we are related by phenomenal properties – they characterize what it is like to be us, but they are independent of us.

If we adopt panqualityism, then we are entitled to endorse the thesis that the qualities of which we are immediately aware in conscious experience can be accounted for in terms of the nature of the physical.⁸ This falls short of giving us an adequate theory of consciousness, however, for it must be supplemented with an appropriately physicalistic theory of awareness – of how qualities enter into our consciousness – if it is to realize the promise of the Russellian project.

The most natural way for the panqualityist to proceed is to hold that awareness reduces to some property of which we can also give an account in broadly physical terms. Yet the panqualityist ought not hold that conscious awareness is also a quiddity, for then it is reasonable to ask: awareness of *what*? If awareness of qualities, then the panqualityist turns out to be a sort of panpsychist after all, since awareness of qualities – that is, phenomenally conscious experience – will then be ubiquitous among fundamental physical entities. It might be possible to propose another sort

³ Chalmers calls Russellian theories of consciousness a ‘Hegelian synthesis’ of physicalism and dualism. See Chalmers (2015).

⁴ The view has a long history, but noteworthy recent defenses of panpsychism may be found in Strawson (2015), pp 161–208; and Goff (2019), *passim*.

⁵ Of course, what I have laid out here is a panpsychism quite literal, on which any physical entity has experience. Panpsychists need not endorse this version of panpsychism – they may hold that it is only all *fundamental* physical entities that have experience, as well as some larger, suitably-structured creatures such as ourselves. Many other variations of panpsychism and panprotopsyism are also available. But I shall ignore these niceties in what follows.

⁶ Coleman (2017), p. 518.

⁷ Chalmers (2015), p. 27.

⁸ We are entitled to endorse this thesis after endorsing some intermediary theses that are in this context banal, such as the theses that in experience we are made immediately aware of qualia, or of Edenic color properties, etc. These theses are not unobjectionable, but anyone who objects to them is unlikely to be interested in the question whether panqualityism is preferable to panpsychism, or which version of panqualityism is to be preferred over the others.

of object for the conscious awareness of fundamental physical entities, but to do so would be to propose an entirely new sort of conscious experience. I shall ignore such complications in this essay. For my purposes, the panqualityist must hold that awareness can be accounted for in terms of physical properties narrowly construed, or in terms of qualities themselves, or both. Only with such an account of awareness in hand can panqualityism advertise itself as a theory of consciousness.

Coleman's preference is for a version of panqualityism on which conscious awareness consists in having a higher-order thought that, in a manner of speaking, *quotes* a lower-order sensory state. The insight behind the quotational account of awareness is the observation that, in linguistic quotation, a sentence can refer to a word-type by simply *containing* one of its tokens, as for example in.

Here is the word 'cat'.

Analogously, according to the quotational account, when we are consciously aware of some lower-order sensory state *s*, we have a thought with the content.

The following state is present: 's'.

The appearance of 's' in inverted commas is supposed to make clear that the lower-order state enters semantically into the content of the higher-order thought by *appearing within its vehicle*, exactly as the word-type 'cat' enters into the content of the previous sentence by the appearance of one of its tokens.

The motivation for adopting the quotationalist account of awareness is that, supposedly, only something like quotation can account for the way in which a higher-order thought makes us aware of some one of our lower-order states. When a lower-order state enters into the vehicle of a higher-order thought by quotation, it becomes a target for that thought directly, in virtue of its own presence, rather than by the intermediary of some representational vehicle that merely refers to it. Since, plausibly, our conscious awareness of the contents of our phenomenally conscious experiences is direct in just this way – so that phenomenal contents are presented to us immediately, and not merely represented – Coleman takes the quotationalist account of awareness to be the most promising account of which the panqualityist can make use.⁹

3 Representationalist Panqualityism

What has not been appreciated until now is that panqualityism need not be committed to Coleman's quotationalist account of awareness, nor to any higher-order account of awareness.¹⁰ Indeed, there is nothing to prevent the panqualityist from embracing a

⁹The exposition here is adapted from Mihalik's excellent summary in Mihalik (2022).

¹⁰In a recent paper, Brian Cutter puts forth a view that, so far as I can tell, is substantially similar to this sort of panqualityism. But Cutter does not present his view as a variety of panqualityism, and declines to say whether he thinks the sensible qualities are qualitative in Coleman's sense. See Cutter (2018).

first-order, representationalist account of awareness. Such a view need be committed only to the following claims:

- i. Quiddities are qualities.
- ii. Conscious awareness of a quality consists in representing the presence of that quality, when further conditions obtain.

What ‘further conditions’ need obtain? We need not here endorse any detailed view.¹¹ The basic thesis of representationalism is that phenomenal consciousness is best understood as a variety of representation, and the ‘further conditions’ in the account serve to mark off the right kind of representation from the many other varieties of representation (e.g., linguistic, pictorial, conceptual, and so on). To obtain an account of awareness, the panqualityist need only hold that we become aware of qualities by representing them in just that very way. The resulting variety of panqualityism is simply representationalism with the added thesis that phenomenal consciousness is a matter of representing qualities.

Mihalik suggests that a first-order, representationalist account of awareness is anti-thetical to the spirit of panqualityism, on the grounds that representationalism seeks to reduce phenomenal properties to representational properties, while panqualityism holds that phenomenal properties are irreducible.¹² But this reasoning is either confused or, at best, insufficiently catholic. For representationalist panqualityism need not hold that phenomenal properties *are* qualities. Rather, for the panqualityist, the phenomenal properties of mental states are relations *to* qualities. In particular, a state *s* will have the property ‘phenomenal *q*’ just when it confers awareness of quality *q*. Now, representationalist panqualityism does indeed hold that awareness is a matter of the right sort of representation, and this may commit the representationalist panqualityist to saying that phenomenal *q* ‘reduces’ to the property of representing the presence of *q* (when further conditions obtain). But, since representation is at least a two-place relation *R*, of which one *relatum* is *q*, and the other the subject *s*, and the representationalist panqualityist takes *q* to be irreducible, any given phenomenal fact *Rsq* will be irreducible.

An analogy may help to illustrate the point. The property of being in debt, let us suppose, reduces to certain relations such as having entered into financial agreements of such-and-such a sort, having received some amount of money or services, and so on. Now consider the special property of being in debt to an irreducibly immaterial soul, which we may call *i*-debt. In one sense, *i*-debt is as reducible as debt *simpliciter*: it is still a matter of having entered into the same arrangements, and so on. But in a deeper sense it is obviously as irreducible as the irreducibly immaterial soul who must necessarily figure in it. One simply cannot be in *i*-debt unless there is an irreducible, immaterial creditor around with whom one can enter into the requisite relations. We may say that properties like *i*-debt are *partially reducible*.

¹¹ Nevertheless, the basic picture of first-order representationalism that I shall assume in what follows is taken from Tye (2000). But the particular details of Tye’s view as articulated in that work are not material to the general outline of a first-order representationalist panqualityism.

¹² Mihalik (2022).

On representationalist panqualityism, phenomenal properties are partially reducible properties, just like *i*-debt. They are one-place properties, reducible to many-place relations, of which the *relata* necessarily include certain things which are not reducible; to wit, qualities. Whether this sort of reducibility goes against the spirit of panqualityism, or of the Russellian approach to consciousness generally, I leave to the reader to judge.

Mihalik also dismisses the possibility of a representationalist panqualityism on the grounds that, even if such a view were to posit intrinsically irreducible and qualitative representational properties, it would still fail to give an account of how it is that we become aware of ‘their intrinsic redness’.¹³ This too is confused. For representationalist panqualityism need not and ought not hold that the property of representing *q* – let *q* be the quality red – is itself intrinsically red, nor that states that represent *q* are red. What representationalist panqualityism holds is that *q* is intrinsically red, and that awareness of *q* is a matter of representing its presence in the right way. Far from standing in need of an account of how we become aware of *q*, this *is* the account. Mihalik’s objection seems to presuppose that the representationalist, panqualityist account of qualitativity is one on which a representation of the qualitative must itself be qualitative in just the same determinable way as what it represents. This seems to be analogous to demanding that one’s thoughts about the golden mountain be realized in brain states wrapped in gold leaf. Needless to say, representationalist panqualityism need not be committed to this picture.

4 Quotationalist Panqualityism and Transparency

Against Mihalik’s objections, then, we may conclude that one can adopt a representationalist account of awareness without abandoning the spirit of panqualityism. What can decide between a first-order, representationalist panqualityism and Coleman’s higher-order, quotationalist alternative? To a large degree, the dialectic here is likely to mirror the debate between first-order representationalist and higher-order physicalist theories of consciousness, and where one’s sympathies lie between the latter is likely to parallel where one’s sympathies lie between their panqualityist analogues.

To illustrate, consider what the two theories say about the targets of conscious awareness. The higher-order approach to consciousness, of which Coleman’s quotationalism is a variation, is largely motivated by the observation that, in consciousness, we seem to be aware of our own mental states. Coleman’s quotationalism is proffered as the best way to account for the immediacy of this awareness.¹⁴ First-order representationalism, on the other hand, is motivated principally by the intuition that, in consciousness, we are principally aware of the *world*, at least as we represent it. Try to attend to the phenomenal character of your experiences, as Moore

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ This motivation for the quotational theory of awareness is quite independent of Coleman’s panqualityism. See the exposition in Coleman (2015).

observed, and you will only find yourself attending more closely to the world.¹⁵ This thesis, of the ‘transparency’ of introspection about consciousness, furnishes a powerful motivation for first-order representationalism as against the higher-order theory of consciousness.

The difference between these two intuitions about awareness comes out quite vividly in the sorts of panqualityism that the two intuitions generate. For panqualityism seeks also to account for conscious experience in terms of our awareness of qualities, and different accounts of the target of our awareness – whether it be awareness of our own mental states, or awareness of the world – will lead panqualityists to rather different accounts of where the qualities that they posit are located.

Coleman, recall, is concerned to account for our immediate awareness of qualities by exploiting the quotationalist analogy, on which a thing figures in the content of a thought by being literally contained in its vehicle. He must be committed, therefore, to thinking that the qualities of which we are aware are qualities of our own mental states, to be located in our own brain tissue.

This is simply implausible, however, for anyone who is moved by the intuition of transparency. When I have a phenomenally conscious experience of a red tomato, I am made aware of the apparent redness of the tomato, and not of the redness of some portion of my own brain. Representationalist panqualityism, unsurprisingly, preserves this intuitive result: on representationalist panqualityism, when I experience a red tomato, the quality of which I am made aware is to be found in the object, the tomato, itself.

To whatever extent one is moved by the intuition of transparency, then, one will prefer a representationalist panqualityism to Coleman’s quotationalism, and the same is likely to go for the other points of contention between higher-order and first-order approaches to consciousness. It is beyond my means to adjudicate such disputes herein. But the difference just surveyed – in just *where* each theory locates the qualities of which we are made aware in consciousness – gives rise to a powerful illustration of the intuition of transparency, which may help to sway those who are on the fence.

For it seems quite implausible to suggest, as Coleman’s quotationalist panqualityism does, that some bit of my brain must actually be red whenever I see a tomato, green whenever I see grass, and so on. It is of course unsurprising that my brain should instantiate qualities of some sort: on panqualityism, qualities are the categorical properties of matter, and my brain is as material as anything else. But the qualities that quotationalism requires my brain to instantiate are *the wrong ones*. Brains are pink and grey, not red and green. Coleman’s quotationalist account of awareness cannot allow me to become aware of a quality unless it is quite literally present in my own brain tissue. Thankfully, however, the qualities of which I can become aware in conscious visual experience are more varied and interesting than the qualities instantiated by own brain.

Now, the quotationalist can simply bite this bullet, and insist that the qualities instantiated in at least some part of my brain must be green when I am consciously

¹⁵ The *locus classicus* for the intuition is in Moore (1903), p. 25; although, as Strawson reminds me, Moore goes on to deny the intuition as it is stated there.

seeing green. Of course, he will concede, any conscious observer of my brain would have a pinkish experience, but this is only because some part of the observer's brain tissue will instantiate pink, and not because *my* brain is instantiating pink.

The response is coherent, to be sure. It is only if one accepts the transparency of the *observer's* conscious awareness that one will insist that the brain is pinkish, not red or green. The argument just given is only a pump for the intuition of transparency, and is not independent of that intuition. But, if we endorse the quotationalist response, we should be aware of how much of our ordinary conception of color, and its distribution in the world, we are giving up. One of the virtues of panqualityism, as I shall shortly stress, is its promise of vindicating our ordinary, Edenic conception of what colors are and where they are to be found, and this promise is squandered if we insist that we can only experience those qualities present in our brain tissue.

I suggest, therefore, that the panqualityist should look elsewhere than to Coleman's quotationalism in giving an account of awareness. Since representationalist panqualityism does not require this implausibility, but instead maintains the intuitive thesis that we are made aware of the qualities of the objects of our perceptions, and not of our own brains, representationalist panqualityism is a promising alternative.¹⁶

5 Mihalik's Objection Considered

In addition to expressing his doubts about first-order representationalist panqualityism, Mihalik adapts an argument from Levine, directed against Balog's quotational version of the 'phenomenal concepts' strategy for defending physicalism,¹⁷ so as to give an argument against Coleman's quotationalist panqualityism. Levine remarks that the quotationalist strategy seeks to explain our conscious awareness of a state – Levine calls this 'cognitive presence' – by appealing to the physical presence of that state in the implementation of some higher-order representation.¹⁸ Hence, Levine argues, in order for the quotationalist strategy to help us toward a satisfying account of phenomenal consciousness, it must be supplemented with an explanation of why this sort of physical presence confers cognitive presence, i.e., conscious awareness. After all, we might argue, also present in the physical implementation of a higher-order thought are various neural particulars of which we are *not* consciously aware, for we had to discover them. Hence, according to Levine's objection, the quotationalist strategy does not succeed in narrowing the explanatory gap between conscious awareness and its physical implementation.

Mihalik suggests that the same line of reasoning shows quotationalist panqualityism to give an inadequate account of awareness. For, while quotationalist panqualityism is concerned with our awareness of qualities, and not of states, it, too, suggests

¹⁶Note that this argument is dialectically stronger than Mihalik's argument against Coleman's quotationalism, to be discussed presently. For Mihalik argues that the quotationalist account fails as an account of conscious awareness. But the objection just given grants the quotationalist account's adequacy as an account of awareness – the objection is that it requires us to be aware of the wrong things.

¹⁷*Vide* Balog (2012).

¹⁸Levine (2007).

that conscious awareness can be accounted for straightforwardly in terms of physical implementation along the model of quotation. It therefore inherits the problem of explaining just why the presence of something in the vehicle of a quotational higher-order thought should result in that thought's conferring conscious awareness of the thing in question – in this case, a quality.

If Mihalik's Levine-esque argument succeeds, then it will furnish the first-order representationalist panqualityist with another powerful argument against Coleman's quotationalism, to go alongside the argument from transparency given above. For I think it is plain that Mihalik's argument will not threaten a first-order representationalist panqualityism. First-order panqualityism seeks to explain conscious awareness in terms of *representation*, rather than in terms of physical implementation. And so Levine's problem of explaining why physical presence should confer cognitive presence does not threaten representationalist panqualityism.

This is not to say that there is no analogous objection in the vicinity. One might wish to give a version of the Mihalik-Levine argument that seeks to show that there is an explanatory gap between representation (of the relevant sort) and conscious awareness. Consider Tye's 'PANIC' account of phenomenal content – why, one might ask, should poised, abstract, non-conceptual intentional content become the object of conscious awareness wherever it is to be found?

Against such an objection, there is little one can do but deny the intuitive feeling that an explanatory gap remains. For my part, I am not inclined to think that there is any immediately apparent explanatory gap here. Others may disagree. But I think the sentiment will be widely shared that there is at least *less* of a gap between representation and conscious awareness than there is between conscious awareness and physical presence in the implementation of a quotational thought. What could be the problem of explaining how technicolor phenomenology results from representing the presence of technicolor qualities, in the right way? Representing a thing in that way just is becoming consciously aware of it; and, where what is represented are technicolor qualities, the resulting awareness is none other than an awareness of the technicolor qualities that are around. Even if one thinks that there is *some* problem here, the problem is surely less vexing than the problem of explaining how technicolor phenomenology could result from the fact that a lower-order stated quoted in a higher-order thought happens to be implemented in quality-containing stuff.¹⁹

An analogy may serve to show the difference in the gaps that must be bridged. Suppose, to take the quotationalist case first, that one affixed a sign to the reel of technicolor film in a running projector, reading 'This film is currently being screened'. Surely the hypothesis that this would give rise to technicolor phenomenology, of the

¹⁹ One might think that the Mihalik-Levine gap can be bridged by transforming Coleman's quotationalism into a genuinely *representational* theory. Indeed, in some work Coleman seems to suggest that this is his view. But I cannot see how this would make a difference. What are represented by higher-order states are first-order states, not qualities. Qualities come into the story by being the categorical properties of parts of the neural realizers of the first-order states that get represented. They are not what is represented. So why should the hypothesis that the higher-order state represents the first-order state, rather than presenting it, narrow the gap at all? The qualities are still not being represented. The only way to narrow the gap is to have the higher-order state represent the qualities themselves. But then it is not a higher-order state, since what it represents is not a lower-order state. Then it is a first-order state, albeit one that represents brain tissue by quotation.

sort that is *on the film*, on the part of the projectionist reading the sign, would stand in need of a defense. Why should we become aware of *what is on the film*, simply because the reel is being used to represent itself? On the other hand, taking up the representationalist case, what sort of defense would we need to give of the claim that technicolor phenomenology results when the projectionist uses the film to represent, by projecting it, what is on it? The analogy is not exact, but it is illustrative of the sort of problem each view faces.

Of course, this is a matter of intuition, and there is little one can say to a Mihalik-*cum*-Levinian who insists that the gap between representation and awareness is as wide as the gap between awareness and physical implementation. The dispute between the representationalist panqualityist and such an interlocutor is likely to be irresolvable. But for those of us who *do* find the link between representation and conscious awareness to be less incredible – less gap-generating – than the link between physical implementation and conscious awareness, however, representationalist panqualityism should be preferred to Coleman’s quotationalist alternative, even in the face of Mihalik’s objection.

6 Considerations for Future Study

Thus far, my aim in this essay has been a fairly modest one. I have articulated a certain theory of consciousness, sought to show what sort of theory it is, and then sought to show that it shows some promise among the field of contenders. I have shown that the view can be thought of as a version of Russellian monism, of the panqualityist rather than the panpsychist variety, and distinguished from Coleman’s panqualityism by its adherence to a first-order representationalist theory of awareness instead of a higher-order one. I have tried to motivate the view, against Coleman’s panqualityism, by stressing its respect of the intuition of transparency, and by showing that the view is not susceptible to Mihalik’s objection.

Before concluding, however, let us push aside all this philosophical taxonomy and consider the view in its own right. All the better: ‘first-order representationalist panqualityism’ is a mouthful, and we should be happy to drop this bit of jargon for a moment. How might one articulate the view to an undergraduate? And what sort of picture of the world, and of the mind, does the view offer?

As Byrne has observed, once one takes the intuition of transparency seriously, the problem of accounting for the character of our experience is revealed to be little more than the problem of accounting for certain features of the world – those features of the world which we seem to encounter in perceptual experience. From this point of view, there is no particularly difficult or interesting problem of consciousness at all. Given an adequate, naturalistic account of mental representation, all that is left of the problem of consciousness are the problems of those things we are conscious *of* – the problem of colors, and also the problems of sounds, tastes, pains, smells, and so on.²⁰

Such an approach, which gives short shrift to what is distinctively *mental*, may seem most naturally to fit with a physicalist disposition toward the problem of con-

²⁰ Byrne (2006), p. 243.

consciousness. After all, if there is nothing about the conscious *mind* that cannot be captured by a naturalistic account of intentionality, then surely there is no question of mind-body dualism. But, as Byrne rightly argues, all of the old anti-physicalist intuitions, and all of the corresponding arguments, can be seen to re-emerge as intuitions and arguments about the features of the world:²¹ about colors, says Byrne, but surely also about tastes, and so on.²² And there is nothing to prevent one who feels driven by those intuitions, and compelled by those arguments, from adopting an antiphysicalist attitude towards the hard problems of color and taste.

The position adopted in this essay expresses just such an attitude. It accepts the intuition of transparency, seeing what is distinctively mental in consciousness as no more than a matter of first-order representational content, and is confident of a naturalistic account thereof. But it rejects physicalism as an account of colors, tastes, and the like. Instead, the account for which I have argued adopts a Russellian monism about colors and tastes, holding that they are among the categorical properties of matter.

It should be stressed what a deeply attractive picture this is. It is attractive, first of all, because of its remarkable simplicity. On this picture, we do not need to give any particularly interesting account of what the mind is like in order to explain how conscious experience can be as dazzling as it is. It is dazzling because it is a matter of becoming aware of the world, and the world is dazzling. All there is to say about the conscious mind is that it becomes aware of the way the world is, by representing that world. And the attractiveness of this picture is compounded by the fact that its simplicity consists in its simply saying what is obvious - one asks how it could be that, when we see a green leaf, our experience is like *that*, and first-order panqualityism answers: leaves are like that, and we are experiencing them. We do not need to posit any conversation-stopping brute identities between colors and surface-reflectance properties, response-dependent properties, or anything of the kind. We need only posit the existence of green, just as we already know it.

These considerations, I think, amount to the best argument in favor of first-order representationalist panqualityism that can be given²³ - better than any objection one

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 228 ff.

²² It may at this point be asked whether it is really clear that first-order representationalist panqualityism can account for our experience in *all* phenomenally conscious states. There should be no problem for panqualityist first-order representationalism if there is none for first-order representationalism generally, however. Dealing with each modality will require a suitable representational content to be found. Taste represents the qualities of the contents of the mouth, olfaction the qualities of the ambient environment, and so on. Pains will represent the qualities of those parts of the body that are in pain. I am inclined to say that moods are not genuinely phenomenal states, but one who thinks that they are will have to find a suitable representational content. A slight complication, however, will arise when the same object is experienced in multiple modalities at once: when I have pain in my thumb, and at the same time represent it as being a tan color, I am aware of two different sorts of qualities present in my finger. But why shouldn't objects have many different sorts of categorical properties? Absent an argument that there is any special problem here, there seems to be no reason not to think that the different sorts of experience can each be dealt with.

²³ Of course, this argument from theoretical simplicity and intuitiveness could also be given in favor of a representationalist dualism about colors and the like, but such a view would founder on questions about color causation. Since the representationalist component of the view is likely to employ a causal-teleological account of representation, I take such a view to be a non-starter.

could give to Coleman's quotationalism. If first-order representationalist panqualityism is true, it is an exceptionally elegant and intuitive theory. It amounts to saying what is simply obvious: that the world is basically experienceable, and that our experience is transparent to it. It is little more than a conjunction of the intuition of transparency, the antiphysicalist intuition, and the intuition that grass is really, Edenically green. If a way can be found to defend the view, it would stand as an exceptional piece of philosophical success in vindicating common sense.

There is no free lunch in philosophy, however. The view will, like any other, have to face its own characteristic challenges. I wish, by way of conclusion, to mention two of those, which seem to me to be the most important, and to offer some preliminary thoughts on how they may be addressed. But, here, we are in the realm of 'directions for future research', and I will not stand too firmly on any of this ground. If I have articulated first-order representationalist panqualityism with sufficient clarity to make its promise apparent, and shown what that promise is, then I have achieved my aim, even if more effort is required in order to fulfill that promise than I am capable of giving presently.

The first challenge is to give an account of representation that makes sense of our ability to represent qualities. The challenge arises because of a *prima facie* tension between the naturalistic account of representation to which first-order panqualityism helps itself, and its antiphysicalist, Russellian monist account of qualities. First-order representationalism is commonly associated with a naturalistic, causal-teleological account of representation, on which sensory states represent states of affairs just in case, under normal conditions, they are tokened when and only when those states of affairs obtain, and precisely because they obtain. The second clause requires that the represented state of affairs *cause* the presence of the perceptual state, and the sort of causation presupposed in such accounts is physical causation.

But first-order representationalist panqualityism requires that the represented states of affairs be states of affairs involving qualities, which are not physical states narrowly construed. And so representationalist panqualityism will have to be supplemented with an account of how it is that a qualitative state of affairs can cause a creature to token one or another perceptual state. This ought not be much of a problem for the view, however, since the categorical properties of physical entities are widely regarded to have just this kind of causal efficacy. Panpsychism is often introduced as a solution to the problem of epiphenomenalism for dualism, and motivated on the grounds that only it can secure a causally efficacious role for phenomenal properties in a physical world. On panpsychism, phenomenal properties of mental states are causally efficacious, inasmuch as they are the categorical bases of the causal dispositions of those mental states. If this is right, then first-order representationalist panqualityism can simply appropriate the panpsychist's metaphysics, so as to give an account of qualitative causation that can undergird a causal-teleological account of qualitative representation.²⁴

This is, to be sure, only a sketch of a first-order panqualityist account of representation. The precise relationship between the sort of causal efficacy exercised by categorical properties, and the sort of causal efficacy exercised by dispositional

²⁴ Admirable work toward this end is accomplished in Cutter, op. cit.

properties (viz., the sort of causal efficacy that must figure in scientific causal claims) remains to be specified by the first-order panqualityist, and it remains to be shown that the former can undergird tracking at least as well as the latter. The analogy with the panpsychist account of mental causation, however, provides reason to think that this promissory note can be cashed.

The second challenge for first-order representationalist panqualityism is to answer the canonical objections to any direct realism about ‘Edenic’ qualities like color, taste, and so on. As we observed above, one of the principal virtues of first-order panqualityism is its promise of securing an intuitive, commonsense, Edenic role for color in the world. But Edenic colors are typically thought to be beset by insuperable difficulties having to do with illusions, hallucinations, and variation between observers.

Chalmers calls this family of objections to realism about Edenic colors the ‘Tree of Illusion’, whose force he takes to be compounded by the ‘Tree of Science’.²⁵ Basically, the scientific problem for Edenic colors is twofold. First, they do not seem to be assimilable to the set of properties of objects which we have discovered through scientific investigation. Second, the intuitive causal role of Edenic colors – as causes of our perceptions of them – seems inconsistent with the causal account of our color perceptions that we have obtained through scientific investigation. The first problem is no problem for first-order panqualityism, which holds that Edenic colors are broadly, but not narrowly physical properties. And the second problem can be overcome if, as we have just indicated, qualities like colors are causally efficacious as the categorical bases of the dispositional properties discovered in science. Only the Tree of Illusion, therefore, remains for us to consider.

Let us consider only the case of hallucinations. Illusions, afterimages, and the rest can be dealt with similarly, and any subtle differences between hallucinations and such cases are too subtle to be dealt with in these pages. At any rate, if I can show that there is hope that the representationalist panqualityist will be able to deal with hallucinations, this ought to warrant enough hope that they can deal with related problems for my purposes herein.

When one has an hallucinatory experience of purple, one’s experience seems indistinguishable from a veridical experience of purple. It is therefore natural to say that the two experiences – the one hallucinatory, *h*, the other veridical, *v* – have the same phenomenal properties. Now, panqualityism holds that phenomenal properties consist in conscious awareness of qualities, and the panqualityist’s account of the phenomenal properties of *v* will surely ascribe awareness of purple to the subject. But, on the assumption that *h* and *v* have identical phenomenal properties, consistency will then require the panqualityist to ascribe awareness of purple to the subject even in the hallucinatory case. But, in an hallucination, surely there is no purple around of which the subject can be aware (if there is, it must be somewhere else in the scene). So the panqualityist seems to face a dilemma: either she ascribes to the subject of *h* an awareness of something that is not there, which seems absurd, or she must have a heterogeneous and unnatural account of phenomenal properties. Neither option seems appealing, and this is the basic problem of hallucination.

²⁵ Chalmers (2010), pp. 381–455. See in particular pp. 381–382 ff.

Thankfully, the first horn of the dilemma is not nearly so unappealing as it appears. It appears unappealing because ‘to be aware’, in ordinary usage, is a success verb. One cannot be aware, in the ordinary sense, of something that is not there, or that is not the case. This is the sense of ‘awareness’ that makes the claim that someone is aware of purple that is not in fact present appear troubling. But it is not the sense of awareness that is in question. Rather, in this context, ‘awareness’ is used in a merely phenomenological sense. To say that I am aware of purple is just to say that, phenomenologically, my experience is characterized by purple. And that is entirely possible without there being any purple around, so long as I am representing purple. If one insists that ‘to be aware’ be a success-verb in this context, then the representationalist panqualityist will simply drop the expression, and analyze phenomenal consciousness not in terms of the ‘awareness’ of qualities, but in terms of the ‘appearance’ of qualities, or something else.²⁶ Levine’s ‘cognitive presence’ might well do the job. The claim that we are ‘aware’ of qualities then becomes a point of substantive contention which stands in need of defense. Be the terminology what it may, the crucial point is that, for the representationalist panqualityist, the feature of consciousness that we have in mind to analyze is understood as consisting in a certain sort of representation of qualities.

So, on reflection, there is no problem of hallucination. The representationalist panqualityist does not require that there actually be purple around in order for a token state to be phenomenally purple. One might be tempted to worry at this point that representationalist panqualityism has abandoned its promise to account for phenomenology in terms of the actual properties of perceptual objects. After all, if the presence of a quality is not required in order to account for the phenomenology of hallucination, why think it is required in order to account for the phenomenology of veridical perception? And if there is no need to posit qualities in order to account for the phenomenology either of hallucination or of veridical perception, then the representationalist panqualityist’s promise to put the qualities back in the world seems groundless.

Such a reaction is in serious error. What the response just given to the apparent problem of hallucination shows is that no qualities need be around in order for a *token* state to be phenomenally purple. This does not mean that qualities drop out of the account of perception altogether, however. If the account of representation given by the first-order panqualityist is an externalist one, then qualities must have been instantiated at some point if representation of them is to get off the ground. And, crucially, whether the account of representation given is externalist or not, the fact that qualities need not be present in order for an hallucination to occur does not imply that, in veridical perception, we are not aware of qualities. So, given that perception is at least sometimes veridical, the representationalist panqualityist has reason to hold that qualities are really instantiated.

Whatever one thinks of this response, it is not particularly novel, and the territory we are going over is well-trodden. This response to the problem of hallucination is essentially a standard defense given by physicalist representationalists, and I am

²⁶ The defense here is deeply indebted to Tye’s treatment of hallucination in his op. cit., pp. 84–85. In later work, Tye abandons this treatment of hallucination, but I remain convinced of its adequacy. *Vide* Tye (2009), pp. 112–114, and elsewhere.

content, in this preliminary survey of the problem, to conclude that representationalist panqualityism will fare just as well in its face as more familiar sorts of first-order representationalism.²⁷

Before concluding, let us consider one last difficulty that the view may be thought to face. The problem may be understood as the uneasy feeling that representationalist panqualityism simply makes us too *lucky*. For the view seems to say, first, that certain features of the world are forever beyond the grasp of scientific inquiry, and then to say that, happily, we can become aware of those very features of the world simply by looking around. But without some independent motivation for the view, this may all seem a bit too convenient.

This unease seems to depend on working backwards rather than forwards, however. It requires us to see common perception as being shoehorned in, after the fact, to fill the holes left in scientific theory. But this is wrong. Instead, science proceeds by deliberately ignoring what is already obvious to common perception.²⁸

We begin our epistemic lives with access to precisely those features of the world revealed to us in common perception: sights, sounds, tastes, and so on. Then, in an effort better to navigate the world, we deliberately abstract away from these features, for they do not allow us to predict what things will do: they tell us what things are themselves like, not how they interact with others. Some process of scientific investigation follows – I will refrain for the moment from endorsing any particular philosophy of science – and the result is a theory, or model, that seeks to explain and to predict the behavior of the world.

When we are sufficiently satisfied with the model, the belief that the model reveals to us what things are really like commands tremendous assent. We come to have the feeling that science has revealed to us the *real* features of the world. But we should remember how we came to discover those features: by setting to one side all the things we *already* knew about the world, just in virtue of our perceptual access to it, and focusing on facts about it that are not immediately perceptually accessible to us; viz., mathematical relationships between its objects, including our measurement devices. In light of this it should be no surprise that science is blind to certain features of the world, and that those features of the world are the very ones to which we have access in common perception.

Another way to dispel the feeling this is all too lucky is to observe that nothing in representationalist panqualityism rules out the possibility of other categorical properties of physical entities of which we are unaware. Surely there are qualities of which we are not aware, because we only have so many sensory modalities. We were not lucky enough to know of them just by looking around. And perhaps there are even entirely different sorts of categorical properties, not qualitative but something else entirely, which we may never come to know. We are not lucky enough to know of them. In light of this it does not seem so suspiciously convenient after all to suppose

²⁷ One alternative response to the problem of hallucination is simply to adopt a disjunctivism on which hallucinations do not, like veridical perceptions, have qualitative contents. On this view, hallucinations may seem to be phenomenal states, but they are not. Such a response is entirely consistent with first-order panqualityism.

²⁸ The point is made forcefully in Goff, *op. cit.*, although I do not wish to attribute to him the philosophy of science which I employ below.

that we have access in perception to some features of the world to which science is blind.

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