RETHINKING PHENOMENAL INTENTIONALITY

by

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RETHINKING PHENOMENAL INTENTIONALITY

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This dissertation puts forward a critique of the phenomenal intentionality theory (PIT). According to standard accounts of PIT, all genuine intentionality is either identical to or partly grounded in phenomenal consciousness. But in contemporary debates about phenomenal intentionality, relatively little attention is paid to the fundamental question of what exactly it is that we are talking about when we talk about conscious experiences. Indeed, the arguments defended by proponents of PIT rely too heavily on insecure assumptions about the nature of certain mental entities the theory postulates; namely token mental states that instantiate phenomenal properties. I argue that it is a conceptually significant mistake to construe conscious experiences in terms of token mental states that instantiate phenomenal properties because sates and properties lack a temporal shape but conscious experience has a temporal shape. So, in order to adequately capture our phenomenology of temporality, what is needed is a mental ontology of first-personal, subjective, mental events rather than one of states and properties.

A second aim of this dissertation is to develop and partially defend a mereological account of phenomenal intentionality, which says that phenomenality and intentionality are related by being mental parts of an agent's whole, unified, first-personal, subjective, mental event. On this approach, the conditions of satisfaction for an agent's first-personal,

subjective, mental events are the same as the conditions of satisfaction for phenomenal intentionality. I explore the theoretical grounds for why one might accept a mereological account of phenomenal intentionality and conclude that it succeeds in answering the most difficult case that proponents of PIT face—the problem of unconscious thought—exactly where standard versions of PIT fail. Thus, we have *prima facie*, defeasible evidence in support of a mereological account of phenomenal intentionality This suffices to shift the burden of argument to proponents of PIT who reject a mereological account to demonstrate what is wrong with the view.

This dissertation is dedicated to Estes Rose Stratman.

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INTRODUCTION

1. What is intentionality?

The topic of intentionality raises gripping and intractable philosophical questions, perhaps the most significant being: In what does intentionality consist? This is an especially difficult question if it turns out that the mind is physical or physically realized in the brain because it is not clear how the grey, physical matter of a brain can be *about* or *directed* at something. How is it that my brain could learn something or carry information about the world (or the way the world might be), if there is nothing more to my brain than neurons flashing and firing?[1]

Talk of "intentionality" pre-theoretically refers to those features present in our mental lives (e.g., our perceptual and cognitive goings-on) that are introspectively noticeable as being *about* or *directed* at something.[2] So, when I talk about a subject's

[1] I shall attempt to remain neutral regarding physicalism or materialism about the mind, insofar as I do not directly take sides on these questions.

[2] For the purpose of this dissertation I shall make a distinction between a strict and general way of using the term 'thought'. Unless stated otherwise, I shall assume a strict use of the term. According to the general use of the term, a subject's perceptual experience can count as mental but not a form of thought. But according to the strict use of the term, a subject's perceptual mental goings-on will count as a form of mental thought, insofar as, at least on some views of the mind, even if a subject is a brain-in-a-vat, when she has a perception

mental activity as having intentional content, what I means is that the subject's mental goings-on have a kind of *aboutness* or *directedness*.[3] For example, when I remember the day my daughter was born, my memory is *about* or *directed* at that day and what occurred; my belief that "the Earth is spherical" is *about* the curvature of the Earth; and when I see rain clouds on the horizon, my visual perception is *directed* at the rain clouds. So, as a kind of pre-theoretical place from which we can begin, I suggest that if a subject's mental goings-on are intentional, then they have *aboutness* or *directedness*.[4]

An important part of giving an adequate account of intentionality will involve explaining how human thought manages to have this sort of aboutness or directness—that is, it should tell us how as subject's thought gets hooked up to the world, such that it is about or directed at what the world is like or might be. But it must do more than this. A theory of intentionality should be fully general, insofar as it is able to cover all cases of intentionality—that is, a truly adequate theory of intentionality should tell us what the deep metaphysical nature of intentionality is.[5] But I am skeptical that any such account can be carried out. So, I will not attempt to develop a fully general theory of the deep, metaphysical nature of intentionality.

I am not going to develop a fully general theory of what intentionality is. Instead, I will offer various criticism of a relatively recent and influential development in the literature on intentionality—the "Phenomenal Intentionality Theory" (PIT). According to

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of some patch of color, even though this perception is not veridical, it still *seems* to her as though she sees this patch of color. For a discussion of this distinction, see e.g., Farkas (2010), pp. 10-13.

[3] In what follows, I shall generally use the terms "aboutness" and "directed at" synonymously to characterize an ostensive definition of "intentionality". See e.g., Brentano (1874), p. 88. And for further discussion of this definition, see e.g., Mendelovici (2018), chapter 1.

[4] It is worth mentioning that someone might argue that this way of thinking about intentionality is too metaphorical. See e.g., Mendelovici (2018), p. 4.

[5] For a nice discussion of this point, see Mendelovici, (2018), pp. 21-29.

standard accounts of PIT, all genuine intentionality is either identical to or partly grounded in phenomenal consciousness.[6] But in contemporary debates about phenomenal intentionality, relatively little attention is paid to the fundamental question of what exactly it is that we are talking about when we talk about conscious experiences. Indeed, the arguments defended by proponents of PIT rely too heavily on insecure assumptions about the nature of certain mental entities the theory postulates; namely token mental states that instantiate phenomenal properties. One of the primary goals of this dissertation is to argue that it is a conceptually significant mistake to construe conscious experiences in terms of token mental states that instantiate phenomenal properties; this is because sates and properties lack a temporal shape but conscious experience has a temporal shape. So, in order to adequately capture our phenomenology of temporality, what is needed is a mental ontology of first-personal, subjective, mental events rather than one of states and properties.

But my allegiances are in an important sense split regarding PIT. For on the one hand, I think that standard accounts of PIT are empirically inadequate and cannot deliver a fully general theory of what intentionality is. On the other hand, I believe that an alternative version of PIT is on the offing, if we construe the nature of conscious experience in terms of temporally structured, subjective mental events or episodes that subjects undergo. In this regard, then, this dissertation should not be read as either as a defense of PIT against orthodox views of intentionality or as a purely negative argument against PIT.

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[6] For two helpful introductions to the Phenomenal Intentionality Theory, see e.g., Kriegel (2013); Bourget & Mendelovici (2019). For early defenses of this and related views see e.g., Strawson (1994); Siewert (1998); Horgan & Tienson (2002); Loar (2003); Pitt (2004). For more recent discussions of the view see e.g.,. Kriegel (2007, 2011); Farkas (2008, 2013); Pautz (2008, 2013); Bourget (2010, 2015, 2020); Dewalque (2013); Chudnoff (2013, 2015); Smithies (2019); and Woodward (2019).

Indeed, once I have offered various objections to standard accounts of PIT, I will develop and partially defend a mereological account of PIT, which says that phenomenality and intentionality are related by being proper parts of our first-personal, subjective, mental events.[7] On this approach, the conditions of satisfaction for a subject's first-personal, subjective, mental events are the same as the conditions of satisfaction for phenomenal intentionality. The second goal of this dissertation is to explore the theoretical grounds for why we should accept a mereological account of phenomenal intentionality and conclude that it does a better job of explaining difficult cases like unconscious thought (e.g., your belief that "grass is green"). Thus, we have prima facie, defeasible evidence in support of a mereological account of phenomenal intentionality exactly where competing accounts fail. This suffices to shift the burden of argument to proponents of PIT who reject a mereological account to demonstrate what is wrong with the view.

2. What intentionality is not.

To get a better grip on what I intended to argue in what follows, it is important to make clear some issues that I am *not* interested in exploring. My hope is that by making these points clear we can set aside any confusions that would otherwise detract from the goals of this dissertation.

First, the term "intentionality" is unfortunately misleading because sometimes we talk about *intending* to do such and such. For example, suppose that someone, say, Alex

[7] Dewalque (2013) offers a mereological approach to phenomenal intentionality as an alternative to standard accounts. But Dewalque is relatively silent on how to understand the part-whole relationship in such a way that is consistent with the claim that intentionality is counterfactually determined by phenomenality; and whether such an account has the resources to answer any of the alleged problem cases facing proponents of PIT. In chapter 4 I will address both of these concerns.

intends to do well on her philosophy exam. In such a case, Alex would have an intention understood as a kind of desire to do well on the exam. This notion of intentions can be at least partly understood in terms of the forming of a particular plan of action or goal to be achieved, based on some desire or interest that a subject possesses. In this way, Alex's intending is related to intentionality, since Alex must undergo a certain sort of mental activity in order to form the intention in the first place. Thus, Alex must already be doing quite a bit of cognitive work in order to form the relevant intention. Presumably, Alex has already been thinking that, "it would be good to do well on the exam", "I desire to do well on the exam", "the exam is on Tuesday", and so on. All of these sorts of mental goings-on have the feature of being about something, and so one might think that they should count as being intentional. However, Alex's intending (as in having a plan to do something) is not the sort of intentionality that will be our primary interest in what follows.

Second, some philosophers have attempted to define intentionality by appealing to the closely related notion of inten*s*ionality (with an *s*).[8] But this is itself a controversial issue; some philosophers think that intensionality has to do with the logical properties of words and sentences, while human thought may not be necessarily tied to language in this way. In what follows, I want to remain relatively neutral regarding this issue by focusing on the alleged relationship between intentional content and conscious experience for creatures like us. So, while I fully admit that the relationship between intensionality and intentionality is philosophically significant in its own right, I will not attempt to inquire into this issue here.

[8] See, e.g., Chisholm's criterion of intensionality (1956).

Third, one might reasonably raise worries about the mental goings-on of infants, young children, and non-human animals. Plausibly, such creatures can have something like proto-beliefs or proto-thoughts. Afterall, the acquisition of beliefs and formation of concepts must occur at some point in the development of a mind. So, it seems reasonable to conclude that, in at least some cases of non-human animals, infants, or young children, there could be some basic form of representation. But it is not clear that such cases of representation will count as genuine forms of intentionality. While I believe that such cases should count as genuine forms of intentional content in some sense, (hence my skepticism of the claim that we can give a fully general theory of the deep nature of what intentionality is), I will endorse a simplifying assumption and bracket such cases. Thus, these sorts of cases will not play a role in the view that I shall develop. I take it to be obvious that adult human minds are capable of having intentional thoughts. So, our paradigm example of intentionality is that of an adult human agent, since this is what we are most familiar with in ourselves and what we have immediate access to. Therefore, when I speak of intentionality, this should be understood in terms of *adult* human perceptual and cognitive experience.

A related issue involves questioning whether the scope of what counts as genuinely intentional is wider than what I allow: For instance, smoke represents fire, and so one might argue that smoke is a kind of non-mental or derived intentionality. Van Gogh's self-portrait is a painting that represents the person, Van Gogh, and the painting may count as having a kind of non-mental or derived intentionality that we in some meaningful sense bestow upon it or project on the thing. So, we can think about these sorts of cases of alleged intentionality as being at least partly determined by us—that is, by creatures with genuine

intentionality (e.g., when we interpret the smoke as meaning fire and the paint on the canvas as referring to or depicting the artist). My claim, however, is that the kind of aboutness and directedness involved in one's perceptual and cognitive experiences are importantly different because in such cases what we might describe as being represented does not depend on us or our interpretations.[9]

However, this point raises an important issue that needs to be addressed: One could argue that there is a distinction between mere representational content, which might be possessed by more than adult human minds and intentional content such as a subject's beliefs and desires, which are not possessed by inanimate objects such as paintings, words, sentences, tree-rings, and so on. It is important to make this distinction clear, since some philosophers have assumed that there is no substantial difference between representational and intentional content, or that representational content entails intentional content.[10] But if it is true that intentional and representational goings-on can come apart, then our understanding of what intentionality is should not assume that they are the same thing. While these are important and tricky issues that should not be outright ignored, for now, however, I will also bracket these concerns in order to focus on the nature of the relationship between intentionality and phenomenal consciousness.

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[9] One might object here by arguing that our perceptual or cognitive states only become intentional after some act of interpretation takes places either by the subject or by the subject's nervous system. If this is correct, then one could argue that the phenomenal character or raw qualia that is perceived prior to such an act of interpretation takes places would lack intentional content. But this objection assumes that intentionality and phenomenal character are metaphysically separable.

[10] See e.g., Strawson (2004); see also Mendelovici (2010), pp. 2-4.

3. Assumptions and methodology.

I now want to say a bit more regarding some of the basic assumptions crucial for this dissertation.

First, I shall assume that introspection and a subject's first-personal point of view are legitimate methodological features of our inquiry into the nature of intentionality. Indeed, we run the risk of misrepresenting intentionality when we fail to take seriously a subject's introspective access to their own mental goings-on.[11] And given that our paradigm examples of intentionality are introspectively recognizable, I take introspection to be a key methodological tool that provides a central type of evidence in our inquiry into the nature of intentionality.

Second, an additional methodological assumption that I embrace going forward is the claim that qualia—the raw qualitative feeling of conscious experiences—are to be understood as a kind of basic datum that need not be explained. Rather, qualia are a part of our total evidence and should, therefore, be taken in consideration when theorizing about intentionality.[12] This does not require dualism and I do not wish to endorse some form of anti-physicalism. But by focusing on the relationship between intentionality and conscious experience, it may seem that I am impugning a kind of failure to physicalist theories of the mind. But this is a mistake; PIT is entirely consistent with physicalism about the mind.[13]

Third, one point of contention that should be made clear prior to moving on is what exactly I mean by "temporal shape" and in what way this is connected to our understanding

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[11] Crane, (2015), p. 6, 11, 13, 90, 96; Crane calls this the "Phenomenological Constraint", which says that an adequate theory of intentionality must take the phenomenology of a subject's experience at face value. I shall generally accept this constraint on an adequate theory of intentionality.

[12] For a discussion of this strategy, see e.g., Goff (2017), pp. 1-17.

[13] See e.g., Mendelovici (2018), pp. 116-119.

of what mental states, properties, and events are. When one endeavors to understand the temporal shape of X, what they want to know is not the temporal dimensions of X. Rather, what the notion of temporal shape addresses is the way or manner in which X occupies or fills some occurrence or duration of time.[14] Here is my basic assumption regarding temporal shape: Mental entities like mental states and phenomenal properties are like continuants that can persist by enduring through time, wholly present at each moment, but are not dynamic and are not composed of temporal parts or stages. Events, on the other hand, are very different; they are not wholly present at each moment in time and they have a kind of processive character insofar as they fill or occupy the expanse of time by being dynamic and being composed of temporal parts or stages. So, states and properties lack a temporal shape but mental events or episodes do have a temporal shape.

4. Chapter summaries.

The dissertation is a collection of essays that each revolve around central questions regarding the alleged relationship between intentionality and phenomenality.

Chapter 1. In this initial chapter, I introduce PIT in greater detail and survey the motivations, reasons, and arguments proponents have offered in support of the view. I discuss the range of positions that different versions of PIT might occupy in logical space and show how the view is typically couched within the framework of an ontology of mental states and properties. I then show how the arguments offered in support of the claim that intentionality and phenomenality are intimately related require a new way of conceptualizing conscious experience in terms of subjective, mental events or episodes

[14] See e.g., Steward (1997), pp. 73-74.

rather than mental states that instantiate phenomenal properties. Indeed, I argue that the identification of mental-cum-intentional content with phenomenal states is a move away from the primary motivations for the view—experience itself. I argue that this is problematic, since it results in a view that tends to be too impersonal and objective; it threatens to misrepresent the temporal structure essential to phenomenally conscious experience.

Chapter 2. In this chapter, I investigate cases of what Kind (2018) calls "imaginative presence" in order to develop a novel challenge to PIT. While proponents of PIT believe that there is a counterfactual dependence relationship between intentionality and consciousness, they disagree about the nature of this relationship. This disagreement generates a tension in the literature on PIT regarding the extent of phenomenal intentionality and perceptual experience. Some take an austere approach, which claims that what is phenomenally perceived is restricted to what is immediately perceived. Others take a liberal approach and argue that our phenomenology is much richer than what can be captured by what is immediately perceived. I will exploit this tension in the literature in order to show why standard versions of PIT are empirically inadequate and need to be rethought. This is because in cases of imaginative presence, one's perceptual experience outstrips what one immediately perceives. Phenomenologically speaking, however, the intentional contents involved in cases of imaginative presence are not two different mental states, since they are a part of the same perceptual experience. I argue that a subject's perceptual mental state in cases of imaginative presence has intentional content that is temporally structured that standard views of PIT cannot adequately explain. Indeed, the reason why this problem occurs for standard views of PIT is because the nature of

conscious experience is conceptualized in terms of token mental states that instantiate phenomenal properties.

Chapter 3. In this chapter, I argue that the mental ontology required for PIT should be construed in terms of phenomenal mental events or episodes, not phenomenal mental states that instantiate phenomenal properties. I begin by laying out the basic commitments of PIT and the claim that phenomenal mental states give rise to phenomenal intentional content. I argue that the real problem with standard views of PIT is that states and properties lack a temporal shape, whereas conscious experiences have a temporal shape. The argument to be defended is simple but powerful. It says: (1) If phenomenally conscious experiences are phenomenal mental states that instantiate phenomenal properties, then the phenomenal character of these experiences will lack a temporal shape. (2) The phenomenal character of our conscious experiences has a temporal shape. (3) Therefore, phenomenally conscious experiences are not phenomenal mental states that instantiate phenomenal properties.

Chapter 4. The goal of this chapter is to propose and partly defend a mereological account of the relationship between intentionality and phenomenal consciousness by showing how this approach to phenomenal intentionality has the theoretical resources to answer the most serious challenge facing proponents of PIT—the problem of unconscious belief. I begin by arguing that standard accounts of PIT fail to give a satisfactory solution to the problem of unconscious belief. I then argue that a mereological account of phenomenal intentionality answers this challenge exactly where standard accounts fail. Therefore, we have good grounds to accept a mereological account of phenomenal intentionality.

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CHAPTER ONE

Analytic Phenomenology and Conscious Experience

1. Introduction.

In recent years, some philosophers working on the nature of intentionality and consciousness have turned away from views that construe the basic ingredients of intentionality in terms of naturalistic tracking relations that hold between thinkers and external conditions in their environment in favor of what has been called the "Phenomenal Intentionality Theory" (PIT).[1] According to PIT, the deep, metaphysical nature of intentionality is either identical to or partly grounded in a subject's phenomenally consciousness experiences.[2] On this consciousness-first approach to the nature of intentionality, a subject's phenomenal conscious experiences are taken to be explanatorily prior to intentional mental states.[3] Indeed, some take the recent development of PIT to be evidence that it is a nascent research program, increasingly viewed as a competitor to

[1] I take intentionality generically to mean the aboutness or directedness of mental phenomena.

[2] For an overview of PIT, see e.g., Kriegel (2013a); see also Bourget & Mendelovici (2019, 2020). It is worth mentioning that Kriegel (2013a), p. 5 recognizes that the term "grounding" is being used in an atypical fashion; the relation need not be asymmetric. For instance, Mendelovivi (2018) claims that it is an identity relation. We can give a relatively neutral formulation in terms of a counterfactual dependence relation as follows: "an intentional state has phenomenal intentionality just in case if it were not phenomenal it would not be intentional; see e.g., Kriegel (2013b).

[3] See e.g., Pautz (2008, 2013).

widely accepted naturalistic, tracking theories of intentionality.[4] But to evaluate this claim, we need to consider the following questions:

(i) What reasons are there for thinking that there is a significant relationship or connection between phenomenal consciousness and intentionality—are they inseparable?

(ii) What would have to be the case regarding the nature of this relation, such that intentionality is counterfactually dependent on phenomenal consciousness?

While proponents of PIT disagree about (ii) in various ways, they concur that there is an important relation between phenomenal consciousness and intentionality, such that they are inseparably related. In what follows, I will focus primarily on (i) by considering prominent arguments that proponents of PIT have offered in support of *inseparatism*—the view that intentionality and phenomenal consciousness are metaphysically inseparable.[5]

This paper has two goals: First, I will situate these arguments within a methodological context that I shall call "analytic phenomenology". Second, I will show that when we view these arguments through the lens of analytic phenomenology, it becomes clear that proponents of PIT must take seriously our phenomenology of temporal experience.

Here is the plan for the paper: I begin by making some needed clarifications at the core of the arguments for inseparatism (Section 2). I will then introduce and explain what is meant by "analytic phenomenology" and why this methodological approach to conscious experience matters for arguments in support of inseparatism (Sections 3). Once these

[4] See, e.g., Kriegel (2013a), pp. 1-4.

[5] Until recently, it was widely accepted that consciousness and intentionality are not merely conceptually distinct, they were taken to be metaphysically independent. For a discussion of this point, see e.g., Kriegel (2013a), p. 5; see also Horgan and Tienson (2002); and Pautz (2008).

points have been adequately elaborated, I will argue that conscious experience has an important kind of temporal structure, which I will call its "temporal shape" (Section 4). I will then show why a proper understanding of the arguments for inseparatism hinge on the temporal shape of conscious experience (Section 5). And I will consider and respond to several objections (Section 6), prior to concluding (Section 7).

2. Preliminaries.

In this section, I will clarify the fundamental claim at the heart of PIT—that phenomenal consciousness is inseparable from intentionality. I will then discuss the motivations for this thesis. But it is crucial to recognize at the outset that, in what follows, I am not aiming to disprove PIT or defend it against views of intentionality that reject inseparatism. Rather, I want to understand what PIT says and how to approach the view, if our goal was to test the theory using the assumptions and methods endorsed by proponents of the theory. Let us begin by considering the sorts of views that proponents of PIT reject.

In contemporary philosophy of mind, intentionality is typically construed in terms of what have been called propositional attitudes, like a subject's belief that *p*. The central task of a theory of intentionality can, therefore, be understood as giving a plausible account of the truth-conditions for such mental states or propositional attitudes. Some philosophers add to this task the desideratum that a theory of intentionality must be naturalized by explicating the propositional attitudes in terms of either a causal-functional role or some naturalistic tracking relation that holds between the thinking subject and her environment.[6]

[6] There are two leading approaches to intentionality that attempts to naturalize it in physical or functional terms. The first are functional role theories, which claim that intentionality arises from the functional role of states internal to the subject in conjunction with other causal relations and ingredients. See e.g., Harman (1987). The second are tracking theories, which claim that intentionality arises a suitably natural relation that

In an attempt to make sense of the mental ontology required for this sort of approach to be plausible, some philosophers posit mental representations or representational content as the basic ingredient for intentionality.[7] Building on this idea of representational contents, one could thereby explain a subject's conscious mental states in terms of her representational mental states. If this is correct, then a theory of intentionality could arguably serve as the basis for a theory of consciousness.[8]

Proponents of PIT adopt a different approach, one that reverses the explanatory direction. Instead of explaining consciousness in terms of intentionality (e.g., representational states), intentionality is explained in terms of phenomenal consciousness. Given this approach, we must begin with phenomenal consciousness as basic and then identity those intentional states that are identical to or partly grounded in conscious states (i.e., phenomenal intentional states). One can then proceed to show that all other forms of alleged intentionality are dependent on this fundament form of "original" intentionality. Indeed, for those who take PIT to be a general theory of what intentionality is, the theoretical program of explaining all forms of intentionality in terms of phenomenal intentionality as their source is arguably the driving intuition and central motivation for the view.[9] Thus, PIT is phenomenological insofar as it is a theoretical investigation of the nature of intentionality via an inquiry into conscious experience itself.

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holds between a subject and her environment and carry or track the appropriate information. See e.g., Dretske (1993, 1995), Millikan (1984).

[7] For an overview of the representationalism see e.g., Shea (2018); see also Heil (2004), chapter 8.

[8] Representational theories of intentionality face various problems. For a discussion of a range of objections to representationalism, see e.g., Lyons (1995). See also, Kind (2007).

[9] For instance, Kriegel (2013a), p. 13 says: "Perhaps the most important kind of claim made on behalf of phenomenal intentionality is that it is in some way *basic* among forms of intentionality".

But some philosophers have thought that there is an unbridgeable gulf between naturalistic explanations of intentional mental states and phenomenal conscious mental states, which suggest that phenomenal consciousness and intentionality are metaphysically distinct and separate.[10] It is this idea of separatism that is rejected by proponents of PIT and is central to a proper understanding of what the theory says. For instance, Kriegel (2013) describes this core intuition as follows:

> The cornerstone would be the idea that intentionality is injected into the world with the appearance of a certain kind of phenomenal character. It is when the relevant phenomenal character shows up that intentionality makes its first appearance on the scene. Here too, once this phenomenal character appears, and brings in its train "original intentionality," intentionality can be "passed around" to things lacking this (or any) phenomenal character. But the source of all intentionality is the relevant phenomenal character (p. 3).

So, according to Kriegel, the source of all genuine intentionality is not some naturalistic property or state of a subject like a tracking relation that holds between the subject and her environment. Rather, the source of all genuine intentionality is phenomenal consciousness. Of course, simply appealing to this intuition is probably not sufficient; proponents of PIT must demonstrate why we should reject the claim that intentionality and phenomenal consciousness are metaphysically distinct. But before we can evaluate the arguments offered in support of inseparatism, we need to consider, clarify, and elaborate upon what exactly it is that inseparatism claims.

There are two key parts to inseparatism. The first says: "…paradigmatic sensory states in fact exhibit intentionality, which is moreover grounded by their phenomenality"; the second says: "…paradigmatic cognitive states in fact boast a phenomenality, which moreover grounds their intentionality" (Krigel, 2013: p. 5). However, it is not immediately

[10] See e.g., Harman (1987); and Dretske (1993, 1995).

obvious what is meant by "paradigmatic sensory states" and "paradigmatic cognitive states". And since PIT takes these to be the basic ingredients of intentionality, it is important to clarify what these states are.

One way that proponents of PIT have attempted to cash out what is meant by such states is to construe them in terms of the instantiations of phenomenal mental properties. For instance, Mendelovici (2018) states:

> We can define **phenomenal properties** as ways things are or might be with respect to phenomenal consciousness, or phenomenal ways things are or might be, and **phenomenal states** as instantiations of phenomenal properties. A (**phenomenally**) **conscious mental state**, or simply, a (**phenomenal**) **experience**, is a mental state that includes, but may not be exhausted by, the instantiation of phenomenal properties. The specific "what it's like," or felt, quality of a phenomenal state or experience is its **phenomenal character**. For example, the experience of pain, the experience of red, and the feeling of déjà vu have what we might call "pain-ish," "red-ish," and "déjà vu-ish" phenomenal character, respectively (p. 84; bolded emphasis in the original).

And given that Mendelovici's definitions of phenomenal states and properties are a representative statements of how proponents of PIT tend to construe what is meant by the phenomenal character of certain sensory and cognitive states, we can use this as an initial place to begin to understand what PIT says are the basic ingredients of intentionality. We can, therefore, interpret inseparatism as asserting the following: Phenomenal properties (e.g., *being in pain*, *being red*, *feeling déjà vu*), which have certain "pain-ish", "red-ish", and "déjà vu-ish" phenomenal characters, are instantiated by phenomenally conscious mental states (i.e., conscious experiences); and importantly, these phenomenal states/properties cannot be separated from the intentional properties instantiated by that mental state because they are metaphysically intertwined.[11]

[11] I reject the claim that mental states instantiate or exemplify certain phenomenal properties because the notion of instantiation and exemplification leads to a vicious regress. This point will be addressed in Section

This may be an improvement, insofar as it helps clarify what is meant by inseparatism. Still, the claim that a phenomenal mental state (or experience) instantiates certain phenomenal mental properties remains largely opaque—that is, the meaning that proponents of PIT assign to terms like "state" and "property" has not been adequately addressed. The problem is that in the literature philosopher have either taken for granted that we have a clear understanding of what phenomenal mental states and properties are or the issue has simply been ignored. This generates a challenge because if we are to evaluate the arguments offered in support of inseparatism, we will need to clarify how proponents of PIT are using these terms. While it is perhaps too demanding to expect that one must give a full theory of states and properties (clearly I will not do so here), it is reasonable to make some clarifications regarding how we should interpret these terms as they relate to PIT and the inseparatism thesis. Unacceptable.

First, there is a longstanding dispute about whether properties should be construed in terms of universals, individuals or particulars, tropes, simple substances, dispositions, or something else entirely; and there are related debates regarding the ontological status of such entities, their causal efficacy, their relations to so-called states of affairs, and the correct logic of such things.[12] I will not attempt to add anything substantive to these issues. But it would probably be a mistake to interpret what proponents of PIT mean by "state" and "property" as referring to abstract entities or universals of some sort, since phenomenal states and phenomenal properties are supposed to have a phenomenal mode of presentation

6, but the reader should be aware that it is this issue that I take to be objectionable and is at the core of how we should interpret the inseparatism thesis.

[12] For an overview of debates about properties and related views, see e.g., Orilia & Paolini Paoletti (2020).

or a felt *what-it-is-likeness*. And it is not clear how abstract (i.e., non-particular) things could be phenomenally conscious in the way required by PIT.

Second, philosophers often implicitly or explicitly assume that every or most meaningful predicates must pick out a property of some suitable form.[13] So, if the sentence "the apple on the table is red" is true, then there exists various properties (e.g., the property of *being an apple*, *being on the table*, *being red*), which *make* the sentence true or in some sense *ground* its truth. And if we take the sentence "Alex is having déjà vu" to be true, we might be tempted to attribute to Alex a phenomenal state/property with a "déjà vu-ish" phenomenal mode of presentation or phenomenal character. Given this way of thinking about properties, we can interpret the claim that phenomenal mental states instantiate phenomenal mental properties as a result of the assumption that properties just are entities that are predicated of something or some subject like Alex.

Third, proponents of PIT often take the term "conscious state" to be synonymous with "conscious experience", which suggests that such states or experiences have an important internal structure with other states/properties as constituents. On this interpretation of what is meant by a phenomenally conscious mental state that instantiates certain phenomenal properties, the relevant conscious mental state can be understood as a complex state or a complex property, rather than a simple, unanalyzable state/property. So, to say that Alex is undergoing an experience déjà vu would be construed as meaning that Alex is in an internally structured conscious state that instantiates various phenomenal properties. Some philosophers take phenomenal conscious states and phenomenal

[13] Heil (2003) p. 6 calls the view that for "every meaningful predicate there corresponds a property" the *Picture Theory of Representation* and argue that though this theory has been highly influential it gives rise to numerous intractable philosophical problems and, therefore, should be rejected.

properties to be basically the same thing; others argue that there is an important difference between phenomenal consciousness, phenomenal states, and phenomenal character. For example, Dretske (1996), Pautz (2010), Bourget (2010), and Tye (2015) defend a relational account of phenomenal consciousness, whereby phenomenal properties are understood not as phenomenal states with a phenomenal character but as relations to distinct things with phenomenal character.[14] Still, one might think that the real issue here is how to understand what is meant by the contents of conscious states or conscious experiences. For instance, some proponents of PIT construe intentional contents to be the instantiations of phenomenal properties not the phenomenal properties themselves. Of course, there are various positions in logical space available to proponents of PIT. So it might be tempting to think that such questions are simply unimportant.[15] But what I want to focus on and what will become clear as we continue is that treating conscious states and conscious experiences as essentially the same thing is not theoretically harmless.

One reason to think that it is a mistake to treat conscious states and conscious experiences as the same thing is because there is an important difference between mere consciousness and what philosophers call "phenomenal consciousness". This is because the former might be understood as a kind of complex state or property of a subject, but it is not immediately obvious that the same is true of the latter. It is widely accepted that the term "consciousness" is ineffable and cannot be defined in a non-circular way.[16] Hence, philosophers like Nagel give an ostensive definition of "consciousness" by describing it in terms of *something-it-is-like* for a subject to undergo some experience. But this ostensive

[14] For a discussion of these points, see e.g., Mendelovici (2018), p. 84 footnote 1.
[15] For a discussion of this point, see e.g., Mendelovici (2018), p. 233.
[16] See e.g., Block (2002).

definition refers to a state or property of the subject not a feature of the experience the subject undergoes. As Nagel (1974) puts this point: "an organism has conscious mental states if an only if there is something it is *like* to be that organism—something it is like *for* that organism" (p. 436; emphasis in the original). The idea, then, is that we can understand what is meant by "consciousness" simply by introspecting our own occurrent and ongoing subjective experience and notice that we are in a particular conscious mental state.

But what about the term "phenomenal consciousness"? One suggestion is that the term "consciousness" is semantically primitive.[17] Whereas "phenomenal consciousness" refers to a conscious experience that a subject undergoes not a state or property of a subject. To put this point differently, phenomenal consciousness is the occurrence of a first-personal experience that has an essentially subjective point of view that subjects enjoy when they undergo conscious experiences. Indeed, Pitt (2004) argues that the concept of consciousness and the concept of phenomenality are importantly distinct, since "unconscious phenomenal states and non-phenomenal conscious states are conceivable" (p. 3). If this is correct, then it would be false to claim that a subject's conscious states/properties just are phenomenal states/properties. So, phenomenal consciousness differs from mere consciousness in the following way: It enlarges the primitive, ostensive notion that there is *something-it-is-like* to be conscious, such that if a subject is phenomenally conscious, then the subject enjoys a certain dynamic, first-personal perspective.[18] This way of understanding the term is also hopelessly circular, which only

[17] See e.g., Pitt (2004), p. 3, footnote 4.

[18] A relatively neutral way of putting this point, which at least some philosophers are likely to accept, is to say that phenomenal consciousness just is whatever gives rise to the hard problem. Sometimes all we mean by consciousness is the ordinary "folk" way of thinking about consciousness, whereby we simply distinguish between being conscious versus being unconscious. However, it is not at all clear that this ordinary use of the term "conscious" will give rise to the hard problem of consciousness. So, it is not obvious that when

contributes to the widely held view that the term "phenomenal consciousness" must be defined in an ostensive way.[19]

The need to distinguish between mere consciousness and phenomenal consciousness is not insignificant for how we are to understand what proponents of PIT mean by inseparatism, since it is the latter not the former that they claim is metaphysically intertwined with intentionality. But this does not mean that proponents of PIT are committed to the view that there are "raw feels" or qualia construed in terms of non-intentional conscious states/properties; it only means that inseparatism should be understood as asserting that there is a metaphysically significant relationship between phenomenal consciousness and intentionality, not mere consciousness and intentionality. Of course, this will probably be taken as a relatively contentious claim. So, to get a better grip on why proponents of PIT focus on phenomenal consciousness as opposed to mere consciousness, let us consider a basic motivation of the view.[20]

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ordinary people talk about consciousness they are referring to the same thing that philosophers have in mind when they use "phenomenal consciousness" as a technical term to mean whatever it is that gives rise to the hard problem. There are further complications involved here too. For instance, some philosophers think that all consciousness must be conscious *of* something. See e.g., Rosenthal (1986). And there are related debates about how to understand what is meant by phenomenal consciousness like Rosenthal's (1986) higher-order-theories of thought; Block's (2002) view of access-consciousness; and more recently one interesting approach to phenomenal consciousness that I find compelling and theoretically plausible is the global workspace theory of consciousness. See e.g., Baars (2017).

[19] Admittedly, what I have said here regarding phenomenal consciousness is only an initial gloss. But for ease of exposition, I shall ignore many complications that cannot be fully addressed here.

[20] While there are various motivations for PIT, some stand out as particularly important. For example, some proponents of PIT are motivated by the apparent failure of several views in the philosophy of mind to account for both phenomenal consciousness and intentionality. Many proponents PIT take missing qualia arguments like Jackson's (1982, 1986) modal argument and Chalmers's (1996) zombie argument to show that functionalism is not a fully general theory of what the mind is. And given that functionalism fails in this respect, some proponents of PIT turn to conscious experience as their starting point rather than a functional analysis of the relevant mental phenomena. And more recently, some philosophers have argued that tracking theories of intentionality, which aim at explaining intentionality in terms of a natural relation that holds between a subject and her environment, are empirically inadequate and should be rejected. See e.g., Mendelovici & Bourget (2014, 2020); and Mendelovici (2018) chapters 3 & 4.

In response to various problems with reductive, physicalist analysis of the mind, some philosophers turned away from such threadbare puzzles in the philosophy of mind like questions about physicalism and mind-body metaphysics and focused on the subjective nature of conscious experience itself. See e.g., Pitt (forthcoming). And a fair number of them returned to a specifically phenomenological approach, which takes conscious experience to be the central feature in our understanding of the nature of intentionality.[21] But interestingly proponents of PIT who looked to philosophers like Brentano, Husserl, and James for inspiration have largely ignored the theoretical importance of the temporal structure of conscious experience.[22] This is curious, given that, arguably, many if not most phenomenologists take the temporal structure of conscious experience to play a fundamental role in theorizing about intentionality.[23] So, if proponents of PIT wish to remain true to what phenomenologists say about conscious experience and intentionality, they should not unreflectively prevaricate the importance of temporal structure of conscious experience. To get a better grip on the importance of this motivation for PIT, let us turn our attention to what I will call "analytic phenomenology".

3. Why Analytic Phenomenology Matters.

The goal of this section is to introduce and explain what analytic phenomenology is and why it matters for PIT. Let us begin by thinking about what phenomenology is.

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[21] For some examples of philosophers who adopt a phenomenological account of intentionality, see e.g., Crane (1998, 2017); Dainton (2017); Kriegel (2017, 2018); and Montague (2017).

[22] It is not entirely correct to say that proponents of PIT tend to ignore the temporality of phenomenology, since some acknowledge that there is a temporal and dynamic dimension built into conscious experience. As Horgan & Tienson (2002) state: "Experience is not of instants; experiences is temporally thick" and cite van Gelder (1999) as one who has explored the temporal thickness of experience; see note 9.

[23] For discussion of this point, see e.g., van Gelder (1999), pp. 246-250. See also, Fréchette (2017).

One common way to understand what is meant by "phenomenology" is to construe it as a philosophical study of the way things "seem" or "appear" in subjective experience, broadly construed to include a variety of mental phenomena like sensations, sensory and perceptual modalities, cognition, emotion, memory, imagination, and so on. Phenomenology was developed as a philosophical discipline by philosophers like Brentano, Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, and William James, just to name a few.[24] Then, in the late 20th century, some philosophers working in the analytic tradition, inspired by the work of philosophers like Brentano and Husserl, attempted to repurpose the notion of phenomenology in order to demonstrate why by investigating subjective experience itself, it can be shown that there is a kind of intentionality that is determined by phenomenal consciousness alone.[25] However, proponents of this sort of view are still working in the domain of the analytic tradition in the philosophy of mind, insofar as they utilize the tools and methods of analytic philosophy. So, they are a part of what I shall call "analytic phenomenology".

One way to appreciate what is meant by analytic phenomenology, then, is to construe it as a kind of philosophical method that treats our first-personal subjective experience as data or evidence to be integrated into our theory of mind.[26] On this approach, introspective evidence is not something to be explained but a basic datum of our total empirical evidence.[27] Thus, we need not explain the nature of phenomenal consciousness by giving a reductive physical explanation of it or by way of a non-reductive, physicalist explanation, whereby phenomenal properties supervene on the physical brain states of a

[24] For an overview of the phenomenology tradition in philosophy, see e.g., Smith (2018).
[25] See e.g., Horgan & Tienson (2002); Loar (2003); Pitt (2004).
[26] For a discussion of this point, see e.g. Goff (2017), chapter 10, p. 271.
[27] But see e.g., Schwitzgebel (2008) for contemporary reasons to be skeptical of introspection.

subject. Instead, we can remain theoretically neutral about the physical nature of the mind because, according to the analytic phenomenology approach, we take our introspective evidence via subjective experience as our theoretical starting point rather than a phenomenon whose ontological status needs to be explained.[28]

Some have described this sort of view as a consciousness-first approach in analytic philosophy of mind.[29] But since, as we have already seen, we need to distinguish between mere consciousness and phenomenal consciousness, analytic phenomenology is better described as a kind of phenomenology-first approach. It utilizes the tools and methods of analytic philosophy, but it can also be understood as a kind of method that is applied to the subject matter of conscious experience itself. And rather than focusing on well-established and routine questions about the metaphysics of consciousness, we do phenomenology from an analytic standpoint, with analytic motivations and values guiding our investigation of conscious experience itself.[30] Let us define the term "analytic phenomenology" as follows:

> *Analytic Phenomenology*: The subject of inquiry is conscious experiences as we actually have them, which encompasses the total experienced scene. And the inquiry uses the standards of analytic philosophy—that is, we do phenomenology from an analytic standpoint and with analytic values guiding our investigation of the whole consciously experienced scene.[31]

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[28] Someone may object by claiming that it is not implausible that the correct account of first-personal experience does not require appealing to phenomenal consciousness. While I agree that this is an important question worth pursuing, my primary goal here is test PIT using the assumptions and methods endorsed by proponents of the theory. So, for our current purposes, I shall ignore this theoretical possibility.

[29] See e.g., Pautz (2013).

[30] Pitt (forthcoming).

[31] This formulation of analytic phenomenology is partly based on Pitt (forthcoming). It should be distinguished from the definition offered by Goff (2017), which says: "Start with common sense, empirical data, and carefully considered intuitions concerning the nature of phenomenal consciousness, *and* move on by appeal to theoretical virtue" (p. 271; emphasis in the original). The two definitions are related and compatible, since one might think that Goff's definition is a kind of restricted version of the definition stated above.

Given this way of understanding what analytic phenomenology is, let us consider why it matters.

It is important to recognize that a crucial reason why proponents of PIT reject separatism is because when we consider a subject's total experienced scene, we can notice that there are intentional properties already phenomenologically present.[32] For example, when discussing an experience of seeing a red pen on a table, Horgan & Tienson (2002) claim that we need to consider such experiences "as we actually have them" (p. 521). And it is by paying attention to the entire experienced scene that we can come to recognize that such experiences include much more than alleged non-intentional, phenomenal properties or qualia. Indeed, Horgan & Tienson (2002) claim that one of the intentional features we can introspectively notice is the spatial character of the total experienced scene. Here is how Horgan & Tienson (2002) describe this point:

> You might see, say, a red pen on a nearby table, and a chair with red arms and black behind the table. There is certainly something that the red that you see is like to you. But the red that you see is seen, first, as a property of objects. These objects are seen as located in space relative to your center of visual awareness. And they are *experienced as part of a complete three-dimensional scene*—not just a pen with a table and chair, but a pen, table, and chair in a room with a floor, walls, ceiling, and windows. This spatial character is built into the phenomenology of experience (p. 521; my emphasis added).[33]

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[32] For instance, Siewert (1998), p. 221 argue that a subject's phenomenally conscious experiences are accessible for accuracy, which implies that some form of intentionality is already built into such phenomenal states. And Searle (1991,1992) argues that intentionality has a kind of aspectual shape or mode of being represented, and then argues that this feature of intentionality must be grounded in phenomenal consciousness. Similar arguments have been defended by Graham et al. (2007) and Horgan & Graham (2012), which appeal to content determinacy to show that built into a subject's phenomenal conscious experiences are intentional contents.

[33] Someone might object by arguing that we never directly experience space or spatial properties. Rather, what we directly experience are spatial relations. In response, let me make two points: First, proponents of PIT typically use phenomenological examples like this in support of the claim that intentionality is built into our phenomenology. Second, since my aim here is not to defend PIT but to understand what it says in order to test the view using the assumptions and methods endorsed by proponents of the theory, even if it is ultimately true that this is a substantive objection to PIT, for our current purposes, the objection can be ignored.

And Mendelovici argues for a similar claim—that is, there are some phenomenal intentional mental states, which implies that some phenomenally conscious states are inseparable from intentional mental states. Here is what Mendelovici (2018) says:

> Perception presents us with a multimodal structured represented scene consisting of the representation of visual, auditory, tactile, and other contents, accompanied by a rich and complex assortment of matching phenomenal characters. For instance, a visual experience of a ripe tomato involves a rich representation of the shape and size of the tomato, its color, texture, and illumination, its location relative to the perceiver, etc. This content matches the experience's phenomenal character, which involves phenomenal characters relating to shape, size, color, texture, illumination, and location. More generally, we might expect that the contents of paradigm cases of intentionality in perception will match their phenomenal characters, making it possible for PIT to accommodate them (p. 89).

Mendelovici then argues that PIT succeeds at explaining the sorts of cases described here exactly where competitor theories fail. And if this is correct, then we have good grounds to accept PIT at least in paradigmatic cases involving a subject's *entire consciously experienced scene*.[34]

But Horgan & Tienson claim that we can also introspectively notice that conscious experience is represented as being "temporally thick".[35] To take one example, in a paradigmatic cases where one undergoes an experience of seeing someone take a bite of an apple, they state:

> Experience is not of instances; experience is temporally thick. This is obvious in the case of hearing tunes or sentences, where the temporal *pattern* is a palpable feature of the experience. The temporal pattern is also a palpable feature of the seen moving apple, though less frequently noted as such (p. 521; emphasis in the original).

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[34] Someone might wonder whether this is to capture a subject's entire conscious mental life at some particular moment or something else. I take Mendelovici's (2018) p. 89 claim that perceptual experience is a "multimodal structured represented scene" to be a better description of what is meant by entire consciously experienced scene.

[35] For discussion of this point, see Horgan & Tienson (2002), p. 521.

This points to the importance of inquiring into conscious experiences as we actually have them, since this is key to understanding why intentionality is built into conscious experience. It is not simply the fact that proponents of PIT are motivated by the desire to take seriously conscious experiences that explains why analytic phenomenology matters. It is the need to take seriously one's *entire consciously experienced scene* that shows why analytic phenomenology matters.

Indeed, when it is understood in this way, analytic phenomenology can be seen as a far more radical departure from conventional approaches to consciousness and intentionality than has been typically recognized in the literature. It tells us to use the tools and values widely recognized by analytic philosophers to investigate conscious experiences from the first-personal, subjective point of view.[36] But this investigation of conscious experience is not simply another attempt at a suitably impersonal, disinterested, and objective ontological point of view. Such an approach would lack the first-personal, subjective point of view essential for analytic phenomenology and the inseparatism thesis defended by proponents of PIT. Rather, analytic phenomenology calls for a novel approach to the relationship between phenomenal consciousness and intentionality, one that takes a first-personal metaphysical approach to our understanding of conscious experience. And it is precisely this methodological difference between an objective metaphysical approach and a first-personal metaphysical approach to conscious experience that proponents of PIT have failed to recognize. So, the need to take seriously the first-personal, subjective point of view generates the need to take seriously the temporal structure of conscious experience, since the temporal unfolding of an experienced scene is a palpable feature of experiences

[36] See e.g., Farkas (2008).

as we actually have them. However, as we shall see in the following sections, the problem is that is that it is not immediately clear how we can explain one's entire multimodal experienced scene in terms of conscious mental state and properties.

4. The Temporal Shape of Conscious Experience.

In this section, I will articulate and elaborate upon a key feature of conscious experiences as we actually have them in paradigmatic cases—that is, the temporal shape of our phenomenology.

Sometimes philosophers talk as though a phenomenal conscious state just is an experience of some form or an event that occurs.[37] This approach builds into the relevant state the needed temporal structure of conscious experience. This may not seem problematic, if we assume that in reality, there is no deep, metaphysical difference between states and events, insofar as reference to states and reference to events are taken to be interchangeable.[38] Or, perhaps, these philosophers take it to be merely a verbal matter about whether one prefers state-talk or event-talk, rather than a substantive ontological question.[39] But it is not clear whether this assumption will allow us to adequately capture the temporal structure of a total experienced scene. For instance, when we consider a case of reading a sentence, the total experienced scene is something that occurs over time. So, phenomenologically speaking, it is more like an event that occurs or happens to someone

[37] For instance, Block (2002), p. 228 explicitly says that "phenomenal consciousness is experience; what makes a state phenomenally conscious is that there is something 'it is like' to be in that state".

[38] This seems to be the motivation behind Chudnoff's (2015) claim that "nothing will hinge on the difference between mental states and mental events, so I will not treat them separately".

[39] This would help to explain why some philosophers treat experiences as states rather than events. As when Mendelovivi (2018) p. 84 says: "A (phenomenally) conscious state, or, simply, a (phenomenal) experience, is a mental state that includes, but may not be exhausted by, the instantiation of phenomenal properties".

than a state or property of someone, which persists wholly present at all moments that it exists. Likewise, the phenomenology of one's total experienced scene of watching someone take a bite of an apple looks like a first-personal, subjective event that one undergoes and unfolds throughout some temporal duration, not a mental state that does not unfold over time. In the same way that reading a sentence is something that occurs over time, watching someone take a bite of an apple is an occurrence or something that happens and has a certain kind of temporal structure.

My claim is this: The arguments in support of inespraratism depended on a focused scrutiny of conscious experiences as we actually have them, understood in terms of one's entire, multimodal experienced scene. Consequently, it would be a mistake to unreflectively assume that there is no substantive difference between mental states and first-personal mental events that unfold throughout some duration of time.[40] If this is right, then proponents of PIT must either show how mental states and properties can capture the temporality involved in one's total experienced scene, or forsake the assumption that there is no deep, metaphysical difference between states and events. And to simply assume that there is no deep, metaphysical difference between events and states leaves PIT vulnerable to substantive objections. What is needed, then, is to consider whether there are principled reasons to think that there is a metaphysically significant difference between events and states.

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[40] Someone might agree that this is a legitimate mistake but remain skeptical of the claim that proponents of PIT are prone to make this mistake. But it seems to me that the failure to account for the metaphysical distinction between properties/states and events is widespread in contemporary philosophy of mind. While the examples are too numerous to catalogue, here are some examples. For cases where one implicitly ignores the distinction, see e.g., Kriegel (2004), p. 108; for cases where one explicitly ignore the distinction, see e.g., Horgan & Woodward (1985), p. 198; and Chudnoff (2015), p. 84. It is also quite common for philosophers to use a disjunctive expression (e.g., "event or state"), and thereby ignore the importance of the distinction. See e.g., Farkas (2008), p. 90; Bayne & Montague (2011), p. 11; and Tye (1995), p. 92.

To get a better grip on this distinction, I want to introduce some jargon that will help to facilitate our discussion. Let us define the notion of "temporal shape" as follows:

> *Temporal Shape*: X has a temporal shape *iff* the following conditions are satisfied: (i) X is dynamic; and (ii) X fills or occupies some arbitrary duration of time by being composed of temporal parts or stages.[41]

Notice that this is not an *a priori* definition of temporal shape; I am not merely stipulating that all conscious experiences are essentially dynamic, changing, and have temporal parts. Rather, my claim is that conscious experiences that creatures like us (humans) typically undergo have a temporal structure, which I call experience's "temporal shape". Indeed, I take this to be a part of our introspective evidence—that is, in paradigmatic examples, when we pay attention to what is introspectively going on in our conscious mental life, we can notice that built into our phenomenology is temporal shape. Let me attempt to explain these points in a bit more detail.

To my mind, if something is essentially dynamic, then it is constantly changing, active, and is inherently progressing in a temporal direction. One way to think about whether some "thing", X, has a temporal shape is to inquiry whether X essentially involves change or inherently involves some sort of unfolding through time. If it does and it also fills the relevant duration of time by being composed of temporal parts, then it has a temporal shape. If not, then it would lack a temporal shape.[42] So, when we consider things like states and properties, which can persist wholly present at every moment and are not

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[41] See e.g., Steward (1997), pp. 72-74.

[42] Someone object by arguing that this view simply rejects endurantism by fiat. This may be a reasonable objection if what we are talking about is the correct objective metaphysical account of reality but the objection loses its force if we restrict the notion of temporal shape to "mental" events or our first-personal, subjective or phenomenological way things seem or appear. On this way of understanding mental events, this account of temporal shape is consistent with an endurantist view of the objective reality. This point will be further discussed in Section 6.

composed of temporal parts, then we should say that they lack a temporal shape.[43] But events do essentially involve change and fill some arbitrary duration of time by being composed of temporal parts or stages.[44] Thus, events would have a temporal shape.

Of course, we can always describe our phenomenology of change in an object in terms of states and properties, if we construe the object as losing and gaining different states or properties. For instance, if you were to paint a red house blue, the object (house) loses the property of being colored red and gains a different property of being colored blue. But it does not make sense to say that the property being colored red itself changes to the property being colored blue. Rather, one state or property of the object is replaced by a different state or property of the object.[45] But the relevant states and properties would not themselves undergo a change. And, presumably, the change that occurs must be the result of an event composed of temporal parts and obtains over some duration of time. So, if you were to paint a red house blue, your act of painting the house would be an event that occurs and fills or occupies an interval of time such that the temporal parts that compose this event obtain at times.[46] Thus, the *occurrence* of losing and gaining some states or properties would have a temporal shape, whereas the states and properties involved would not.

What about the second condition in our definition of temporal shape? What does it mean to say that X fills or occupies some arbitrary duration of time by being composed of temporal parts or stages? Here is what Steward (1997) says about this condition:

> It is often observed that in merely giving the temporal dimensions of an existent thing—in specifying the beginning and end-points of its existence—one does not thereby determine its temporal character. For vastly more important than these

[43] See e.g., Mellor (1981), p. 104.
[44] For a discussion of this point, see e.g., Crane (2013), pp. 167-168.
[45] For a discussion of this point, see e.g., Crane (2013), p. 167.
[46] For a helpful presentation of some of the complications involved with these issues, see e.g., Hawley (2001).

> temporal reference points, in determining the ontological category of any item, is the *way* in which that item fills the relevant period of time—whether it *persists through* the time, or *occurs* during the time, or *obtains throughout* the time, etc. Continuants, for example, persist *though* time and exist, as wholes, at every moment of their existence, whereas events occur *at* times or *during* periods of time, and are unlike continuants in having temporal parts. The differences which are indicated by these contrasting verbs and prepositions I call difference of temporal shape (1997, p.73; emphasis in the original).

The key point that Steward discusses in this passage is the idea that different things can fill or occupy durations of time in different ways—that is, the mode of filling some stretch of time is importantly different.[47] To help illustrate this point, consider the following example: Imagine a case where you fill a transparent glass with water and hold it up to the sunlight, which shines through the glass. Arguably, the water and the sunlight fill or occupy the glass in very different ways. The rays of sunlight you see are photon particles, which are the metaphysical sorts of things that can travel through the glass. But water is not a subatomic particle like the sunlight; it is composed of the chemical elements hydrogen and oxygen, which are not the metaphysical sorts of things that pass through solid objects like the glass. Since photon particles and chemical elements like hydrogen and oxygen are metaphysically different, there is a difference between the way that they fill or occupy the transparent glass. Similarly, we can say that different metaphysical things will fill or occupy some arbitrary stretch of time in different ways.

[47] It is worth mentioning that Steward is inferring from linguistic facts about the way certain kinds of verbs and prepositional forms work substantive metaphysical claims about the nature of states/properties and events; namely that events have a temporal shape and states/properties do not. Someone might object by arguing that we cannot automatically infer how things are from the way that language works. While this may be a contentious philosophical move on the part of Steward, when we restrict the claim being inferred to the way that things phenomenally seem or appear to a subject, it will arguably be less contentions. This is one reason why it is important to recognize that the sorts of events at play in this discussion are mental or phenomenal events understood in terms of our first-personal, subjective point of view.

To make sense of the second condition in our definition of temporal shape, consider the following intuitive options: One might think that X is wholly present at every moment from the beginning to the end point of some stretch or duration of time. But one might also think that X is not wholly present during such temporal expanse but is instead composed of temporal parts or stages. Presumably, what one says in this regard will be determined by what sort of metaphysical thing they believe X is—that is, what ontological kind X is categorized as being. One might think that X can persist through time but is not composed of temporal parts. One might also think that X can occur or obtain throughout some duration of time by having temporal parts or stages, unlike those things that can persist existing wholly present at every moment throughout some stretch of time. My claim, then, is that if one thinks that X can persist through time wholly present at every moment, then X is best understood as a state or property.[48] And if one thinks that X essentially involves change and is composed of temporal parts, such that it unfolds over time, then one probably thinks that X is an event, not a state or property.

This is not to say that states/properties have a different temporal shape from events; what I am claiming is that events have a temporal shape, whereas states/properties lack a temporal shape. If this is correct, then it would be false to claim that an event is either identical to or composed of properties instantiated or exemplified at a time (which is arguably the dominate view), since it is hard to see how that which has a temporal shape could be identical to or composed of that which lacks a temporal shape. As Steward (1997) claims: "the composition relation can only intelligibly relate items which have the same

[48] Of course, this is not meant to rule out the possibility that the relevant continuant is a substance or universal. But given that my aim here is to understand what PIT says and how to approach the view if our goal was to test the theory using the assumptions and methods endorsed by proponents of the theory, I have chosen to ignore these possibilities.

temporal shape" (p. 73). But since states/properties lack a temporal shape they cannot compose to make events, which have a temporal shape.[49] But it is important to recognize that even if this point is interpreted as a mere terminological dispute, it is still counts as a significant conceptual disagreement, since it involves substantive issues regarding the soundness of the conceptual scheme we use to understand the relevant phenomena.[50] When we conceptualize states/properties as having a temporal shape, this is not a good conceptualization of the relevant phenomena for the reasons I offered above. So, when we conceptualize that which has a temporal shape as being identical to or composed of that which lacks a temporal shape, this is not a good conceptual scheme either because it entails a contradiction or the composition relation becomes unintelligible. Thus, it would be a mistake to claim that an event just is the instantiation of certain properties instantiated by some state at a particular time.

However, someone might object by arguing that there are obvious cases of states/properties that satisfy the two conditions of temporal shape described above. For instance, it may be thought that the property of an electric current being such and such hertz (i.e., the frequency of the waveform of the current) is both dynamic and can fill a duration of time. While it is not obvious to me what it means to say that a state/property is essentially dynamic, insofar as it inherently changes in some temporal direction as required by the first condition, let us ignore this point and focus on the second condition.

It is important to notice that this condition does not claim that states/properties cannot fill a temporal duration, it says that the way or manner in which the relevant thing

[49]This is not an insignificant point given that someone will likely object by arguing that events are really just property exemplifications at times. See e.g., Kim (1976).

[50] This point will be discussed in further detail in Section 6.

fills the duration of time is what matters when attempting to determine whether that thing has a temporal shape. If the thing fills the temporal duration by being composed of temporal parts, this suggests that it has a temporal shape. But if the thing fills the relevant duration of time by persisting wholly present at every moment, this suggests that the thing lacks a temporal shape. To see why this point matters, consider a common sixty hertz household current: There are several things to pay attention to here that would indicate why the relevant thing in example does not have a temporal shape. First, the notion of a hertz is a unit of measurement. So, we need to distinguish between the measurement and what is being measured. It is the latter that matters for the example. Second, given that one hertz measures one cycle of electrical current per second, a common sixty hertz household current would be sixty cycles of electrical current per second. But what the hertz is measuring in this example is something that occurs or happens over a temporal duration, though it would be a rather short-lived temporal duration. So, it does fills the relevant duration of time. The question we need to ask, then, is in what way does sixty cycles of electrical current fill the relevant duration of time?

To my mind, it would be correct to claim that the electrical current persists wholly present at every moment and false to claim that it is composed of temporal parts. But if this is correct, then the example of being a particular hertz would not satisfy both conditions of what it means to have a temporal shape, though it would be natural to think of this as an example of a state/property. Of course, someone may insist that a sixty hertz household current can fill the relevant duration of time by being composed of temporal parts. But I would argue that this simply confuses or conflates events with states/properties. Thus, it

is not implausible to construe states and properties as lacking a temporal shape, since they do not satisfy both of the conditions discussed above.

Someone will probably object at this point by claiming that it is not difficult to conceive of a case where there is *something-it-is-like* to experience some X but that this experience is utterly changeless at all times in which it exists. Take for example, where X is a static speck of blue in an otherwise completely empty world. Presumably, your phenomenology of this speck of blue would be utterly changeless, since the world is empty and changeless—that is, we are imagining that the speck of blue seems to persist through time, wholly present and unchanged. But notice that, even in a situation like this where the speck of blue appears unchanged, your phenomenology would not be changeless because there would still be the unfolding of moments in time passing from one moment to the next. Arguably, you would still have an experience of before and after; your phenomenology would still include a kind of temporal direction or flowing from the past, through the present, and into the future.[51] So, even in cases where one imagines some constant, unchanged color, phenomenologically speaking, there is still a diachronic and dynamic element built into such a case, insofar as your conscious experience unfolds or evolves throughout time.

But someone might find this example unconvincing, since it could be argued that appealing to difference between foreground and background might be sufficient to indicate that there could be an element of change involved. So, let us consider different case: Suppose that your visual field is entirely covered by a single shade of blue with no alteration in hue, saturations, and brightness. In such a case, your entire visual

[51] See e.g., van Gelder (1998); O'Shaughnessy (2000); Glicksohn (2001); Nes (2011); and McKenna (2021).

phenomenology would be static and unchanging. Even in this case, there would still be *something-it-is-like* for you to experience this static shade of blue from one moment to the next—that is, built into your phenomenology is a kind of temporal structure or temporal ordering. While the shade of blue may not itself change, your experiences would still be continuously renewed. For instance, O'Shaughnessy argues conscious experiences live in the domain of changing events. O'Shaughnessy (2000) states:

> Yet even when experience is not changing in type or content, it still changes in another respect: it is constantly renewed, a new sector of itself is there and then taking place. This is because experiences are events…or processes…each momentary new element of any given experience is a further happening or occurrence (by contrast with (say) the steady continuation through time of one's knowing that 9 and 5 make 14). Thus, even if I am staring fixedly at some unchanging material object, such staring is not merely a continuous existent across time, it is an activity and therefore also a process, and thus occurrently renewed in each instant in which it continues to exist. In short, the domain of experience is essentially a domain of occurrences, or processes and events (pp. 42-43).[52]

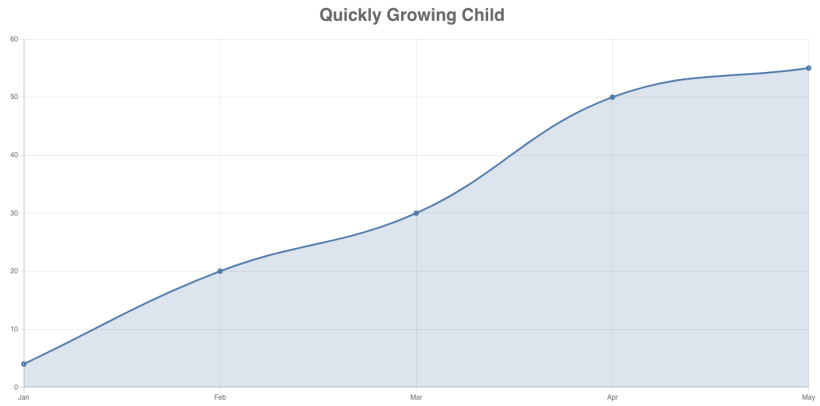
If this is plausible, then it should count as an example of an event that has temporal shape, since it essentially dynamic (it involves change) and is composed of temporal parts.

Similarly, we can imagine a situation where a mad scientist decides to crystalize everything on the Earth, from the most minute molecule to the most complex ecosystem, for a thousand-years. While it would be true to say that nothing on the Earth would change, this would still count as an event that unfolds over time (a thousand years) and essentially

[52] Notice that O'Shaughnessy (2000) claims that such experiences are essentially events. One might object on grounds that it is not obviously true that events are essential dynamic or changing as this passage may suggest. So it would probably be too strong to claim that all experiences are essentially dynamic. My claim is that conscious experiences that creatures like us (i.e., humans) typically undergo have a temporal structure, and I am calling this temporal structure its "temporal shape". I am not claiming that all conscious experiences necessarily have temporal shape.

involves change.[53] In effect, this case is like the previous one, except we are considering a crystalized world with countless changeless objects in it instead of an empty world that contains only a single changeless object. The general point is the same in both cases: From the first-personal, subjective point of view, both cases would count as events because they have a temporal shape.

But consider a different sort of case of a quickly growing child: Suppose that a mad scientist wants to instigate pandemonium for the parents of a five-year-old child by causing the child to quickly grow enormously tall, say, over fifty feet, throughout the course of roughly four months, from January 1st to May 1st. Let us stipulate that on the January 1st the child is a normal four feet tall, but then, all of a sudden and to the disbelief of the parents, the child grows to an astounding twenty feet tall. Let us also say that the child continues to grow such that, on February 1st the child is thirty feet tall, by March 1st the child has grown to be a staggering fifty feet tall, and finally on May 1st the child has leveled off at fifty-five feet tall. Here is a visualization of the case:



[53] Notice that this case does not stipulate that there is not change. It stipulates that for a thousand years nothing on Earth is frozen such that nothing on Earth changes for this temporal period of time. Clearly this cases would still involve change, since it occurs over a thousand years.

The curve of the line represents the growth of the child from January to May. And given that this graph is supposed to represent the change that occurs in the height of the child over the course of four months, we can say that the curve of the line (and the shading underneath) represents the temporal shape of the occurrence of the child growing. Someone might object by arguing that "growing" should be construed as a property rather than an event or that, if "growing" refers to an event, then this event just is a complex or higher-order property. But this would be a mistake; it would be like saying that the occurrence of a child kicking a ball is really a property of the child. A more intuitive way to think of a child kicking a ball is to construe it as an event that occurs and the child undergoes, not as a property of the child. Likewise, we should construe a child growing over several months as an event that occurs or happens, which the child undergoes, not a property of the child.

Of course, we can describe this case in terms of the losing and gaining of states/properties, such that the child has the property of being four feet tall on January 1st, but by February 1st the child has lost that property and gained the property of being twenty feet tall, and similarly for March, April, and May. But it would be a mistake to say that the property of being four feet tall itself changes and becomes twenty feet tall. A more intuitive way of describing the case would be to say that the child undergoes an event of growing to the awesome height of fifty-five feet tall.

Alternatively, it is easy to imagine a case where there is no mad scientist attempting to exasperate the parents of the child, such that their height remains wholly present at roughly four feet tall at every moment from January 1st to May 1st. In such a case, there would be no curved line that represents the change in height of the child over the course of

time because being a particular height is a state or property of the child, not an event or episode that the child undergoes. And we can infer from this sort of case that the child's being four feet tall is a state of the child or property that the child instantiates, such that there is no temporal shape associated with that state/property, though it does fills a particular experienced scene. But when these cases are compared, it is not unreasonable to think that the quickly growing child describes an event with temporal shape, while the former does not.[54]

Interestingly, when one pays attention to their own introspective situation and the patterns of certain sorts of phenomenological data, one might inquire whether there can be cases of phenomenology that are changeless or whether what shows up in conscious experience is always represented as being wholly present at all moments in which it exists. Or, one may wonder whether your phenomenology is such that what is present to you introspectively unfolds over time. For instance, when you slowly scan the room turning your visual field from left to right, presumably your phenomenology will involve a slight change in perspective and will occur over some duration of time. Assuming that we are never really fully static or motionless, we can generalize this sort of case to all or most of the introspective situations that one might undergo. And if you are like me, then when you pay attention to your own phenomenology, it should be clear that when you turn your gaze from left to right, what appears is not changeless or wholly present. Indeed, when we pay attention to our own phenomenology, what is represented is an unfolding or diachronic

[54] Of course, this is not to say that the case where the child does not grow quickly is not also an event. Clearly when it happens that the child does not grow at an exaggerated rate this is still an occurrence and, therefore, an event that has a temporal shape. But in a case where the child does not grow, the child's height does not change, which tells us that it is a property that can persist wholly present throughout the months long duration of time.

scene of some sort—that is, one's phenomenology is such that the way it fills some arbitrary stretch of time is by being composed of temporal parts. And proponents of PIT cannot ignore the distinction between events and states, without being vulnerable to the objection that one is equivocating between things that have and things that lack a temporal shape. This indicates is that at the very heart of our phenomenology is temporal shape. And if this is not sufficiently captured by the arguments offered in support of inseparatism, then we will have grounds to conclude that they are unsupported. Let us now turn our attention to some of the key arguments that proponents of PIT offer in support of inseparatism.

5. Arguments for Inseparatism.

The goal of this section is to explain and evaluate some of the key arguments offered in support of inseparatism.[55] To begin, let consider a claim that is often accepted by proponents of PIT. That conscious experiences as we actually have them are essentially subjective. Here is the way that Kriegel (2013a) puts this thesis:

> *Intrinsic Subjectivity*. Necessarily, for any intentional state M, if M is non-derivatively subjective, then M is phenomenally intentional" (p. 11).

Interestingly, some philosophers take conscious experiences to always be *of* something and *for someone*.[56] As Kriegel (2013a) says: "It is built into the phenomenal character of a phenomenal intentional state that it (re)presents what it does *to someone*" (p.

[55] It should be noted that I cannot evaluate every argument that has been offered or the many different versions of these arguments; and I fully admit that one could always modify an argument in order to avoid the sorts of worries that I shall highlight in what follows. However, for our current purposes, it is sufficient to consider some of the main arguments types that have been offered in the literature.

[56] For example, Kriegel (2003) argues that phenomenal intentionality is the only kind of intentionality that counts as essentially subjective. If this is true, then it is of utmost importance for proponents of PIT.

5; emphasis in the original).[57] While there may be dissidents to this approach, arguably a better appreciation of the significance of distinction between events and states is born from the view that conscious experiences are essentially subjective, since it is not obvious how a changeless state/property could have a temporal shape and, thereby be inherently subjective. Of course, someone might reasonably ask: What exactly does it mean to say that conscious experiences are inherently or essentially subjective?

One answer is that conscious experience requires a first-person point of view. And since analytic phenomenology is an inquiry into one's entire, multimodal, experienced scene, not merely an inquiry into some particular X experienced at some particular point in time that has been abstracted away from the experienced scene, it makes sense to think that a subject's conscious experience is a mental event rather than a mental state/property. However, it would be very difficult to see how one could have this sort of essentially subjective, conscious experience if experiences are construed in terms of mental states that instantiate phenomenal properties that lack a temporal shape. So, given that proponents of PIT adopt both analytic phenomenology and the view that phenomenal intentionality is essentially subjective, they should also adopt the view that conscious experience is an event rather than a state/property.

Notice, however, that the above definition of what it means for a conscious experience to be inherently subjective explicitly assumes a mental ontology of mental states, such that there is an essential kind of subjectivity built into conscious mental states.

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[57] Someone might object by arguing that this begs the question against those who deny that phenomenal consciousness requires this sort of essentially subjective or first-personal point of view. But, as I have pointed out previously, since my aim here is to understand what PIT says and how to approach the view if our goal is to test the theory using the assumptions and methods endorsed by proponents of the theory, even if this objection is plausible, for our current purpose it can be ignored.

And according to this view, it is the intrinsic subjectivity of conscious experience that gives rise to phenomenal intentionality. But if mental states/properties lack a temporal shape, as I have argued in the previous section, then it is not clear how any mental states could be intrinsically subjective. Likewise, if the arguments one offers in support of this thesis rely on mental events with a temporal shape, then they will fail to give us reason to accept this thesis of *Intrinsic Subjectivity*, which explicitly targets mental states that lack a temporal shape. Indeed, the arguments that we shall consider below are each vulnerable to this criticism. The basic problem is this: If the argument deploys a mental ontology of mental events that have a temporal shape, then they cannot support a conclusion that deploys a mental ontology of mental states, which lack a temporal shape. This is why the notion of temporal shape and the temporal structure of conscious experiences as we actually have them is so crucial.

There are two basic strategies proponents of PIT have utilized in arguing for inseparatism. The first strategy attempts to show that there is a kind of intentionality built into phenomenology; and the second strategy attempts to show that there is a phenomenology that is properly associated with intentionality (e.g., cognitive phenomenology), and which is irreducible to sensory phenomenology like visual, auditory, or internal speech phenomenology.[58] Let us consider each of these strategies in turn.

Proponents of PIT like Horgan & Tienson (2002) defend the following claim about the alleged intentionality of phenomenology: "Mental States of the sort commonly cited as paradigmatically phenomenal (e.g., sensory-experiential states such as color-experiences, itches, and smells) have intentional content that is inseparable from their phenomenal

[58] See e.g., Horgan & Tienson (2002), p. 520.

character" (p. 520). Here is an argument that Horgan & Tienson (2002) offer in support of the claim:

> …In typical cases of experiencing red, the *overall* phenomenal character of one's visual experience is a structurally rich what-it's-like of *experiencing a visually presented scene*, a scene that contains a whole array of apparent enduring objects with various properties and relations—including the property redness instantiated on the surfaces of some of these objects. The total visual experience with this overall phenomenal character is richly intentional, since it presents a temporally extended scene comprising various objects that instantiate various properties and relations at various spatial locations relative to one's center of visual awareness. This total visual experience is also richly *phenomenal*, because there is an overall what-it's-like of experiencing the whole scene. (Any visually noticeable alternation in the visually presented scene would be a *phenomenal* difference in one's total visual experience.) (p. 521-522; emphasis in the original).

This argument is a paradigmatic example of the sort of argument that one might offer in support of the inseparatism thesis central to PIT. Thus, it should be taken as demonstrating the sort of analytic phenomenological method described above—that is, this is a phenomenological argument that takes seriously one's entire, multimodal, consciously experienced scene.

But in a case where one visually experiences an entire scene of, say, a red apple on a table or someone taking a bite of a red apple, this will crucially involve the first-personal, subjective point of view that we already saw is essential for conscious experience. It is the dynamic and diachronic nature of perceiving that makes it possible to perceive an entire sense as such, and not merely to instantiate non-intentional phenomenal properties or qualia like the raw "feeling" of some shade of red. If this is correct, then it would involve an important temporal duration, which suggests that the conscious experience involved in this case has a temporal shape. So, the conscious experience must be an event or episode, not a token mental state or property that is instantiated by a mental state. But notice that the claim this argument is supposed to support explicitly targets a subject's mental state as

being the sort of things that is phenomenally intentional. I take this to show that, as it currently stands, this argument cannot provide support for the thesis that there is an important kind of intentionality built into one's phenomenology, unless suitable modifications are made to the thesis being defended.

Consider a different sort of phenomenological argument that proponents of PIT sometimes adopt, one that begins with the introspective observation that conscious experiences seem to be such that, from the first-personal point of view, one can recognize both the accuracy conditions of what they perceive and differentiate between the contents of what they perceive.[59] But it is not obvious how this can happen, so the argument goes, unless intentionality is built into one's overall conscious experience. Hence, the best explanation for these introspective observations is simply that intentionality and consciousness are inseparable. Of course, just as we saw with the previous argument, these introspective observations involve temporal shape, insofar as the entire, multimodal, experienced scene essentially involve change.[60] And the way such an experience fills or occupies the relevant duration of time is by being composed of temporal parts. Thus, these sorts of arguments fail to support the claim that *mental states* are phenomenally intentional for the same reason that the previous argument failed. They either equivocate between events and states or they make a category mistake by conflating events and states.

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[59] See e.g., Siewert (1998), p. 221.

[60] It is worth once again calling attention to the fact that, while someone might think a particular feature of the scene, say, a particular shade of red, when abstracted away from the rest of the scene and considered in isolation may not essentially involve change, proponents of PIT are focused on conscious experiences as we actually have them, not particular features abstracted away from the total experienced scene. And arguably, for creatures like us, conscious experiences as we actually have them typically do involve change and have what I have called a temporal shape.

Clearly, the conclusion of the argument presented in the passages above are about mental states. But this is a mistake. Given the phenomenological data—examples—being considered, it makes more sense to construe the relevant conscious experiences as phenomenal mental events, insofar as they have a temporal shape. Indeed, all phenomenological arguments of the sort cited above involve temporal shape.[61] If this is correct, then we have reason to doubt that any such phenomenological arguments can support inseparatism without sufficient modifications.

Perhaps there is a way to modify the central claim being defended. Instead of claiming that mental states are phenomenally intentional, proponents of PIT should amend the thesis to say the following:

> *Modified Intentionality of Phenomenology.* Mental events like sensory-experience (e.g., color-experiences, itches, smells, etc.), have intentional content that is inseparable from their phenomenal character.

According to this modified version of inseparatism, phenomenal consciousness and intentionality are related because they are both built into the mental event that the subject undergoes. This is a kind of mereological account of PIT, whereby the phenomenal and the intentional are taken to be proper parts of a subject's phenomenal mental events.[62] And importantly, this mereological account of PIT does not require that phenomenal consciousness and intentionality are mental states that instantiate phenomenal properties, which opens the door for a view of phenomenal intentionality that can arguably capture the

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[61] There are various arguments that proponents of PIT have offered in support of inseparatism, which I have not explored here. See e.g., Loar (2003); and Horgan & Tienson (2002) offer a duplication argument from internalism about mental content; Searl (1991, 1992) offers an argument from aspectual shape; and Horgan & Graham (2012) offer an argument from content determinacy. But, in each of the cases, the arguments rely on introspective observations of experiences, which are occurrences or mental events that have a temporal shape.

[62] For an example of one who does endorse a mereological account of PIT, see e.g., Dewalque (2013). However, it is important to note that Dewalque does not formulate PIT explicitly in terms of mental events.

temporal structure of conscious experience precisely where other views fail. Indeed, this is the sort of account that proponents of PIT can and should endorse.[63]

What about the claim that there exists an irreducible and *sui generis* form of phenomenology that is properly associated with intentionality? Recall Horgan & Tienson's (2002) formulation of the phenomenology of intentionality thesis, which says:

> Mental states of the sort commonly cited as paradigmatically intentional (e.g., cognitive states such as beliefs, and conative states such as desires), when conscious, have phenomenal character that is inseparable from their intentional content (p. 520).

There are two widely accepted types of arguments that proponents of PIT have offered in support of this thesis. And like the arguments we looked at previously, these arguments will also rely on introspective considerations.

The first type of argument appeals to phenomenal contrast cases. We begin by considering an introspective situation where a shift in intentional content occurs and then consider whether there is also a shift in phenomenology. The basic idea, then, is that if there is a shift in intentional content accompanied by a shift in phenomenology, but no shift in what the subject immediately perceives via sensory phenomenology, then, according to proponents of PIT, the best explanation for this introspective observation is a subject's cognitive phenomenology. For example, some philosophers appeal to cases of understanding or grasping to show that there is *something-it-is-like* when someone

[63] It is worth mentioning that this even if this is understood as a mere termenological difference, it is not an insignificant because the conceptual framework at the core of the claim that phenomenal consciousness is metaphysically inseparable from intentionality is importantly different when the mental ontology is construed in terms of mental events rather than states/properties. So, while I believe that proponents of PIT can and should endorse this modified thesis, this would require embracing different conceptual scheme, which is not insignificant.

understands or grasps the content of a proposition, which is not just more sensory phenomenology.[64] Here is how Horgan & Tienson (2002) describe such a case:

> Imagine two people side by side hearing the same spoken sequences of sounds, with one of them understanding the language and the other one not. At a certain relatively raw sensory level, their auditory experience is phenomenologically the same; the sounds are the same, and in some cases may be experienced in much the same way *qua sounds*. Yet it is obvious introspectively that there is something phenomenologically very different about what it is like for each of them: one person is having an understanding experience with the distinctive phenomenology of understanding the sentences to mean just what it does, and the other is not (p. 523).

These phenomenal contrast cases have been developed and modified in various ways in order to try and avoid objections raised against them.[65] But no matter what modifications they have undergone, arguably, they all continue to rely on the introspective observation that conscious experiences are temporally structured and, therefore, have a temporal shape. So, these arguments cannot establish their conclusion (i.e.., inseparatism), unless they are modified so as to target phenomenal mental events that have a temporal shape instead of mental states/properties that lack a temporal shape. And importantly, this is not an insignificant change to the theory.

A second type of argument that has made a major impact is Pitt's (2004) self-knowledge argument, which cannot be explained without appealing to cognitive phenomenology. This argument is significant because it also aims to show that content is constitutively determined by the phenomenology alone. Here is the argument that Pitt (2004) gives:

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[64] See e.g., Strawson (1994); and Bourget (2015).

[65] See e.g., Strawson (1994); Siegel (2006, 2007, 2010); Kriegel (2015); Chudnoff (2015); Sacchi & Voltolini (2016); Jorba & Vicente (2019).

(1) It is possible Immediately to identify one's occurrent conscious thoughts…one can know by acquaintance *which* thought a particular occurrent conscious thought is; but

(2) It would not be possible Immediately to identify one's conscious thoughts unless each type of conscious thought had a proprietary, distinctive, individuative phenomenology; so

(3) Each type of conscious thought—each state of consciously thinking that *p*, for all thinkable contents *p*—has a proprietary, distinctive, individuative phenomenology.[66]

This is also an abductive argument. Similar to the other arguments that we considered above, we begin by introspectively observing key features of one's total consciously experienced scene. Namely, when we pay attention to our own phenomenology we are able to distinguish our occurrent thoughts from our non-occurrent thoughts. Thus, we can introspectively distinguish an occurrent thought that *p* from an occurrent thought that *q*; and we are able to identify what an occurrent thought is about—its content. According to Pitt, the fact that we can notice these features in our introspective reflection can only be explained by the fact that cognitive phenomenology exists, is irreducible to sensory phenomenology, and the intentional content is in fact constitutively determined by the relevant phenomenology.

[66] Someone might object by claiming that the first premise is highly contentious. But I must insist that the point is not whether the argument is contentious or not. Rather, the point is that this argument (and similar argument model on it) represent one of the key arguments that proponents of PIT have offered in support of the claim that there is an important relationship between conscious experiences and intentionality. Again, the point is not to disprove PIT nor is it to defend it against those who reject inseparatism. Rather, my aim is to understand what PIT says and how to approach the view, if our goal was to test the theory using the assumptions and methods endorsed by proponents of the theory. To that extent, if one were to reject this argument because, perhaps, one might think it is obvious that we can distinguish between, say, something's being water (e.g., a stereotype) and something's being H2O is either a red herring or it completely misses the point.

In response, some philosophers argue that one can have immediate self-knowledge without appealing to phenomenal character. Here is how Levine (2011) describes this objection:

> What makes this Immediate knowledge, in Pitt's sense, is the fact that this sentence tokening is not the result of an inferential process, but rather an immediate causal result of the first-order thought state itself (together with some functionally characterizable internal monitoring process). It's because of the reliability of the relevant process yielding the higher-order sentence expressing the fact that one is thinking a certain content that it counts as knowledge. If this explanation is adequate, then we don't need to appeal to the thought's phenomenal character to explain how we know—Immediately—that we're thinking it (p. 107).

Presumably, Pitt could respond by claiming that Levine's objection presupposes the sort of cognitive phenomenology that the argument is meant to establish. Thus, the objection is avoided. Here is the way that Pitt (2011) describes this sort of response: "…mere occurrence of a mental state can't constitute *conscious* implicit self-knowledge unless the occurrence is itself conscious, and consciousness requires phenomenology" (p. 146). Notice that both Levine's objection and Pitt's response take it for granted that the alleged occurrent, conscious self-knowledge must be a representational state, tokened in the thinker's cognitive architecture in some way, such that it either instantiates a phenomenal property associated with the thinker's thought that *p*, or not.

But if what I have argued is plausible, if one's total consciously experienced scene is not a state/property but an event that subjects undergo, then this sort of objection is easily avoided. The reason why Levine's alternative explanation of Immediate self-knowledge would fail to show that we can have this sort of immediate self-knowledge without phenomenology is because the type of self-knowledge that Pitt has in mind is not a mental

state or phenomenal property but an event or episode that the subject undergoes.[67] Levine assumes that the form of immediate self-knowledge described in the first premise of Pitt's (2004) argument is a mental state. But, as I have argued above, it is not a mental state. The sort of immediate self-knowledge that Pitt claims cannot be explained without appealing to phenomenology is an event or episode that a subject can undergo because it has temporal shape. The representational states that Levine's alternative explanation appeals to lacks temporal shape. Thus, these representational states cannot give rise to the required sort of immediate self-knowledge.

Furthermore, this way of responding to Levine's objection is not available to the proponent of PIT who assumes that there is no deep, metaphysical distinction between events and states/properties or that one's total consciously experienced scene just is a mental state that instantiates phenomenal mental properties—perhaps some experiential properties. Therefore, without making a distinction between events that have a temporal shape and states/properties that lack a temporal shape, at best, Pitt's (2004) argument for cognitive phenomenology generates a stalemate or impasse. I take this to be an unwelcome result for the proponent of PIT, one that should be avoided. Indeed, the arguments considered above can support inseparatism only if one's total consciously experienced scene is understood as having a temporal shape. If this is a plausible way to respond to Levine's (2011) objection to Pitt's (2004) argument for the phenomenology of intentionalitiy, then it should count as an excellent reason for why proponents of PIT must take seriously the temporality involved in conscious experiences as we actually have them. It follows that analytic phenomenology matters a great deal for proponents of PIT. Hence,

[67] Admittedly, Pitt (2004) describe phenomenal consciousness as a mental state rather than a mental event but probably would not reject my characterization of conscious experience in terms of mental events.

proponents of PIT should take seriously our temporal phenomenology—that is, the temporal shape of conscious experience.

6. Objections.

There are various important criticisms that one might raise, which each deserve an adequate reply. Stating and responding to these worries is the goal of this section.

Objection. Someone might think that the force of the arguments I canvased in the previous section is relatively weak, if all that would be required to sure-up the key arguments in support of inseparatism is a small and relatively insignificant modification.[68]

Response. Let me make it very clear that this is a misunderstanding of what I have argued. While the meaning that one assigns to terms like "state", "property", and "event" clearly matters, I have argued that these terms are not interchangeable. It would, therefore, be a mistake to claim that one term can be swapped-out for another without having a substantive theoretical outcome at the core of inseparatism.[69]

Objection. It will probably be objected that what I have argued for here hinges on a mere verbal dispute because the distinction between state/properties and mental events is nothing more than a terminological disagreement—nothing substantive hinges on which terms one prefers.

Response. While I recognize and even feel the pull of this sort of objection, I entirely reject the claim that nothing substantive hinges on the distinction between states/properties and events. It simply is not true that the terms "state", "property", and

[68] Recall that inseparatism claims that there is a significant relationship that holds between phenomenal consciousness and intentionality such that they are metaphysically intertwined. See e.g., Kriegel (2013), p. 5.

[69] Admittedly, much more could and should be said to elaborate on the details of this point.

"event" as I understand them are interchangeable as would be required for this objection to work. To illustrate this point, consider Williamson's (2000) famously debated "anti-luminosity" argument. If it is true that nothing substantive hangs on making a distinction between states/properties and events, then we can expect the anti-luminosity argument to apply equally to both states/properties and events. But this is not the case. As Jenkins (2021) has persuasively argued, Williamson's anti-luminosity argument is far more limited in scope than is often thought, because mental events like episodes of judging and deliberating are the most "plausible candidates for being luminous" (p. 1553). Indeed, Jenkins goes on to make the following point regarding the distinction between states and events:

> …that such events and processes constitute the stream of consciousness makes it plausible that there are luminous events and processes, and thus that there are corresponding luminous conditions. Crucially, this claim has not been undermined, even if it is admitted that Williamson's anti-luminosity argument reveals that there are no luminous states (p. 1553).

If the case that Jenkins makes regarding the scope of Williamson's anti-luminosity argument is plausible, then we have *prima facie*, defeasible evidence in support of the claim that at least in some cases the distinction between states and mental events in fact is a substantive issue. And it is difficult to reconcile how this would be true, if the issue is merely terminological.

Notice that, sometimes when we say that such and such is merely a "terminological" issue, this can make it seem as though nothing significant is at stake. But even if it is granted for the sake of the argument that the matter *is* terminological, it still is not an insignificant matter. And it is in this sense that I want to claim that it is not simply a verbal dispute but more pointedly a conceptual issue—that is, it is not a question about

terms and words but concepts. The soundness of the conceptual scheme that we used to understand the relevant phenomena is not just a matter of terminological preference, it significantly makes a difference for the way that we understand what it means to say that phenomenal consciousness and intentionality are metaphysically inseparable, which is not an insignificant issue. When we conceptualize conscious experiences as we actually have them in terms of states/properties, this is not a good conceptualization, insofar as it is not at all clear how this conceptual scheme can capture the temporality involved in a subject's first-personal, subjective experiences. Thus, the objection from mere-terminological-ness can be avoided.[70]

Objection. Given that most proponents of PIT take phenomenal consciousness to be the instantiation of certain phenomenal properties, which are likewise typically taken to be the effects of activities of certain substances (e.g., a mental state or brain state) at particular times, it may seem difficult to deny the claim that an event just is a state/property of some suitable form. Thus, plausibly, someone could argue that nothing conceptually significant hinges on the distinction between states/properties and events.

Response. While I recognize that the dominant conceptual scheme in philosophy of mind is one that construes events as property instantiations (or exemplifications) at times, I think this view is mistaken for a variety of reasons.[71] But for current purposes, I will only focus on one.

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[70] I want to thank an anonymous referee from helping me think about this response.

[71] For instance, Heil (2003, 2012) rather persuasively argues that the view in question presupposes what he dubs the *Picture Theory of Representation,* and that this assumption takes the relevant states to be higher-order or complex properties. But, arguably, such a view of states/properties generates numerous worries about the causal relationship between mind and body. And given that proponents of PIT are motivated by a desire to fight shy of such worn-out problems regarding the metaphysics of consciousness, it is not unreasonable that they should reject such a view.

The problem is this: It is not immediately obvious that the notion of property instantiation (or exemplification) is not either completely incoherent or is simply accepted by fiat as a kind of brute fact without any need of explanation.[72] And neither of these options are favorable for an adequate account of property instantiation. Arguably, the conceptualization of "*a* instantiates *F*" is doomed because any adequate analysis of *instantiation* or *exemplification* faces what philosophers call "Bradley's Regress".[73] This regress can be stated as follows: "Suppose that the individual *a* has the property *F*. For *a* to instantiate *F* it must be *linked* by a (dyadic) relation of instantiation, I_1. But this requires a further (triadic) relation of instantiation, I_2 that connects I_1, *F* and *a*, and so on without end" (Orilia & Paolini Paoletti, 2020; emphasis in the original).[74]

Now, whether there is a regress here is not controversial; what is controversial is whether the regress is ultimately vicious. Many philosophers claim that it is not.[75] But the challenge for this position is to give a plausible account of the instantiation relation that does not simply take it to be a brute fact. But some philosophers have argued that "Bradley's Regress" is vicious.[76] And if they are right, then inseparatism cannot be coherently construed in terms of mental states that instantiate phenomenal properties. Thus, it is not obvious whether there is a plausible analysis on the offing. But the correct solution to this problem is not the point. The mere fact that there is legitimate dispute regarding the proper way to understand "Bradley's Regress" is sufficient to conclude that a skeptical approach to this issue is plausible; though, admittedly the dominant conceptual

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[72] For a discussion of this point, see e.g., Orilia & Paolini Paoletti (2020).
[73] This regress is attributed to F. H. Bradley (1893).
[74] For further discussion, see e.g., Baxter (2001), p. 449..
[75] See e.g., Russell (1903); Board (1933); Strawson (1959); Bergmann (1960); Armstrong (1997); and Lowe (2006).
[76] See e.g., Bergmann (1960); and Vallicella (2002).

scheme in philosophy of mind is one that construes events as property instantiations (or exemplifications) at times. But to simply assert that some substance *a* has the property *F* without explaining what it means to say that *a* instantiates *F*, begs the question, which suffices to show that the objection can be avoided.

Furthermore, in previous sections, I offered principled reasons to think that things with a temporal shape cannot be composed of or identical to that which lacks a temporal shape. The burden of argument is, therefore, on the objector to rebuff my claim that conscious experiences as we actually have them crucially involve temporal shape.

Recall what the thesis of temporal shape actually says:

> *Temporal Shape*: X has a temporal shape *if and only if* the following conditions are satisfied (i) X is dynamic; and (ii) X fills or occupies some arbitrary duration of time by being composed of temporal parts or stages.[77]

Since the objections stated above and my responses to them largely depend on whether we have grounds to accept this thesis, let us consider how someone might object to it.

Objection. Someone could argue that the first condition is false because it seems one can imagine cases where it is true that there is *something-it-is-like* to have an experience of X and for this experience to be completely unchanging at all times in which it exists. If so, then it is possible for an experience to fail to be essentially dynamic, which would be sufficient to reject the first condition of temporal shape.

Response. Previously I argued that this sort of objection fails to recognize several crucial features of what proponents mean by conscious experience; namely, it is not simply an isolated feature of one's conscious experiences like an apple appearing to have the property of being red or a lone speck of blue in an otherwise empty world that matters.

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[77] See e.g., Steward (1997), pp. 72-74.

Rather, what matters for the inseparatism thesis defended by proponents of PIT is one's total consciously experienced scene. So even if it is true that we can imagine cases where we experience some isolated feature of one conscious experience as being unchanging at every moment, this is not true when we enlarge the target of our investigation to include one's entire, multimodal, consciously experienced scene, which arguably would be essentially dynamic. As I previously argued, one's total consciously experienced scene is essentially dynamic, insofar in the stream of consciousness unfolds into the next and evolves throughout some duration of time. If this is correct, then even if nothing else in the stream of conscious changes, the temporal direction of the experience does. Indeed, it is this phenomenological observation about our conscious experiences as we actually have them that grounds Horgan & Tienson's (2002) claim that "experience is not of instances; experience is temporally thick" (p. 521). If this is true of our conscious experiences as we actually have them, then it is entirely plausible that the temporal structure of such experiences is both a palpable and essential feature of conscious experience.

But let us suppose for the sake of the objection under consideration that there are cases where one's total, multimodal, experienced scene is completely unchanging and, therefore, not essentially dynamic. What would this show? It would not show that the temporal shape thesis is false. It would only show that not all cases of conscious experiences as we actually have them have a temporal shape. But even if this is true, it is still entirely reasonable to claim that the vast majority of our total, multimodal, conscious experiences do have a temporal shape. And these are the cases that matter for proponents of PIT and the inseparatism thesis. At best, what this objection would show is that PIT should be theoretically weakened or restricted to those cases of conscious experience that

in fact do have a temporal shape, which is not an implausible position to take.[78] For these reasons, this objection can be avoided.

Objection. Someone could argue that the second condition of the temporal shape thesis should be rejected because it is either trivial or it begs the question. It might be trivial, insofar as it requires only that X exists at a time; and it might beg the question against endurantisim, since it commits one to some version of perdurantism or what is sometimes called "four-dimensionalism" without argument.

Response. The second condition is not trivial because not everything fills or occupies some arbitrary duration of time by being composed of temporal parts or stages. The condition invites us to explore introspective observations (i.e., data) in order to discover whether what we perceptually experience "seems" or "appears" to be composed of temporal parts or stages. This is not a kind of *a priori* definition of what it means to have a temporal shape. Rather, it is an ostensive definition. It points to features that we can recognize in paradigmatic introspective explorations. Indeed, this condition does not even require that X exists at a time, since it makes no claim about non-subjective reality or what objectively exists apart from what one is confronted with phenomenologically. It only requires that from one's first-personal, subjective point of view, X "seems" or "appears" to fill a duration of time by being composed of temporal parts or stages. And I find it hard to see how this ostensive definition might count as a trivially true.

I grant that the temporal shape thesis might beg the question against endurantism, if it is used to understand events from a purely objective metaphysical perspective, which

[78] For instance, Bourget & Mendelovici (2019) define this sort of weak or restricted form of PIT as follows: "Some intentional states are phenomenal intentional states". Such a view does not deny that there are various non-phenomenal mental states/properties that are entirely independent of intentionality.

attempts to explore the non-subjective, ontological nature of events regarded from an impersonal and disinterested point of view. But, I must insist that when temporal shape is deployed in an attempt to understand the nature and structure of *phenomenal mental* events, from a first-personal, subjective point of view, it is not question-begging. This is because the claim that conscious experience understood from within, in terms of a first-personal metaphysical framework, has a temporal shape, is entirely consistent with the claims offered by endurantists about the nature of objective reality understood from an impersonal, disinterested, and ontologically objective point of view. Thus, this objection is avoided.

Objection. Someone might claim that it is not clear what I mean by "mental events".

Response. While I agree that much more can and should be said regarding what is meant by the term "mental event", it is not clear to me that a full theory of mental events is either possible or warranted. Still there are various things to say that will help to put this worry at bay.

First, let us base the distinction between objective and first-personal metaphysical approaches to the nature and structure of mental events on Loar's (1990) distinction between phenomenal modes of presentation and scientific modes of presentation. And suppose that this enables the resources to then construe a mental event as being both subjectively and objectively real and numerically the same, though they are investigated from what I am describing as distinct points of view.[79] The former is explored from within the domain of introspective and phenomenological observations; the latter is studied from within a non-subjective, objectively ontological perspective in mind.

[79] In this way, I would not object to the label of "realist" about events. See e.g., Davidson (1967, 1970).

Second, we have good reasons to be ontologically committed to mental events from both subjective and non-subjective ontological perspectives. But, arguably, only the latter can *possibly* be adequately explicated—that is, we can give the identity conditions for events understood from a non-subjective ontological point of view, but not from a first-personal, subjective point of view. Thus, I take mental events to be primitive. But this is not to deny that there are no conditions of satisfaction for a subject's first-personal, phenomenal mental events, only that such conditions are to be understood by pointing to the relevant phenomena.[80] Indeed, one may take the conditions of satisfaction for a subject's first-personal, phenomenal mental events to be the very same conditions of satisfaction for phenomenal intentionality. And if this is plausible, then clearly there will still important things to say about what a phenomenal mental event is.

Third, we can appreciate this distinction by considering tangible examples where we can clearly have two importantly distinct perspectives. Here is Paul's (2017) example of Google Maps:

> If you use Google Maps under the "map view" setting, you'll see where you are from above, with your location represented as a blue dot moving along the map. If you switch to the "street view" setting you drop down to street level. Once you are in the street view mode, you see where you are by occupying a perspective you'd have by being on the street at that location. The view from above, using map view, intuitively corresponds to the (abstract) perspective we take when we explore objective ontology. It's an observer's view of the mapworld with a centre (you) (p. 263).

And Paul goes on to claim that one's first-personal, subjective perspective "corresponds to the view from *within* the centered mapworld" (p. 263; emphasis in the original). I think there is something to this analogy, insofar as it helps us to see how one can shift from one

[80] This is consistent with Mendelovici's ostensive definition of intentionality by point to paradigmatic examples in our introspective observations. See e.g., Mendelovici (2018), p. 6.

point of view to the other, given one's goals and motivations. If one is motivated to explore the world from above, they will use the "map view" setting; if one is motivated to explore the world from within, they will use the "street view" setting.

To my mind, PIT as being primarily motivated by a "street view" setting, which is just to say by a kind of first-personal, subjective approach to conscious experience. But to claim that conscious experiences must be understood in terms of phenomenal properties instantiated by phenomenal mental states of some suitable form is to assume a kind of "map view" setting or a non-subjective ontology regarding the way the world objectively is. And, arguably, this runs afoul of one of the key motivations for PIT and, therefore, inseparatism. While I fully admit that much more work needs to be done by way of cashing out the details what a phenomenal mental event is, for our current purposes, I take this as an invitation for further investigation, not an objection.

7. Conclusion.

To conclude: I offered *prima facie*, defeasible evidence for the claim that proponents of PIT need to take seriously the temporal structure of one's total, multimodal, consciously experienced scene, if the arguments offered in support of inseparatism are to be accepted. But even if one is still skeptical, the paper should be treated as a call for proponents of PIT to begin rethinking about phenomenal intentionality in order to make sense of the temporal structure of conscious experience, the relation between states/properties and events, and the implications the answers to these questions might have for PIT.

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CHAPTER TWO

The Imaginative Presence Paradox

1. Introduction.

The Phenomenal Intentionality Theory (PIT) is a consciousness-first approach to intentionality.[1] Rather than explaining consciousness in terms of intentional mental states, the order of explanation is reversed; intentionality is explained in terms of phenomenal consciousness. According to PIT, all intentional mental states are either identical to phenomenal intentional mental states or they are grounded in phenomenal intentional mental states.[2] All proponents of PIT believe that there is an important relationship between intentionality and consciousness.[3] They disagree about the extent of phenomenal intentionality—that is, proponents of PIT disagree about the nature of the relationship between intentionality and consciousness.[4]

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[1] See e.g., Pautz (2013).

[2] For an introduction and general overview of the Phenomenal Intentionality Theory (PIT), see e.g., Kriegel (2013). For some examples of those who accept PIT, see e.g., Bourget (2010, 2015, 2020); Chudnoff (2013, 2015a); Farkas (2008, 2013); Horgan (2011, 2013); Horgan & Tienson (2002); Kriegel (2007, 2011a, 2011b, 2013); Loar (2003); Mendelovici (2013); Mendelovici & Bourget (2019, 2020); Pautz (2008, 2013); Pitt (2004); Siewart (1998); Smithies (2013a, 2013b, 2019); Strawson (1994, 2004); and Woodward (2016, 2019).

[3] See e.g., Pautz (2008), and Mendelovici & Bourget (2020).

[4] For a discussion of asymmetrical-grounding views of the relationship, see e.g., Kriegel (2013) p. 6. For an example of an identity view of the relationship, see e.g., Mendelovici (2018). For an example of a mereological approach to the relationship, see e.g., Dewalque (2013). It is worth noting that what one says about the nature of the relationship between intentionality and consciousness will likely have implications

This disagreement generates a tension in the literature on PIT regarding the extent of phenomenal intentionality and perceptual experience.[5] On the one hand, some proponents of PIT take a conservative or austere view of the relationship between the phenomenal and the intentional, such that what is phenomenally perceived is restricted to what is immediately perceived.[6] But some proponents of PIT take a more liberal approach, and argue that our phenomenology is much richer than what can be captured by what is immediately perceived.[7] According to this liberal approach, there might be a phenomenology of cognition, a phenomenology of agency, a phenomenology of moral properties and other kinds of higher-order properties, just to suggest a few ways that some have treated the extent of PIT. The goal of this paper is to exploit this tension in the literature to show why standard versions of PIT are empirically inadequate.

Here is the plan for the paper: I begin by discussing cases of what Kind (2018b) calls "imaginative presence" (Section 2). I use these cases of imaginative presence to argue that proponents of PIT face a triad of independently plausible but jointly inconsistent propositions; I call this problem the "Imaginative Presence Paradox" (Section 3). Then I consider various explanatory strategies that proponents of PIT might adopt to explain (or explain away) cases of imaginative presence, and argue that each face serious problems

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for what is said about the nature and epistemic significance of cognitive phenomenology. For a discussion of this issue, see e.g., Bayne & Montague (2011), and Smithies (2013a, 2013b, 2019). For examples and discussion of conservative views of the nature and significance of cognitive phenomenology, see e.g., Levine (2011); Prinz (2011); Farkas (2013); Mendelovici (2018); Pautz (2013); Woodward (2016, 2019). For examples of more liberal view of cognitive phenomenology, see e.g., Chudnoff (2013); Horgan (2011); Kriegel (2015); Pitt (2004); Siewart (1998); Strawson (2004); and Siegel (2005, 2006).

[5] For discussion of this issue, see e.g., Kriegel (2013), p. 6.

[6] See e.g., Farkas (2013); Mendelovici (2018); Pautz (2013); and Woodward (2016, 2019).

[7] See e.g., Chudnoff (2013); Horgan (2011); Horgan & Tienson (2002); Kriegel (2015); Pitt (2004, 2011, 2013); Siewart (1998, 2013); and Strawson (2004).

(Sections 4). Then, prior to concluding, I sketch an alternative solution that proponents of PIT can adopt (Sections 9).

2. Imaginative Experience.

The goal of this section is to introduce what Kind (2018b) calls cases of "Imaginative Presence" and explain why they present a *prima facie* challenge for proponents of PIT. To get a better sense of the problem, consider the following situation:

> ***Piano***: Suppose that Sam needs to move a piano into a small apartment. Sam scans the largest room in the apartment and the arrangement of objects in it. Sam then imagines an alternative arrangement of the objects and judges that, if the couch and table were moved over there, then the piano should be able to fit where the couch and table are.[8]

In this case, there is arguably *something-it-is-like* for Sam to undergo the experience of imagining some alternative arrangement of the furniture.[9] And what Sam imagines (i.e., the content) is intentional, since Sam's imaginative experience is *about* or *directed* at a possible way that the world might be.[10] So, the present but hidden content in a case like *Piano* should count as phenomenal intentional content.[11] Of course, there are details involved regarding how to understand what exactly is meant by "imaginative experience", which a full theory of this phenomena must explain but I shall largely ignore.[12] And it is

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[8] This case is adapted from (Kind, 2013).

[9] For a discussion of the claim that there is a qualitative feeling or phenomenology that is properly associated with imagination, see e.g., O'Dea, (2018).

[10] I am assuming a widely accepted way of understanding intentionality as a kind of aboutness or directedness of human thought and perception.

[11] Someone might object to the term "hidden". There are two points worth mentioning in response. First, the term "hidden" is used by philosophers like Noë, A. (2004) and Kind (2018) in discussing the problem of perceptual presence. So, in order to remain consistent with their terminology, I have adopted the use of this term. Second, the term refers to content that is present (a part of) one's perceptual experience but is not immediately perceived.

[12] It should be noted that imagination is heterogeneous. Philosophers use this term to explain many different mental phenomena, but there probably is no single thing that is fundamental for all cases of imagination. For

worth mentioning here that, for Kind (2018b, 2020), we can think of imaginative experience as a kind of "image" generated by our imaginative capacities. As Kind (2018b) states: "Working in tandem with our perceptual capacities, our imaginative capacities contribute to our perceptual experience by making unseen features of objects seem present" (p. 176). But for our current purpose, let me say that a quasi-visual approach to imaginative experience is not incoherent, though we may lack the words or concepts needed to capture the similarities and differences between visual and imaginative phenomenology.[13]

Likewise, let me state at the outset that it is not implausible that some kinds of imaginative experiences are objectual rather than propositional.[14] For instance, one can imagine *that* "Donald Trump lost the 2016 Presidential election" (propositional); but one might also imagine the person Donald Trump himself, in a non-propositional way (objectual).[15] Similarly, when Sam undergoes an imaginative experience involving the presence of an alternative arrangement of the furniture in the room, this sort of imaginative experience can be construed either as a case of *propositional* imaginative experience or *objectual* imaginative experience. While I am not automatically ruling out the possibility

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our current purpose, I shall simply endorse Kind's (2020) general approach to imaginative experience. For instance, Kind (2020) claims that philosophers interested in imaginative experience typically endorse two claims: "(1) the experiential character of imagining is importantly similar to that of perceiving; (2) despite this similarity, the experiential character of imagining is nonetheless importantly different from perceiving" (p.125). Kind then goes on to argue for a kind of pessimistic conclusion about our ability to make very precise such a distinction: "While we are very good at recognizing the difference between different kind of phenomenal experiences, we are much less good at capturing this difference in a meaningful way" (p. 139)."

[13] For a discussion of this sort of pessimism about our ability to adequately explain the difference between visual and imaginative phenomenology, see e.g., Kind (2020).

[14] When Sam undergoes an imaginative experience involving the presence of an alternative arrangement of the furniture in the room, this is not some species of visual perception *per se*. But there are important phenomenological similarities between imagination and visual perception. Let us say that the kind of imaginative experience involved in *Piano* can be, under the right conditions, a form of quasi-visual perceptual experience, since it is reasonable to think that imagination and vision are importantly related. For further discussion of this point, see e.g., Kind (2018b), p. 174.

[15] For a discussion of this distinction see e.g., Kind (2018b), p. 174.

that *Piano* should be construed as propositional rather than objectual, for our current purposes, it is the latter will take center stage.

But cases like *Piano* involve two other important features: First, the imaginative content can outstrip the content of what is immediately perceived by Sam. Second, this case involves a kind of temporally structured phenomenology, such that the content is represented as unfolding or evolving throughout some duration of time.[16] It is important for proponents of PIT to be able to explain (or explain away) both of these features for the following reasons. On the one hand, by paying attention to the *total conscious experience*, we can introspectively notice that the total experienced scene is both richly phenomenal and richly intentional, such that for any alteration of the perceptually presented scene will count as both a *phenomenal* and *intentional* difference in the total perceptual scene.[17] So, in a case like *Piano*, proponents of PIT must take into account the total perceived scene, including the present but hidden intentional content that seems to outstrip what is immediately perceived.[18]

For instance, since we are thinking about the total perceptual scene that Sam is experiencing, Sam's visual perception of *the current arrangement of the furniture in the*

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[16] This is importantly different from one's merely being consciously aware of time. Being conscious of time or a temporal moment is to be aware of some property of one's experience. One's temporal phenomenology involves content being represented as unfolding throughout some duration of time. Thus, this sort of phenomenology is temporally extended and represented as such. For a discussion of this distinction, see e.g., van Gelder (1999).

[17] See e.g., Horgan & Tienson (2002), pp. 521-522.

[18] Some proponents of PIT who hold an identity version of the relationship between consciousness and intentionality may object to this claim, since it could be argued that it is trivially true that any alteration of the perceptually presented scene will count as both a phenomenal and intentional difference in the total perceptual scene. But this does not impinge on my claim, since, even if it is a trivial claim, it is not generally accepted as such. Indeed, Pitt (2004), p. 3 responds to a similar sort of object along these lines.

room must be include the content <an alternative arrangement of the furniture>.[19] But arguably, proponents of PIT should also hold that there is an important kind of temporal structure involved in one's total conscious experience, such that the total perceptual scene does not consist of mere instances. Rather, conscious experience is represented as being temporally thick.[20] Let me explain how this sort of temporal phenomenology applies in a case like *Piano*.

Arguably, the imagination involved when Sam imagines an alternative arrangement of the furniture is a kind of mental simulation or model of a possible way that the world *might* be.[21] And if this is plausible, then, in a case like *Piano*, Sam undergoes a temporally structured phenomenal simulation of imaginatively seeming to see *how* one would need to move the couch and table to allow the piano to fit in the room. So, Sam's imaginative experience would be epistemically significant, insofar as it is a simulation or model of the way the world might be.[22] As McGinn (2004) claims: "imagination is the *means* by which we acquire modal knowledge, it functions to supply *reasons* for modal belief" (p. 138; emphasis in the original).[23]

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[19] I am following Mendelovici's (2018) using of brackets to specify the imaginative content in this case <content>. And I shall use quotations to specify propositional "content". Of course, someone might be unhappy with this choice to symbolize the relevant mental content, because the former may appear less determinate. In response, let me simply state that the brackets are at least partly intended to indicate that the relevant content is somewhat less determinate than in the case of propositional content. But this does not imply that it is not mental content or that it should be construed as propositional content instead.

[20] See e.g., Horgan & Tienson (2002), p. 521.

[21] It is important that the modality involved in Piano is a part of the relevant imaginative content. For a discussion of the epistemic dimensions of imagination, see e.g., Kind (2013, 2016, 2018a).

[22] For a discussion of the epistemic significance of imagination, see e.g., the articles collected in Kind & Kung (2016).

[23] For further discussion of this sort of view of imaginative experience, see e.g., Kind (2018a).

Now some have thought that imaginative experience (or *what* is imagined) does not play any epistemically significant role in our cognitive lives.[24] But for Kind (2013, 2016, 2018a), such accounts are unwarranted because they fail to recognize imaginative experience as a kind of model or simulation.[25] Indeed, Kind argues that there are numerous cases where imaginative experiences play a modal-epistemic role in justifying beliefs. For instance, Kind (2016) states:

> Many of these epistemically significant imaginings are perfectly ordinary ones. When trying to decide whether to become parents, a young couple might call upon their imagination in various ways to help them make their decisions—from imagining themselves grappling with exhaustion from a sleepless night with a crying baby to imagining themselves proudly watching a teenager graduate from high school (p. 145).

While my aim here is not to defend Kind's view of imaginative experience, it does seem reasonable to think that, if Kind is right in claiming that imaginative experience is a kind of model or simulation, then we have some reason to think it is modal-epistemically significant. Indeed, if we have reason to think that scientific models and simulations are epistemically significant in this way, then to reject Kind's approach, one would have to (i) show that imaginative experience is not a kind of model or simulation, or (ii) show why imaginative experiences construed as a kind of model or simulation are importantly different from scientific models and simulations.[26] It is for this reason that *what* Sam imagines should count as intentional content. If this is correct, then at least in some cases

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[24] See e.g., Sartre (1948); O'Shaughnessy (2000); and Paul (2014).

[25] Kind (2018a) persuasively argues, imagination can take the form of a model or mental simulation, which is able to provide justificatory power (p. 237). Kind discusses cases of great thinkers like Nikola Tesla and Temple Grandin who were remarkably good at imaginative simulations. For further discussion, see e.g., Kind (2018a), pp. 232-235.

[26] For arguments that imaginative experiences can be understood as a kind of scientific modal or simulation, see e.g., Kind (2013, 2016, 2018a).

of imaginative content (e.g., the content in cases like *Piano*), can be understood as an important source of modal-epistemic justification.

But, it is also important to recognize that a crucial part of what makes the imaginative content in a case like *Piano* epistemically significant is the temporal phenomenology involved in such a case. To put this point differently, *Piano* is epistemically significant at least partly as a result of the temporal phenomenology that is partly constituted by the imaginative content <an alternative arrangement of the furniture>.[27] Furthermore, the temporal phenomenology characteristic of a case like *Piano* has an important kind of temporal shape or way that the content is represented as unfolding throughout some duration of time.[28] Indeed, the phenomenology of temporal unfolding is essential to what this content "says" because it is constitutively determined by the way it unfolds throughout the relevant duration of time.

If the kind of imagination involved in *Piano* is modal-epistemic, then the present but apparently hidden content <an alternative arrangement of the furniture> should count as intentional content, insofar as it either generates or contributes to the justification of modal knowledge. And given that there is *something-it-is-like* for Sam to undergo an episode of this form, then the relevant content is both richly intentional and richly phenomenal.[29] Thus, the relevant content is phenomenal intentional content. So, proponents of PIT need to provide an adequate account of the alleged phenomenal

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[27] It is important to note that I am not claiming that the temporally phenomenology involved in cases like *Piano* are not significant for perceptual experience in general. Quite the opposite is, I think; our temporal phenomenology is crucial for perceptual experiences in general. I have chosen to focus on cases of imaginative experience because the importance of temporal phenomenology is particularly clear, insofar as such cases are like models or simulations.

[28] See, e.g., Steward (1997), p. 73

[29] For discussion of this sort of argument, see Horgan & Tienson (2002), pp. 521-522.

intentional content in a case like *Piano*, which can adequately capture the temporal phenomenology involved the case. Call this the "Temporal Shape Desideratum":

> *Temporal Shape Desideratum*: If an account or explanation E of some first-personal, subjective experience fails to adequately account for the temporal shape characteristic of a subject's *total consciously experienced scene*, then E should be rejected.[30]

By introducing this desideratum and focusing on cases of imaginative presence as our primary example, we are now in a position to consider an argument against PIT. As I will show:

(1) If PIT is true, then Sam's visual perception of *the current arrangement of the furniture in the room* never has the intentional content <an alternative arrangement of the furniture>.

(2) But in a case of imaginative perception, Sam's visual perception of *the current arrangement of the furniture in the room* can have the intentional content <an alternative arrangement of the furniture>.

(3) Therefore, PIT is false.[31]

What this argument says is that PIT falsely predicts that we never have conscious experiences of imaginatively experiencing intentional content that is present but not immediately perceived. If this is correct, then PIT is empirically inadequate and probably false.[32] Let us now turn our attention to why one should accept this argument.

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[30] The term "temporal shape" is a term of art, which following Steward (1997), I use to make clear the distinction between events and states. I define "temporal shape" as follows: Let us define the notion of "temporal shape" as follows: X has a temporal shape, *if and only if* ,the following conditions are satisfied (i) X is dynamic; and (ii) X fills or occupies some arbitrary duration of time by being composed of temporal parts or stages.

[31] This argument is modeled on Mendelovici's (2018), p. 43 argument from omission against tracking theories.

[32] Woodward (2019) offers an argument along similar lines, which appeals to imaginative experience.

3. The Imaginative Presence Paradox for the Phenomenal Intentionality Theory.

The goal of this section is to use cases of imaginative presence to introduce a paradox generated by the view that intentional content is determined by phenomenal consciousness. This will provide support for the argument above.

Let "IC" stand for "intentional content", "PC" stand for "phenomenal consciousness", and "IP" stand for "immediate perception". Consider the following claims:

(a) IC is determined by PC.
(b) PC is exhausted by IP.
(c) IC can outstrip IP.[33]

Proponents of PIT are in a sense, definitionally committed to (a); it is just a part of what is meant by "phenomenal intentionality" that intentionality is determined by phenomenal consciousness. For instance, a widely accepted way of understanding the central thesis of PIT is originally offered by Horgan and Tienson (2002): "There is a kind of intentionality, pervasive in human mental life, that is constitutively determined by phenomenology alone" (p. 520). And this way of stating the central thesis of PIT comes very close to simply restating (a). As Kriegel (2007) says: "conscious states have an intentional content which they carry purely in virtue of their phenomenal character", and these states have "intentional properties that are instantiated in virtue of, indeed are constituted by, their phenomenal properties" (p. 320). And one relatively uncontroversial way of stating the central thesis of PIT is: "original" intentional content is either identical to or partly grounded in phenomenal consciousness. But putting the thesis in terms of an "in virtue of" relation that holds between phenomenal consciousness and intentional content suggests

[33] I want to thank Imogen Dickie for helping me think about the best way to formulate this problem.

that there is a metaphysical entailment between them. If this is what we mean by "determined by", then we cannot simply reject (a) without also rejecting PIT. Thus, proponents of PIT must accept (a).

Proponents of PIT think that consciousness and intentionality are inseparable.[34] But this does not mean that they are conceptually inseparable, only that there is a metaphysical dependence relation between consciousness and intentionality. According to PIT, if some mental state M is to count as intentional, then M must arise from, be realized by, emerge in virtue of, or be grounded in phenomenal consciousness alone.[35] Thus, there is an entailment relationship that holds between the phenomenal and the intentional.

However, phenomenal intentionality theorists disagree about the nature of this entailment relationship. For some, the relationship is an asymmetrical dependence that holds between intentional content and conscious experience, such that intentional content is dependent on the phenomenal feeling of conscious experience. There are also symmetrical ways that proponents of PIT might understand this entailment relationship, which claims that it is an identity relation that holds between the phenomenal and the intentional. For instance, Mendelovici (2018) defends an identity version of PIT, which holds that all genuinely intentional states arise from phenomenally conscious states because

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[34] For a discussion of this point, see e.g., Horgan & Tienson (2002), p. 520. However, it is worth mentioning some proponents of PIT might think that there can be cases where consciousness and intentionality can come apart. There are three ways that one might treat such cases. According to the first way, proponents of moderate versions of PIT could argue that in cases of non-phenomenal intentionality, the relevant intentional mental goings-on get their intentionality derivatively from the relevant phenomenal mental goings-on. According to the second way, proponents of weak or restricted versions of PIT could argue that there are genuine cases of non-phenomenal intentionality that get their intentionality in some other way, but not derivatively. So, not all genuine intentionality is either identical to or partly grounded in phenomenal consciousness. According to the third way, proponents of a strong or unrestricted form of PIT might argue that cases of alleged non-phenomenal intentionality do not count as genuine forms of intentionality. For discussion of these issues, see e.g., Bourget & Mendelovici (2019).

[35] For a discussion of the various way of understanding the entailment relation, see e.g., Kriegel (2013).

they are identical.[36] But what all of these views have in common is that there can be no change in a subject's intentional states without a corresponding change in their phenomenal states. Thus, to say that intentional content is determined by phenomenal consciousness is to say that the sameness of phenomenal consciousness entails the sameness of intentional content. And since this restates the central thesis of PIT, it follows that proponents of PIT are antecedently committed to (a).

Given that (a) describes an entailment that holds between PC and IC, we can interpret the term "determined by" as meaning "entails". Similarly, we can interpret "exhausted by" and "outstrip" as meaning "entails" and "does not entail" respectively. We can, therefore, introduce a modified inconsistent triad as follows:

(d) Sameness of PC entails sameness of IC.
(e) Sameness of IP entails sameness of PC.
(f) Sameness of IP does not entail sameness of IC.

This is an inconsistent triad for proponents of PIT, insofar as they are committed to (d). Of course, one could reject (d) by adopting a weaker, restricted version of PIT, which claims that some but not all intentional states are constitutively determined by phenomenally conscious mental states. But this would amount to a weakening of PIT, such that not all genuine instances of intentionality are either identical to or grounded in phenomenology alone. This restricted version of PIT may be able to avoid the conclusion that PIT is false, but only at the cost of abandoning the view that PIT is a fully general theory of what intentionality is. For this reason, in what follows, I will not explore this solution to the above inconsistent triad.

[36] For a discussion of this point, see e.g., Mendelovici (2018), p. 83.

Someone might object by arguing that the entailment claims involved in here are vague. Thus, it is important to make clear what exactly it is that proponents are committed to in claiming that the sameness of PC *of what* entails sameness of IC *of what*. Consider the following examples. Suppose you are looking at a blue coffee cup sitting on a desk. One way to think about the claim that sameness of PC entails sameness of IC is to consider our introspective evidence. When we introspectively notice the blueness of the coffee cup we do not notice two distinct mental features. Rather, we introspectively notice only one mental feature or mental content. Put differently, we do not notice a blue-ish intentional content and also a blue-ish phenomenal character. If this is right, then we have reason to think that there is some sort of a metaphysically significant relationship that holds between phenomenal consciousness and intentional content. Thus, (d) says that the sameness of PC *of the blue coffee cup* entails sameness of IC *of the blue coffee cup*.

Now, depending on how one understands what is meant by perception, they might also be committed to (e). And since, by hypothetical syllogism, (d) and (e) entails the negation of (f), advocates of PIT must either accept (e) and show why (f) is false or demonstrate why we should reject (e). Let us explore some reasons one might accept these claims, beginning with (e).

If the proponent of PIT holds a sparse or austere view of phenomenal consciousness, then this could motivate why they might accept (e). On this approach, when I visually see, say, a coffee cup on my desk, what is presented to me is the immediate perception of the facing side of the cup and the top of my desk—that is, I am not immediately presented with the hidden parts of the cup and desk. Presumably, if the hidden or absent content is to count as genuinely intentional, it must get its intentionality by

deriving it from a different phenomenal intentional state that *is* immediately perceived. Otherwise, one would be forced to deny that PC is exhausted by IP. Therefore, the proponent of PIT might hold that sameness of what is immediately perceived entails the sameness of phenomenal consciousness.[37]

For instance, Woodward (2016, 2019) holds an austere view of phenomenal consciousness, which claims that the unseen contents one becomes aware of are simply the "offline redeployment of perceptual-represented resources" (p. 144). For Woodward (2016), "conscious cognition involves the deployment of phenomenal modes of presentation that are closely related to, and derived from, those deployed in conscious perception" (p. 144). This sort of account suggests that the sameness of IP entails the sameness of PC. Likewise, Mendelovici holds a similar sparse view of "original" phenomenal intentional content. As Mendelovici (2018) says: "thoughts have fairly impoverished phenomenal characters, which are responsible for the contents we are immediately aware of in having thoughts but not for many of the contents we intuitively want to ascribe to them" (p. 101). Mendelovici goes on to illustrate this point by discussing Siegel's (2005) example of representing a pine tree *as a pine tree*. Mendelovici (2018) says:

> …suppose that when a subject sees a pine tree *as a pine tree*, she has a visual experience that, in some sense, represents not only particular shapes and colors but also the property of being a pine tree or the kind *pine tree*. Here is how my account accommodates this case: The perceptual state has a particular immediate content, C, which is phenomenally represented. C might consist in a particular configuration of shapes and colors or even a gisty pine-tree-ish content. The subject is also disposed to have various cashing out thoughts to the effect that C cashes out into <an evergreen coniferous tree with needle-shaped leaves>, or simply <kind of tree that experts call "pine">. Such cashing out thoughts together

[37] For examples of proponents of PIT who hold an austere view of phenomenal consciousness, see e.g., Farkas (2013); Pautz (2013); Woodward (2016, 2019), and Mendelovici (2018).

> specify a content, C+, that might be thought of as our subject's best characterization or understanding of a pine tree (p. 155).

This example of representing higher-order properties (e.g., representing a pine tree *as a pine tree*), supports the claim that intentional content can outstrip what is immediately perceived by a subject. But Mendelovici's treatment of this case suggests that the intentional content cannot outstrip what is immediately perceived by the subject—that is, the content C+ cannot outstrip the content C.

Depending on one's view of the extent and richness of phenomenology, one may either accept or reject (e). But if one accepts (d) and (e), then it follows that they must reject (f). This is problematic for proponents of PIT, insofar as we have phenomenological grounds to accept (f). And if this is correct, then one would need to explain why we should reject (e).[38]

But why might we think that proponents of PIT should accept (f)? We have already seen how, phenomenologically speaking, in cases like *Piano,* the intentional content outstrips what is immediately perceived. But there are numerous other similar sorts of cases that suggest proponents of PIT should accept (f). Consider the following case: Right now I am sitting at the desk in my office looking at different objects in my environment—there is a coffee cup, a laptop, books on a bookshelf, and so on. But when I look at, say, my laptop, I do not visually see this object in its entirety; at least I do not see the whole laptop all at once. All that is immediately available to me in my visual field of the laptop in a single moment is its façade.[39] Of course, I can turn the laptop so as to see its backside,

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[38] Recall that the inconsistent triad states: (d) Sameness of PC entails sameness of IC; (e) Sameness of IP entails sameness of PC; and (f) Sameness of IP does not entail sameness of IC.

[39] This sort of example can be found in the work of Husserl and the notion of "horizon"; see e.g., Husserl (2014).

and I can get up and look at the other various hidden objects in my environment, but to do this takes time. So, while my immediate perception of these objects does not include hidden contents like the backside of the laptop, arguably the total perceptual scene will include these contents, insofar as it has a kind of temporal shape or structure.[40]

There are also numerous cases of illusions, such as the illusory lineation involved in the Kanisza triangle illusion, which suggest there is hidden intentional contents that are a part of the overall perceptual experience but outstrip what is immediately perceived. Or there are cases that involve looking at a coin from a variety of different perspectives as you turn it. Arguably, your phenomenology of the coin changes as the angle in which you see the coin changes. It appears round when you are looking at its front. It seems flat when you are looking at it from the side. And at different points the coin appears to take on a quasi-elliptical shape depending on the degree in which your vantage point covaries with coin position in relation to you. Of course, the coin itself does not actually change its shape, but your phenomenology of it would tell you otherwise. Arguably, these sorts of cases are ubiquitous in our phenomenally conscious experiences, and this fact seems to call out for some sort of explanation.

Another reason why proponents of PIT should accept (f) is because to reject (f) would require an error theory about one's phenomenology, such that we would be systematically wrong about most of the things that we commonly take ourselves to be aware of in conscious experience. Indeed, according to Noë (2004), it is simply a basic datum or fact about our perceptual experiences that they include intentional contents that outstrip what is immediately perceived. So, to reject this alleged fact about our

[40] For instance, Walsh (2017) claims that we can show that intentional content is grounded in phenomenal character of perceptual experience by focusing on the temporal nature of subjective experience.

phenomenology would require quite compelling reasons. While an error theory about our phenomenology may not be in principle impossible, it is probably not the most plausible solution. As Noë (2004) asks: "How can it seem to us as if the world is present to us visually in all its detail without its seeming to us as if we *see* all that detail?" (p. 60; emphasis in the original). To answer this question by claiming that we are simply wrong about our own phenomenology is less plausible than the claim that intentional content can outstrip what is immediately perceived. So, we have at least some intuitive reason to think that the sameness of what is immediately perceived does not entail the sameness of intentional content.

To my mind, the phenomenological examples considered above provide *prima facie*, defeasible evidence in support of (f), which shifts the burden of argument to those who reject (f) to give an adequate explanation of such cases. If this is correct, then at least some proponents of PIT will likely accept (f). The question, then, is whether one should accept (e) and reject (f) or accept (f) and reject (e). Thus, proponents of PIT must be able to give an adequate explanation of cases like *Piano*, where the hidden, imaginative content outstrips what is immediately perceived in one's total perceptual experience. And this means that two things must be established in order to avoid the problem that we have been considering. First, the proponent of PIT must give an explanation of cases of imaginative presence like *Piano*, such that one rejects either (e) or (f). Second, they must give an explanation for why the rejected proposition initially seemed plausible, even though it is false. Let us now turn our attention to how proponents of PIT might attempt to explain (or explain away) cases of imaginative presence.

4. Explanatory Strategies.

The goal of this section is to consider various explanatory strategies that proponents of PIT might deploy in order to show that either (1) or (2) in the argument above are false; and this will involve showing why we should reject either (e) or (f).[41] Let us begin by considering Noë's (2004) enactive approach to perceptual experience, which rejects (e).

4.1 *Enactivism*: In the literature, there are a fair number of examples that suggest it is phenomenologically obvious that intentional content can outstrip what is immediately perceived.[42] it might seem as though the only plausible option available to proponents of PIT is to deny the claim that phenomenal consciousness is exhausted by what is immediately perceived. But, as we shall see momentarily, this approach is not available to proponents of PIT.

Consider, for example, Noë's (2004) view that we can use a theory of enactive perception in order to explain the relevant intentional content in cases like *Piano*. On this view, the perceiving subject must have some form of implicit "know-how" understood in terms of the possession of sensorimotor knowledge. Thus, a subject's perception of an object like a tomato involves an expectation of their bodily movements relative to the tomato. As Noë (2004) explains:

> Our perceptual sense of the tomato's wholeness—of its volume and backside, and so forth—consists in our implicit understanding (our expectation) that movements of our body to the left or right, say, will bring further bits of the tomato into view. Our relation to the unseen bits of the tomato is mediated by patterns of sensorimotor contingency (p. 63).

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[41] Recall that these theses say the following: (d) Sameness of PC entails sameness of IC; (e) Sameness of IP entails sameness of PC; (f) Sameness of IP does not entail sameness of IC.

[42] See e.g., Siegel (2006a, 2006b); Bayne & Montague (2011); Chudnoff (2013); Farkas (2013); Masrour (2013); Kriegel (2015); and Walsh (2017).

According to this approach, our lived perceptual experience is not only a matter of our current representations; it also involves the presence of an implicit access to the hidden bits of details in the world, which outstrip what is immediately perceived. If this is correct, then my experience of the laptop on my desk includes my being disposed to position myself so that its backside is in my field of vision.[43] And importantly, this will involve numerous behavioral dispositions, which take center stage in Noë's explanation.

This solution may seem promising for a number of reasons, but proponents of PIT cannot accept this approach without substantial modifications. The problem is that enactivism takes phenomenal consciousness to be dispositional, and proponents of PIT will likely take issue with this view, since it is thought that dispositional states like one's belief that "grass is green" cannot be phenomenally conscious.[44] So, when one undergoes a conscious episode, from the first-person perspective, it involves something categorical (i.e., qualitative and occurrent) happening in their subjective experience. If this is correct, then it is not clear how phenomenal consciousness could be dispositional in the way Noë's explanation of perceptual presence requires. Here is how Horgan and Kriegel (2008) put this point:

> We think it is obvious that phenomenal consciousness is not merely a dispositional property—obvious in some immediate, first-personal way. But perhaps the following consideration might add further support. Phenomenal consciousness is introspectively accessible. But it would seem that if it were merely dispositional it would not be. Just as fragility and solubility are not perceivable, though they are

[43] Someone might object by arguing that things like one's implicit know-how are not really dispositional states or properties. This is an interesting objection. But since proponents of PIT typically interpret Noë's enactive theory of perception in terms of dispositional states or properties, I will not explore this potential response in detail here. But it is worth mentioning that, if it is true that enactivism does not treat phenomenal consciousness as dispositional states or properties, as we shall see below, there are additional reasons why one should reject this approach to cases of imaginative presence.

[44] For discussion of this point, see e.g., Mendelovici (2018) p. 169 where it claimed that it is implausible to think that unconscious dispositional states like beliefs can be phenomenally conscious. See also Gertler's (2011), pp. 77-78 view that we do not have any introspective or privileged access to our dispositional beliefs.

> thinkable, so if phenomenal consciousness were merely dispositional, it would not be introspectable, though it would be higher-order thinkable (p. 365).

According to Horgan and Kriegel, the fact that enactivism takes phenomenal consciousness to be a dispositional property is sufficient to conclude that it is false.[45] Thus, proponents of PIT cannot endorse Noë's theory of enactive perception in order to explain the problem of imaginative presence without also explaining how phenomenal consciousness can be a dispositional property.

But there is a deeper problem for the enactivist strategy. It may be the case that enactivism plays an important role in our understanding of how it is that one can perceive present but hidden content that they do not immediately perceive, but it is not sufficient to explain such cases.[46] For instance, Kind (2018b) argues that if enactivism is true, then there should be more contents phenomenologically present than what is in fact present in experience. Consider the following example: Right now I have an immediate, visual perception of a coffee cup resting on my desk. The backside of the coffee cup is not visually present in the way that its façade is. But, according to the enactive approach to such cases, the intentional content of the backside of the cup can outstrip what I immediately perceive in my visual experience of the cup, such that the sameness of what I immediately perceive does not entail the sameness of intentional content. This is because I have implicit "know-how" or sensorimotor knowledge of how to reposition myself or the cup such that its backside will be in my field of vision. But there several other coffee cups in the other room, and I have the sensorimotor "know-how" to get up, go into the other room, and position myself such that these other cups are also in my field of vision. If

[45] For a discussion of this point, see e.g., Horgan & Kriegel (2008), p. 365.
[46] This objection is developed by Kind (2018b), pp. 170-173.

enactivism were true, then these other cups should be present in my experience. And since they are not present, then, according to Kind, we can conclude that the enactive approach is not sufficient to explain the relevant cases.

Furthermore, Kind (2018b) argues that the real problem with the enactive approach is that Noë (2004) is attempting to give a reductive account of perceptual presence, whereby we reduce the phenomenal character involved in these cases to a subject's implicit sensorimotor knowledge.[47] Of course, Kind is not arguing that we should reject the enactive theory of perception in its entirety, only that it is not sufficient to explain the relevant cases. We should, therefore, interpret Kind as claiming that Noë's reductive account fails to explain cases like *Piano* because more is required for an adequate explanation. Namely, we need an account that introduces the subject's imaginative capacities in conjunction with their perceptual capacities. As Kind (2018b) claims, when we incorporate a subject's imaginative capacities into the explanation, we get a view that tells us how our imaginative capacities "enables us to have an experience of something not present as if it were present" (p. 175). And if this is right, proponents of PIT must do more than appeal to an enactive theory of perception.

4.2 *Patterns of Covariance*: Some proponents of PIT attempt to explain intentionality by reducing it to the covariation between highly structured and predictable patterns of sensory phenomenology and agential/bodily movements.[48] For example, Farkas (2013) argues: "the external directedness of sensory experience is not a basic fact, but it is rather constituted by a complex structure of phenomenal qualities which are not

[47] For a discussion of this objection, see e.g., Kind (2018b), p.
[48] See e.g., Farkas (2013), and Masrour (2013).

presentational in themselves" (p. 113). The guiding idea in Farkas's view is that bare qualitative feeling or simple and unstructured sensory qualities alone are insufficient to generate phenomenal intentionality. It is only together with an agent's bodily movements and expectations that sensory qualities become organized and thereby give rise to perceptual intentionality of mind independent objects. As Farkas (2013) states:

> The simple phenomenal features of sensory experiences in themselves may amount to no more than modifications of the subject's consciousness: they may present nothing beyond the experience that they are part of. A feeling may just be a feeling and not present or represent anything. However, when these sensory features are received by the subject in a highly organized and predictable structure, one that responds to actions and further inquiry in a systematic way. The experience may become suggestive of the presence of something beyond this experience, namely, an experience-independent object. Perceptual intentionality is thus constituted by the structure of sensory phenomenal features: by the way these features hang together and respond to movement and inquiry (p. 100).

Given what Farkas says in this passage, one might adopt this sort of covariance strategy in an attempt to explain the cases of imaginative presence, whereby one accepts (e)—sameness of IP entails sameness of PC, and rejects (f)—sameness of IP does not entail sameness of PC. This is because, if phenomenal intentionality can be understood in terms of phenomenal consciousness together with the structure and organization of a subject's bodily movements and expectations, then this could potentially explain how the imaginative content in a case like *Piano* seems to be hidden, though it is nonetheless present in the subject's perceptual experience.

But there are problems to consider: One might think that this approach is either too closely related to the enactive approach, insofar as it seems to rely on dispositional and behavioral properties of a subject to explain the relevant phenomenal intentional content. If this is right, then the covariance approach would be vulnerable to the same objections. But one might also think that this approach is too vague and cannot clearly specify what

exactly is meant by the covariance involved in the relevant cases. For example, one might think that the appeal to an agent's bodily movements and expectations does not specify the conditions when the covariance relation occurs.[49] Therefore, to make this explanation plausible, additional component(s) would need to be specified.

4.3 *Perceptual Constancy*: There are several ways that one might build the needed ingredients into an explanation of cases like *Piano*. One option is to adopt a view of perceptual constancy, whereby we posit a distinction between constant properties and merely apparent or changeable properties in order to explain the pattern of covariance. One could then explain phenomenal intentionality in terms of the covariance between the constant and merely apparent or changeable properties in a given situation.[50]

The problem with this proposal is that it is not phenomenologically obvious which of the postulated properties count as immediately perceived. Are the constant, unchanging properties of objects immediately perceived? This would make the merely apparent, changeable properties dependent on the constant properties. Or should we construe the merely apparent, changeable properties as immediately perceived, and the constant properties of objects as dependent on our phenomenology of apparent and changeable properties? It is not clear, phenomenologically speaking, which view is correct. Indeed, it is not even clear how we might investigate this question in a way that would do justice to our phenomenological evidence.[51]

A different problem for the covariance approach arises from the fact that we are currently focused on cases of imaginative presence. Since in the domain of imaginative

[49] For a discussion of this criticism, see e.g., Woodward (2019), p. 610
[50] For a discussion of this sort of account, see e.g., Allen (2018).
[51] For a discussion of this criticism, see e.g., O'Dea (2018).

experience, it is reasonable to think that Sam's imaginative content could be wildly different from what is typically expected or anticipated given the pattern of covariance involved in such a case, then even if it is granted that appealing to a pattern of covariance or perceptual constancy might be able to explain standard cases of visual perception, there is no reason to think that the same patterns of covariance will apply in cases of imaginative experience. For instance, Sam might visually see *the current arrangement of the furniture in the room* and imaginatively experience the presence of the content <the furniture floating away> or <the furniture exploding>, and so on. Thus, in cases of imaginative presence, there may be a failure of covariance in phenomenal patterns.[52] So the imagined content may not be constituted by the pattern of covariance between sensory phenomenology and an agent's bodily movements and expectations in cases like *Piano*.

But this is not the end of the story for a covariance, since one might argue that the pattern of phenomenal covariance suggested above may play an important role explaining phenomenal intentionality, though covariance alone is not sufficient for an explanation of imaginative presence. For example, Masrour (2013) argues that in addition to an agent's first-personal, subjective perspective, there is an additional phenomenological element that we must account for, which partly constitutes phenomenal intentionality. Here is the example that Masrour offers to illustrate this point:

> Imagine walking toward a tree as you are looking at it. Why you get closer, the visual angle through which you see the tree grows in size in an inverse relation to your distance from the tree. If things go well and your perception s veridical, your representation of the visual angle through which you see the tree and your representation of your distance from the tree co-vary with each other in a law-like manner (p.122).

[52] For a discussion of this criticism, see e.g., Woodward (2019), p. 613.

Now, for Masrour, this sort of case of visual phenomenology involves at least two key features: There is something-it-is-like for your to perceive the tree from a particular angle, which changes as you walk towards it; but there is also something-it-is-like for you to see the tree as located at a point in space, which is a particular distance from where your location. And these key features do not operate in isolation, since, according to Masrour, they "co-vary in a law-like manner" (p. 122). But Masrour claims that there is also a third phenomenological feature that we need to pay attention to in a case like this:

> There is something that it is like to experience the visual angle and the relative distance as co-varying in the particular law-like manner that they do and this additional phenomenological element is over and above the law-like covariance of the other two experiences and is constant through their change (p. 122).[53]

This is an interesting proposal. It introduces a central component in the explanation an allegedly highly specialized phenomenology, which is, presumably, readymade for tracking the patterns of phenomenal covariance we are considering. But building this special sort of phenomenology into the explanation from the outset may seem problematic.

Recall the desideratum that says: Any explanation of imaginative presence must be able to capture the kind of temporal shape involved in such cases. Thus, what we need to do is ask whether Masrour's (2013) version of the covariance and perceptual constancy approaches will in fact satisfy this desideratum. It does not. What is needed is an explanation of the way that the hidden, imaginative contents <an alternative arrangement of the furniture> can be represented as unfolding or evolving throughout some duration of

[53] It is worth noting that for Masrour (2013) discusses this additional form of phenomenology that tracks the pattern of covariance in terms of what is called "phenomenal objectivity" or "facts, objects, and properties that are independent from our mind" (p. 116). But Masrour claims that the conditions of satisfaction for phenomenal objectivity are the same as those for phenomenal intentionality (p. 117). So, Masrour's appeal to phenomenal objectivity can be understood as a way to account for the phenomenal intentionality involved in the relevant cases.

time. But given that those who espouse this strategy accept the claim that what is immediately perceived entails what is phenomenally conscious, the explanatory resources available would be highly restricted. And since proponents of PIT typically construe phenomenal intentionality in terms of token mental states that instantiate phenomenal mental properties, arguably, whatever explanation is offered, the mental ontology available for the explanation will be limited to token mental states and phenomenal properties.[54]

This explanatory strategy is a kind of building block approach, whereby we attempt to explain our temporal phenomenology by using the basic building block ingredients to construct our phenomenal awareness of change in perspective. The problem, then, is how to give an account of our temporal phenomenology in cases of imaginative presence that is restricted to the basic building blocks of mental states and phenomenal properties alone.

For instance, when you undergo a perceptual experience of seeming to see the unseen parts of, say, a tomato, you imaginatively perceive what is not directly in your field of vision, insofar as you can imagine walking around to the other side of the table where the unseen side of the tomato can then come into your field of vision. Notice, however, that imagining walking to the other side of the table takes time to occur, and that a subject's temporal phenomenology in such a case is not merely some form of consciousness awareness of time. Rather, *what* is imagined (the content) is represented as unfolding or as occurring throughout the duration time. So, we can say that the imaginative content in this case has a kind of temporal shape, such that what is imagined is not represented as persisting through time wholly present and unchanged. Instead, our temporal phenomenology involves the content being represented as changing and flowing from one

[54] For a discussion of this point, see e.g., Mendelovici (2018), p. 85.

moment into the next as our perspective changes and unfolds throughout the relevant duration of time. But if our explanation is restricted to the basic building blocks of token mental states and phenomenal properties, then it is not clear how such an approach could capture our temporal phenomenology that changes as our perspective changes.

Here is the problem: Intuitively, non-instantaneous states and properties can persist, wholly present and unchanged form one distinct time, t_1, to a different time t_2. And insofar as these things persist wholly present and unchanged, it would not make sense to construe as being composed of temporal parts. Events, however, are different metaphysical kinds of things. An essential part of what it is to be the kind of first-personal mental events that we are considering, is the fact that mental events involve change; they are not the sort of thing that could possibly persist, wholly present and unchanged. The intuitive problem, then, hinges on this metaphysical distinction between events and states, and this is why the notion of temporal shape is crucial for our evaluation of explanatory strategies that attempt to make sense of the temporal phenomenology involved in cases of imaginative presence by appealing to mental states that instantiate phenomenal properties.

Consider, for example, the way that Steward (1997) appeals to the notion of temporal shape to distinguish between events and states:

> I think it is here, in the concept of temporal shape, that we may find the resources to explain why it is that states cannot be composed of events. For states do not have temporal parts. It is sometimes claimed (and I think often implied by the persistent tendency of philosophers to lump events, states, and processes together and to treat them as a single category) that states do have temporal parts, but a little reflection suggests that this is simply wrong. Some water's being at 90 °C, for instance, seems to be a state which exists, as it were, in full, at all times at which the water is at that temperature; it is not incomplete in any way at any moment at which the water is at that temperature, in the way in which a football match, say, is incomplete at half-time (pp. 73-74).

Given this intuitively plausible way of thinking about the distinction between events and states, it is reasonably to conclude that events have a temporal shape, insofar as they are composed of temporal parts, whereas states and properties lack a temporal shape, insofar as they are not composed of temporal parts. So, unless one can show that states and properties have a temporal shape, such that the way they fill or occupy some stretch of time is by being composed of temporal parts, then it simply is not clear that mental states and phenomenal properties are the right metaphysical sort of thing that can capture the temporal phenomenology involved in cases of imaginative presence.[55]

One might grant that states and properties do not individually capture the relevant temporal phenomenology, but if we posit enough mental states and properties properly organized and related, then one might be able to capture the temporal phenomenology or temporal shape involved in cases like *Piano*.[56] But if this explanation is to work, then our temporal phenomenology of changing perspective would have to emerge from the changing of one mental state to the next. Thus, there must be enough mental states and properties that persist wholly present and unchanged, to account for the changing in perspective that we phenomenologically enjoy. And, perhaps, the explanation could appeal to the structural organization of the states and properties in order to capture the change in perspective involved in such cases. So, even if the individual states and properties considered in isolation lack the intrinsic qualitative character sufficient to capture our

[55] Looming over this entire discussion is an important question regarding whether this is nothing more than a mere verbal dispute. In general, it is not an easy to determine exactly when some philosophical dispute will count as being a mere verbal dispute vs when it might count as a substantive one, because it may be vague or merely a matter a degree, and most philosophical disputes can always be reframed as a verbal dispute only. So, if one insists on the claim that this is only a verbal dispute, this claim would need to be defended in its own terms. However, I have offered a principled reason to distinguish between states and events grounded in what Steward (1997) calls a "temporal shape".

[56] For a discussion of this sort of view, see e.g., Chuard (2017).

phenomenology of temporal change and moving perspective, maybe when they are combined the states and properties in the right way, then we could explain our temporal phenomenology using only the basic building blocks of token mental states and phenomenal properties.

But if token mental states and phenomenal properties lack a temporal shape, insofar as they persist wholly present and unchanged, then it is not clear why when we combine them in the right sort of way this would give rise to the temporal phenomenology needed to explain cases like *Piano*. Is this supposed to be some sort of brute fact? Why should we think that by multiplying states and properties this will generate the needed phenomenal feeling for Sam as she imagines an alternative way the furniture in the room might be arranged?

I am skeptical that such an account can adequately capture the temporal phenomenology in cases like *Piano*, unless one can show that the phenomenology is not in the states and properties themselves, but in the structural organization of the states and properties when combined. But once we retreat to saying that our temporal phenomenology in cases like *Piano* must be explained not in terms of mental states that instantiate phenomenal properties but the structural organization of these states and properties, we thereby introduce some sort of special, structural relation that holds between token mental states that instantiate phenomenal mental properties. The problem with this approach is simply that it is not at all clear what exactly this relation is. Proponents of PIT would then be forced to give an account of what exactly it would mean for a token mental state to be "appropriately related" to other token mental states, such that this relation generates the temporal phenomenology and not the states or properties.

One thing that we can say is that, for a mental state M_1 to be appropriately related to a different mental state M_2, such that it can give rise to the needed temporal phenomenology, then M_2 must also be appropriately related to some other mental state M_3 that is likewise appropriately related to other mental states that are also appropriately related, and so on. Thus, this approach is faced with a regress of appropriately related mental states. If this is right, then proponents of PIT will be faced with the following choice: (i) reject the claim that an explanation of the relevant cases can be given using only the basic building block ingredients of token mental states that are appropriately related, or (ii) give an alternative account of the temporal phenomenology involved in such cases. Masrour (2013) adopts the second option by simply asserting that there *is* a special kind of phenomenological awareness that tracks the temporal change in perspective.

While I grant that Masrour correctly identifies a special form phenomenology relevant for these sorts of cases, I deny that all we need to do is identify such phenomenology, since this is the very thing that needs to be explained in cases of imaginative presence—that is, we cannot assert this extra-phenomenological aspect of the explanation, since this element is what needs to be explained.[57] Of course, there may be other strategies available to proponents of PIT that adopt some version of covariance and perceptual constancy similar to those discussed above, but it seems to me that they will probably face one or more of these objections.[58]

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[57] For a general overview of several explanations one might offer for temporal experience, see e.g., Chuard (2017). For a discussion of the unity of temporal experience, see e.g., Dainton (2000).

[58] It is worth mentioning that I am not claiming that we should reject this sort of view in its entirety. I do not claim to have offered anything like a refutation of covariance or perceptual constancy accounts of phenomenal intentionality. Indeed, I believe that there are many strong points that count in favor of such views. Rather, my point is simply that these accounts are unable to adequately explain the relevant cases.

4.4 *Derivativism*: One way that proponents of PIT could attempt to avoid the paradox of imaginative presence is to argue that, in a case like *Piano*, the intentional content <an alternative arrangement of the furniture> is a kind of non-phenomenal intentional content. Thus, it must get its intentionality derivatively from some other phenomenal intentional content. The idea is that one could deny that the kind of imagination involved in this case is objectual, and instead argue that the kind of imagination involved is propositional. According to this objection, Sam imagines *that* <there is an alternative arrangement of the furniture>. This strategy rejects (f)—the claim that the sameness of IP does not entail sameness of IC—since the intentional content in this case is entailed by a phenomenal intentional mental state or content.

There are several problems with this approach. First, the objections raised in response to the covariance and perceptual constancy strategies that put pressure on the need to provide an account of our temporal phenomenology of the changing perspectives will also apply in this case. This is because a derivative approach is confined to the resources of mental states and properties. But there are deeper worries involved in this approach.

Second, this approach flouts the basic phenomenological data: When one imagines such and such, this can be objectual rather than propositional only. But the derivativist strategy simply denies there is *something-it-is-like* for Sam to undergo an experience of imagining an alternative way that the furniture might be rearranged.[59] Since there are plausible phenomenological grounds in support of the claim that *Piano* involves objectual

[59] One could always take a dogmatic approach and deny that imagination can ever occur in this quasi-visual and phenomenologically rich way. But I have attempted to remain neutral about the nature of imagination, which allows me to leave open the possibility that imagination can be objectual rather than propositional. I take it that we cannot dogmatically rule out this option without some independent argument for why imagination is essentially propositional.

rather than proposition imagination, proponents of PIT cannot avoid the problem simply by stipulating that imagination is not objectual.

But there is deeper problem for the derivativist strategy. Arguably, a non-phenomenal token mental state cannot become intentional by deriving its intentional content from a different token mental state that is phenomenal. For instance, Mendelovici (2018) argues that it is not clear what cognitive mechanism would be required for non-phenomenal mental states to derive their intentional content from some phenomenal intentional mental state. Mendelovici states:

> …there is a fundamental concern with the view, which is that intentionality is just not the right kind of thing that can be passed around as would be required. The worry is that *even if* derivativism appears to give us what appear to be the right answers in all cases, the view fails because the various derivation mechanisms are not in fact sufficient for generating new instances of intentionality (p. 165; emphasis in the original).

For Mendelovici, this counts is an independent reason to reject derivativism. And since the different derivativist strategies differ only in how the intentional content gets "passed" from one state to a different mental state, this objection will apply in cases of imaginative presence too. Thus, if we have reason to think that a mental state cannot get its intentionality from a different phenomenal mental state by "passing" its content to it, then we also have independent grounds to reject derivativism as a general approach to PIT.[60] In this regard, then, we can turn our attention to the way that Mendelovici (2018) handles problem cases where it might seem as though intentional content can outstrip what is immediately perceived.

4.5. *Self-Ascriptivism*: Mendelovici's approach fairs better than those we considered thus far because it identifies the phenomenal with the intentional. According

[60] For further discussion of this objection, see e.g., Mendelovici (2018), pp. 163-169.

to this identity version of PIT, there is genuine intentional content in cases like *Piano,* only if the relevant content is phenomenal intentional content. As Mendelovici (2018) tells us: "Original intentionality is identical to phenomenal consciousness, and there is no derived intentionality, though there are non-intentional representational states that derive from intentional states" (p. 83).[61] I take this to be a more plausible approach to cases like *Piano* because it allows the proponent of PIT to say that as long as the right kind of phenomenology is present, there is no principled reason why the proponent of PIT cannot explain how the content gets its intentionality. So, if the relevant content counts as genuinely intentional, we should be able to introspectively notice it as phenomenally intentional. Therefore, we must answer the following two questions: (i) In cases like *Piano*, is the right kind of phenomenology present in the relevant perceptual experience? And (ii) is the alleged intentional content <an alternative arrangement of the furniture in the room> genuinely intentional content? We have already seen why it would be a mistake to simply reject the claim that in a case like *Piano* the right kind of phenomenology is present in the perceptual experience.[62] So, let us turn our attention to the second question.

To my mind, it is introspectively obvious that we can notice the relevant content in cases of imaginative presence as phenomenal intentional content. For instance, when Sam has the visual perception of seeing the current arrangement of the furniture in the room,

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[61] It is worth mentioning here that, according to Mendelovici, there is an important difference between intentional content and mere representational content. See e.g., Mendelovici (2018) chapter 1 for the definition of intentionality as it relates to representational views; and see pp. 152-153 for a discussion of whether derived mental representation counts as a kind of genuine intentionality.

[62] Recall that the relevant content in the case of Piano is supposed to be apparently hidden or missing but nonetheless still present in the experience, and that I take this to suggest that the content is not immediately perceived by the subject. But someone might object by arguing that for X to be hidden or missing suggests that X is not there at all or at least not perceived. In response, let me reiterate that "hidden" or "missing" content in this context does not mean not perceived full stop. Rather, it means that it is not immediately perceived.

this immediate perception has phenomenal character, call it C_1. According to Mendelovici's Identity-PIT, then, C_1 should count as phenomenally intentional. But when Sam imagines an alternative arrangement of the furniture, this also has a certain phenomenal character, but one that is different from C_1. Let us call this different phenomenal character C_2. Notice that, given the way that we have described the case of *Piano*, C_2 should also count as phenomenal intentional, since the relation between the intentional and the phenomenal is one of identity. But there is a tension between C_1 and C_2, insofar as nothing can be phenomenally like both C_1 and C_2, at least not at the same time and relative to the same subjective perspective. But if intentionality is identical to phenomenal character, then the content <an alternative arrangement of the furniture> would be identical to C_2, and the content <the current arrangement of the furniture> would be identical to C_1. So either Sam's perceptual experience E would have both the phenomenal character C_1 and C_2 at the same time and from the same subjective point of view, or one would be forced to say that these are different perceptual experiences E_1 and E_2 that overlap or somehow blend together.

The problem, then, is that neither of these options are plausible. If we say that, contrary our phenomenological evidence, in a case like *Piano*, this is not a single perceptual experience E with phenomenal characters C_1 and C_2, this misrepresents how these contents show up to us in experience, since when we pay attention to our phenomenology in cases like these, there seems to be only a single experience not multiple experiences that overlap or blend together. So, to dismiss the need to explain cases like *Piano* simply by identifying the right sort of phenomenal character and then identifying the intentional content with that

phenomenal character will not solve the problem because it multiplies experiences beyond what seems phenomenologically warranted.

However, there may be ways that the proponent of PIT can adapt Identity-PIT in order to argue for the claim that sameness of what is immediately perceived in fact does entail the sameness of something like phenomenal intentional content. One could argue that the content in cases like *Piano* is derived *representational* content, not *genuinely intentional* content. On this approach, subjects take themselves to have representational content by self-ascribing what is represented. When one self-ascribes some content, it will not count as genuine intentional content, though it will still count as derived representational content. Mendelovici (2018) calls this approach to derived mental representation "self-ascriptivism" (p. 139). Let us consider this strategy to see how proponents of PIT might attempt to solve the Imaginative Presence Paradox.

According to Mendelovici (2018), derived representational content can be defined as follows: "Immediate content C (and any state or vehicle with immediate content C) derivatively represents C+ (for S) if S takes C to mean C+" (p. 145). Presumably, Mendelovici would construe the content in cases of imaginative presence to involve derived mental representation, which "involves taking an immediate content" (e.g., Sam's visual perception of the current arrangement of the furniture in the room) "to mean another immediate content" (e.g., Sam's imagining an alternative arrangment of the furniture in the room) (p. 146). If this is correct, then we also need to make clear what exactly is meant by the claim that a subject "takes C to mean C+". Mendelovici describes this point in terms of "cashing out thoughts": "Subject S takes a representation's immediate content C to mean C+ if S has a set of dispositions to have cashing out thoughts that together specify that C

cashes out into C+ (upon sufficient reflection)" (p. 143). Mendelovici then claims that we should construe taking C to mean C+ in terms of "accepting that one thing stands for another" (p. 143; footnote 23). We are now in a position to surmise how self-ascriptivism might help the proponent of PIT explain cases like *Piano*. Mendelovici (2018) says:

> Presumably, in having perceptual experiences, there is some content we are immediately aware of, so at least some perceptual states have immediate contents. If a subject is disposed to have cashing out thoughts that together specify that a perceptually represented immediate content, C, cashes out into C+, then C derivatively represents C+ (for her), and so does any state or representation immediately representing C, including any perceptual state or representation immediately representing C (p. 155).

In apply this strategy to *Piano*, we get the following result: When Sam visually sees the current arrangement of the furniture in the room, she has a visual perceptual experience that, in addition to representing the content <the current arrangement of the furniture>, also includes the hidden but present content <an alternative arrangement of the furniture>. So, Sam's visual perceptual mental state M has the immediate content C, which is phenomenally represented and, therefore, counts as being a phenomenal intentional mental state. But since Sam is disposed to have certain cashing out thoughts, the thought with content C gets cashed out into a different content <an alternative arrangement of the furniture>, which is specified by the content C+.

Here is the rub: We might reasonably wonder whether the notion of cashing out thoughts can capture the phenomenology involved in a case like *Piano*. For Mendelovici, the idea of "taking" is supposed to be understood in terms of cashing out the content C into C+, and this is then to be understood in terms of accepting one thing to mean another thing.[63] But, in *Piano* it is not clear that one in fact does take their perceptual state as

[63] For a discussion of this point, see e.g., Mendelovici (2018), p. 155.

meaning something else. Does it really make sense to think that Sam takes her visual perception of the current arrangement of the furniture to mean an alternative arrangement of the furniture? Not if Sam is perceptually imagining an alternative arrangement for the purpose of finding space to move a piano into her small apparent, since that would not be a successful way to achieve her goal.[64] Moreover, according to Mendelovici, cashing out the content C into C+ is supposed to involve sufficient reflection. But it is not clear what will count as a sufficient amount of reflection in cases of imaginative presence. For instance, when Sam imagines an alternative arrangement of the furniture in the room, this may happen as the result of some sort of reflective process, but it might also happen involuntarily in a kind of flash without much or any cognitive effort any at all.[65] Furthermore, to make this proposal work one would need an independent argument for why we should think that the content <an alternative arrangement of the furniture> is merely derived representational content, rather than genuine, phenomenal intentional content—that is, we would need an argument that purports to defend an error theory about many of the mental contents that we take to be intentional contents. As Mendelovici (2018) claims: "the intentional mind is restricted to the phenomenal mind, which is itself fairly

[64] To be fair, Mendelovici (2018) appeal to the notion of cashing out thoughts is primarily used in response to problem cases such as non-phenomenal thoughts, concepts, and standing intentional states. So, one could object that Mendelovici would not utilize this move in response to the problem of imaginative presence. However, without a direct response from Mendelovici, it seems reasonable that appealing to the notion of cashing out thoughts would be amongst the options available.

[65] Notice that one of Kind's (2018a), pp. 232-235 aims in discussing exemplar imaginers like Nikola Tesla and Temple Grandin was to suggest that it is possible for one to become highly skilled at using their imaginative capacities for modal-epistemological purposes, such that one undergoes a kind of mental simulation or model. Arguably, if Kind is right about this claim, then one could become so highly trained at imagining that it no longer takes much cognitive effort at all, but becomes more like a reflex. For further discussion of this point, see e.g., Kind (2016).

limited, but derived mental representation and other representation-like phenomena play many of the roles that intentionality might have previously been thought to play" (p. 121).[66]

However, this is not just an error theory about intentionality. To say that the mental content <an alternative arrangement of the furniture> is not genuinely intentional but only derivatively representational is straightforwardly problematic for Identity-PIT because the content has all standard signatures of a phenomenally intentional content. Indeed, the sort of content in cases like *Piano* are introspectively noticeable as phenomenal intentional contents. So, either there are case where we mistakenly introspectively notice phenomenal intentional contents, or not.

Suppose that we can be wrong about our own phenomenology in cases like *Piano*, such that we mistakenly introspectively notice some alleged phenomenal intentional content. If this is true, why should we be optimistic about introspectively ability to notice phenomenal intentional contents in normal cases like when I visually perceive the blueish coffee cup is on my desk? And given that the kind of perceptual presence of apparently absent or missing contents is a ubiquitous aspect of human experience, one would need a principled way to distinguish the good cases from the bad. The more plausible thing to say here is simply that, in a case like *Piano*, the content is genuine phenomenal intentional content, because if we are wrong about our own phenomenology in cases of imaginative presence, then one would be committed to a radically revisionary view of intentionality. I take this to be a good reason to be skeptical of the extent in which Mendelovici's proposal can be applied.

[66] It is worth pointing out that, in a certain sense, Mendelovici's (2018) approach to PIT can be understood as an extended argument for this sort of error theory about intentionality.

4.6. *Primitivism*: The final proposal I want to consider takes phenomenal intentionality to be a primitive notion, insofar as phenomenal properties are construed as being in some sense irreducible to anything more basic. Here is how Woodward (2019) introduces this idea:

> Among the phenomenal properties are *phenomenal-intentional properties*, or '*P-I* properties'. *P-I* properties are irreducible to any other phenomenal properties; they comprise *a sui generis type of* phenomenal property, whose most abstract determinable is *being phenomenally-intentionally directed some-content-wise*. The nature of a *P-I* property wholly consists in the presentation to the subject of some particular intentional object. An example is the *P-I* property whose intentional object is *causation*. When a subject instantiates this property, she is thereby consciously presented with *causation*. Similar things can be said about other intentional contents that are necessitated by the phenomenal character of a conscious mental state (p. 617; emphasis in the original).

According to this primitivist strategy, as long as the phenomenology is present, then we can say that the intentional content is also present because whenever a subject instantiates the relevant P-I property, it follows, on this view, that she is thereby presented with the relevant intentional content.

This approach is an improvement over other strategies, insofar as it is able to avoid most of the problems that we previously encountered. For example, we need not worry about the fact that imagination can break down in unexpected ways. As Woodward (2019) claims:

> …it explains how perceptual phenomenology and imaginative phenomenology can generate intentional contents in the same way, despite the fact that we anticipate predicable changes within perceptual phenomenology but often do not anticipate any sort of predictability within imaginative phenomenology (p. 618).

And since this approach does not deny the phenomenology in cases of imaginative presence, it has the advantage of being able to take seriously our most of our phenomenological evidence. Likewise, Woodward claims that a primitivist approach can

avoid the worries that one might raise regarding Mendelovici's Identity-PIT.[67] If Woodward is right, this would be additional support for this explanatory strategy. But there are problems with a primiativist account of phenomenal intentionality that needs to be addressed.

First, one could argue that primitivism is not theoretically warranted or that it is theoretically vacuous and without merit.[68] Of course, this is not the place to fully evaluate the complications that would be involved in adjudicating theoretical reasons for or against taking phenomenal intentionality as primitive. But we can say that this problem generates a stalemate, which means that proponents of PIT cannot appeal to the advantages a primitivist account has over the other potential solutions that we considered previously.

Second, if the primitivist approach construes phenomenal intentionality in terms of mental states and properties, then it is not clear how such an explanation of imaginative presence can give an adequate account of the temporal phenomenology involved in our awareness of the changing temporal perspective one undergoes in such cases. To put this point in terms of temporal shape, a primitivist approach fails to satisfy this desideratum for the same reasons that the other approaches failed—that is, because such an explanation is restricted to the basic building block ingredients of token mental states and phenomenal properties. By claiming that these token mental states and phenomenal properties are primitive does nothing to show how they can give rise to the kind of temporal phenomenology involved in the relevant cases.

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[67] For a discussion of this claim, see e.g., Woodward (2019), p. 618.
[68] For a discussion of this claim, see e.g., Woodard (2019), pp. 618-619.

5. Concluding Remarks.

In this section, I want to briefly sketch an alternative solution, which claims that the Imaginative Presence Paradox arises as a result of restricting our theoretical resources to token mental states and properties.

If we adopt a view that eschewed talk of token mental states in favor of mental events, then we could argue that the phenomenal and the intentional are related by being proper parts of our first-personal, mental events or episodes. We would then be able to reject (e)—the claim that the sameness of what is immediately perceived entails the sameness of phenomenal consciousness in favor of (f)—the claim that sameness of what is immediately perceived does not entail the sameness of intentional content. And this is because our first-personal, mental events are the right metaphysical sorts of things that can adequately capture all the seeming hidden or absent elements in a subject's perceptual experience. And arguably, the ontology of a subject's total experienced scenes are better understood in terms of first-personal, essentially subjective mental events that are at least partly composed of temporal parts.[69] Thus, by deploying the theoretical resources of mental events, we will be in a far better position to adequately capture the temporal shape of our changing perspectives, which, as we have seen, is a crucial part of giving an adequate explanation imaginative presence.[70] The basic idea is that when we construe the mental ontology of phenomenal intentionality in terms of mental events composed of temporal parts, we can adopt a mereological approach to PIT that will likely succeed at explaining cases such as *Piano* precisely where the alternative explanations fail.

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[69] While I have not defended this view here, one thing we can say is that such an approach would probably construe mental events mereological holism, whereby the parts of the mental event are dependent on the entire mental event.

[70] For a discussion of this point, see Crane (2013), pp. 167-169.

Assuming that such an account could be developed, there are at least two important reasons why proponents of PIT might favor this approach over those discussed in the previous section. First, none of the explanatory approaches could adequately satisfy the temporal shape desideratum. But, given that the first-personal, mental events we are considering have a temporal shape, insofar as they are composed of temporal parts, it seems entirely plausible that such a view could adequately account for the kind of temporal change of perspective that is a crucial part of the way the content is represented as unfolding throughout time. Second, even if it is granted for the sake of the argument that one of the previously considered explanatory strategies could give a plausible explanation of the temporal phenomenology involved in cases like *Piano*, proponents of PIT would still be required to explain why the rejected proposition initially seemed plausible, and it is not clear what explanation could be given. But, if we abandon the building block approach to explaining such cases, which is restricted to the token mental states that instantiate phenomenal properties, we have a readymade explanation for why it initially seemed plausible that phenomenal consciousness is exhausted by what is immediately perceived.

Recall that the inconsistent triad that causes trouble for proponents of PIT states that:

(d) Sameness of PC entails sameness of IC.
(e) Sameness of IP entails sameness of PC.
(f) Sameness of IP does not entail sameness of IC.

Now, according to the account that I am proposing here, we can reject (e), because the phenomenal and the intentional are not token mental state that instantiates some phenomenal properties. Instead, we can construe phenomenal consciousness is a proper part of the larger context of a subject's first-personal, essentially subjective mental events. This is a holistic approach to phenomenal intentionality, which does not construes the

phenomenal and the intentional in terms of a one-to-one matching between states and properties. And if this sort of holistic, mereological account of phenomenal intentionality is plausible, then intentional content can outstrip what is immediately perceived. While more would need to be said to fill in the details of such a view, at the very least, proponents of PIT need to give an adequate explanation of the intentional content in cases of perceptual, imaginative presence.[71]

In summary, I developed a novel challenge to PIT by appealing to a case of perceptual, imaginative presence. I argued that, since proponents of PIT cannot give an adequate account of how this can occur, we have good reason to reject PIT. However, I do not think we should reject PIT full stop. Rather, proponents of PIT can avoid the problem presented by the Perceptual Presence Paradox by abandoning the metaphysical framework of token mental states that instantiate phenomenal properties in favor of a framework that construes the phenomenal and the intentional in terms of proper parts of our first-personal, mental events. This would be a mereological approach to the relationship between phenomenal consciousness and intentionality; such an account has not gained much attention in the literature on PIT.[72] But, if what I have argued is plausible, then proponents of PIT should take up the proposal outlined here with much more urgency, or offer an alternative solution to the Imaginative Presence Paradox.

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[71] This is only an initial sketch. More work is needed to show that such a proposal is in fact plausible.

[72] For an example of a proponent of PIT who defends a mereological approach to PIT, see e.g., Dewalque (2013).

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CHAPTER THREE

Phenomenal Mental States and the Temporal Shape of Experience

1. Introduction.

Imagine a situation where someone, let us call them Alex, is experiencing déjà vu, such that there is *something-it-is-like* (a first-person point of view) for Alex to undergo this conscious experience.[1] Suppose that we ask Alex to describe what this experience is like. Alex might say: "It feels like I have been here before, like it already happened to me". But this is a description of Alex as the subject of the experience. It is not an answer to the question regarding what the experience is like.[2] This suggests that there are multiple adequate ways of thinking about and describing our conscious experiences; they can be described in terms of a mental state of the subject or as an event the subject undergoes. But which, if any, of these descriptions is correct? The primary aim of this paper is to show that conscious experiences are first-personal, phenomenal mental events that subjects like Alex undergo, not phenomenal mental states that instantiate phenomenal properties.

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[1] I accept Nagel's (1974) famous take on phenomenal consciousness as there being "something it is like" to be that person or thing that is undergoing some experience. In the case of déjà vu, this is generally taken to be an example of cognitive phenomenology. There are various debates about the nature and significance of cognitive phenomenology. For an overview and introduction to such debates, see e.g., Bayne & Montague (2011). Since my main focus in what follows pertains to the phenomenal intentionality theory, which accepts the existence of cognitive phenomenology, I will not rehear such debates in what follows.

[2] For a discussion of this sort of case, see e.g., Soteriou (2007), p. 555.

Is it true that talk of mental states, phenomenal properties, and mental events are ultimately interchangeable? If so, then perhaps, both of the above descriptions are in some sense adequate. Indeed, this does seem to carry some intuitive support, insofar as we want a theory that allows for a certain amount of terminological flexibility. Given this approach, there may be no conceptually significant distinction between states/properties and events. But what is the argument for this claim? It may be true that the distinction between states and events will ultimately collapse. But this is not obviously true, and it should be defended in its own right.

Interestingly, philosophers have been trained to think of conscious experiences as mental states of some suitable form without knowing what exactly a mental state is.[3] This is especially the case for proponents of the "Phenomenal Intentionality Theory" (PIT). According to PIT, all "original" intentional mental content is constitutively determined by the phenomenal character of certain mental states.[4] The idea is this: Conscious experiences are phenomenal mental states that instantiate phenomenal properties, which type that experience by *what-it-is-like* for a subject to undergo the experience.[5] But, if there are no phenomenal mental states, or if the notion of a phenomenal mental state is incoherent, then either there will not be any genuine intentional mental content or PIT will be an incoherent view. Thus, having a plausible account of phenomenal mental states and properties is vital

[3] The way that philosophers of mind and cognitive scientists use terms like "brain state", "brain process", or "neuronal activity" suggests that they are place-holders for a notion that will eventually (hopefully) be understood once a fully developed future neuroscience is able to tell us exactly what a mental state is, no less what a phenomenal mental state is. But arguably, these dummy phrases are not helpful.

[4] For an overview of PIT, see the essays collected in Kriegel (2013). See also, Bourget & Mendelovici (2019).

[5] I take "consciousness" to be semantically primitive. For an ostensive definition of "phenomenal consciousness" let us say: X is phenomenally conscious *iff* there is "something-it-is-like" from the first-person perspective to be X. For further discussion of this ostensive definition, see e.g., Nagel (1974).

to the theoretical success of PIT. As things currently stand, this issue has received almost no attention in the literature on phenomenal intentionality. I aim to remedy this situation.

Some philosophers claim that conscious experiences of the sort that we actually undergo are temporally thick, insofar as our phenomenology typically involves a temporal structure or a feeling of flowing in a certain temporal direction.[6] I will refer to this feature of mental goings-on as the "temporal shape" of experience, which states: X has a temporal shape, *iff* the following conditions are satisfied: (i) X is dynamic; and (ii) X fills or occupies some arbitrary duration of time by being composed of temporal parts. By focusing on the temporal shape of experience, it will be shown that, strictly speaking, conscious experiences are not phenomenal mental states that instantiate phenomenal properties. If states and properties lack a temporal shape, but conscious experiences have a temporal shape, then this generates an obvious problem for PIT. Either there will be no intentional mental content or PIT will be an incoherent view. Thus, versions of PIT that construe conscious experiences in terms of phenomenal mental states and properties should be rejected. Here is the argument to be defended.

(1) If phenomenally conscious experiences are phenomenal mental states that instantiate phenomenal properties, then the phenomenal character of these experiences will lack a temporal shape.

(2) The phenomenal character of our conscious experiences has a temporal shape.

(3) Therefore, phenomenally conscious experiences are not phenomenal mental states that instantiate phenomenal properties.

The paper begins by laying out the basic commitments of PIT and the claim that phenomenal mental states give rise to phenomenal intentional mental content (Section 2).

[6] See e.g., Horgan & Tienson (2002), p. 521.

I will introduce a puzzle about phenomenal mental states as an initial reason to be worried about alleged phenomenal mental states and properties (Section 3). But the *real problem* with standard views of PIT is that states and properties lack a temporal shape, whereas conscious experiences have a temporal shape (Section 4). Prior to concluding, I will consider an important theoretical upshot for a the view that conscious experiences are first-personal, mental events (Section 5).

2. Phenomenal Intentional Mental Content.

In this section, I will briefly discuss what proponents of PIT typically mean by phenomenal intentional mental content and how this is related to the claim that phenomenal mental states instantiate phenomenal properties.[7]

The central thesis of PIT says: "There is a kind of intentionality, pervasive in human mental life, that is constitutively determined by phenomenology alone" (Horgan & Tienson, 2002: p. 520). But what does it mean to claim that intentionality is constitutively determined by phenomenology? Proponents of PIT accept that all genuine forms of intentionality arise from phenomenal consciousness, insofar as intentional mental states are either identical to or partly grounded in the phenomenal character of certain phenomenal mental states.[8] Thus, phenomenal intentional mental content is intentional content that is constitutively determined by the tokening of mental states that are *about* or *directed* at something or some way that the world might be, where the *aboutness* or *directedness* is the phenomenal character (i.e., mode of presentation) of the relevant mental state.[9] For

[7] For an early account of phenomenal mental states and phenomenal properties, see e.g., Loar (1990,2003).
[8] See e.g., Kriegel (2013), p. 5
[9] I will use the term "mental content" broadly to include any mental phenomena that is about or directed at something. So, mental content just is what a thought, belief, judgment, desire, etc., is about or directed at.

instance, Kriegel (2007) claims: “When a mental state M has an intentional content that is constituted by its phenomenal character, we may say that M exhibits a phenomenal intentionality, or is phenomenally intentional” (p. 320).[10] But given the central role that phenomenal mental states and properties play in the relevant account of intentional content, we need a clear statement of what proponents of PIT mean by such things.

Consider, for example, Mendelovici’s (2018) description of phenomenal mental states and properties: “a phenomenal state with a red-ish phenomenal character might automatically represent the content <red> and a phenomenal state with a red-square-ish phenomenal character might automatically represent the content <red square>” (pp. 84-85). And Mendelovici claims that we can construe phenomenal properties as “ways things are or might be with respect to phenomenal consciousness or phenomenal ways things are or might be, and phenomenal states as instantiations of phenomenal properties” (p. 84). Mendelovici then offers a textbook way that advocates of PIT tend to think about conscious experience: “…a phenomenal intentional state is an instantiation of a phenomenal intentional property, and its content is its phenomenal content” (p. 85). I take this sort of approach to phenomenal mental states and properties to be accepted by most proponents of PIT, though they are not necessarily committed to this sort of ontology of mind. Of course, if an ontology of mental states that instantiate phenomenal properties is required by PIT and it turns out that there are no such things, or if the notion of phenomenal mental states that instantiate phenomenal properties is incoherent, then there would be no intentional mental content, which would be a disaster for PIT.

[10] According to PIT, the phenomenal character of some mental state M is a constitutive feature of M’s intentional content because M’s intentional content is determined by its phenomenal character.

3. A Puzzle About Phenomenal Mental States.

The goal of this section is to introduce a puzzle about phenomenal mental states. The worry is that we lack a good account of what a phenomenal mental state is.[11] While this alone is not sufficient to demonstrate that there are no phenomenal mental states, I take it to generate an initial worry for standard versions of PIT.[12] Let me explain.

Proponents of PIT posit an instantiation relation that holds between phenomenal mental states and phenomenal properties. So, when Alex is undergoing an experience of déjà vu, then, according to standard versions of PIT, Alex must be in a mental state of déjà vu—that is, Alex's mental state is such that it instantiates a déjà vu-ish phenomenal character. This might seem unproblematic, insofar as we commonly describe things as being in a state of such and such. For instance, we frequently say things like "the state of the economy is poor" and "the state of the room is a pigsty".[13] But consider the following example: "This desk is a mess". Of course, for this claim to be true it does not require that this desk must instantiate the property of *being a mess* or that the desk is in a state of being a mess. For the claim "this desk is a mess" to be true, it is sufficient that certain conditions obtain. Perhaps there are books scattered about the surface of the desk along with various other things like pens, pencils, pieces of paper, and so forth. We do not need to posit some extra ontologically substantive entity like a property or state of "being a mess" in addition to these conditions that obtain. Likewise, when Alex undergoes an experience of déjà vu, we do not need to posit an extra mental state that instantiates a phenomenal property. Or consider the sentence "Biden is a father". This sentence is true, and there is a predicate 'is

[11] For a discussion of this point, see e.g., Brown (2006).
[12] For discussion of similar worries, see e.g., Kriegel (2020).
[13] For a discussion of this issue, see e.g., Steward (2000), pp 115-117.

a father'. But in its deep metaphysics, it does not correspond to the existence of a metaphysically substantive property but rather to a relation. And insofar as mental states involve the instantiation of a real phenomenal property, we cannot immediately conclude from the truth of such a sentence as "this desk is a mess" or "Biden is a father" that there are real states involved. Thus, there are some reasons to be skeptical of phenomenal mental states and properties, which suggests that proponents of PIT may need to rethink the mental ontology involved in phenomenal intentionality.

4. The Temporal Shape of Conscious Experience.

The goal of this section is to introduce and elaborate upon the idea that conscious experience has an important kind of temporal structure, which I will refer to as its "temporal shape". I will argue that mental events have a temporal shape but states and properties lack a temporal shape. And since the sorts of conscious experiences that creatures like us can undergo have a temporal shape, we have grounds to conclude that the mental ontology of conscious experience is better understood in terms of phenomenal mental events than phenomenal mental states and phenomenal properties. Indeed, this is the *Real Problem* for versions of PIT that are built on a mental ontology of phenomenal mental states that instantiate phenomenal properties.

To get a better grip on what is at stake in this section, let us begin by considering two basic starting points that some take regarding how to conceptualize our conscious life. The first can be described using James's (1890) famous image of a stream of consciousness:

> Consciousness, then, does not appear to itself chopped up in bits. Such words as "chain" or "train" do not describe it fitly as it presents itself in the first instant. It

> is nothing jointed: it flows. A "river" or "stream" are the metaphors by which it is most naturally described. In talking of it hereafter, let us call it the stream of thought, of consciousness, or of subjective life (p. 233).

According to this intuitive starting point, conscious experiences are temporally structured such that, phenomenologically speaking, there is an unrelenting temporal flow in a particular direction. Call this the "Jamesian intuition". Someone might claim that they lack this intuition or that it is not clear what it means to say that experience is like a stream flowing in a temporal direction. This is a second basic starting point, which is in effect simply the negation of the first. Let us call it the "atomistic intuition", since it construes conscious experience as being built up out of more basic or fundamental ingredients. Given these basic points of departure, we can make a distinction between two conceptual schemes regarding conscious experiences: The Jamesian intuition takes phenomenal consciousness to be first-personal, mental events that have an important kind of temporal structure; the atomistic intuition construes phenomenal consciousness in terms of phenomenal mental states that instantiate phenomenal properties.[14]

To my mind, the Jamesian intuition does a better job of capturing our phenomenology of temporal experience. But it may be objected that an independent argument is needed for why we should begin by accepting this intuition rather than the atomistic intuition. I propose the following test to show why we should begin with the Jamesian intuition. Imagine two possible conscious experiences that are alike in every conceivable way except that the mental ontology for one of these conscious experience are phenomenal mental states that instantiate phenomenal properties and the mental ontology

[14] But things may not be as simple as I have suggested here, since there are various theories one might take concerning the nature and structure of conscious experience. See e.g., Lee (2014); Chuard (2017); Rashbrook-Cooper (2017).

for the other conscious experience involves mental events. If there are no phenomenological differences between these conscious experiences, then, we can infer that both intuitive starting points are equally plausible. But if there are phenomenological differences, then this should count in favor of the claim that one of the intuitive starting points does a better job of capturing what our phenomenology is like than the other intuitive starting point.

Advocates of the atomistic intuition might argue that some of the things we experience can be phenomenally blended in our total conscious experience, such that our phenomenology of these things will outstrip our capacity to make introspectively fine-grained distinctions.[15] Take for example our phenomenology of things like color. When we introspect the colors in our visual field, we can see that yellow and blue could be phenomenally blended to make green, in such a way that would make distinguishing, phenomenologically speaking, the yellow parts from the blue parts beyond our capacity to discern. If this is plausible, then maybe something similar occurs regarding our phenomenology of temporal experience.[16] The alleged fine-grained details of temporal experience might introspectively appear to flow like a stream rather than appear to us as chopped up bits because these features of experience are blended in such a way that outstrip our general capacity to make such introspective distinctions. If this is right, then there might not be any phenomenological differences between the two intuitive starting points.

But even if we grant that this explanation demonstrates what may occur for many things that we experience (e.g., our phenomenology of colors), the appeal to phenomenal

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[15] See e.g., Roelofs (2014, 2019).

[16] It is worth mentioning here that by talking about our phenomenology of temporal experience I am not concerned with our consciousness of time. Rather, I am referring to the temporal structure of one's experience.

blending is not plausible for the temporal structure of conscious experience. The problem is that temporal experience is not like colors, insofar as there is simply no commonsense model where one temporal part is mixed or blended with another temporal part in order to produce a third temporal part—that is, our phenomenology of temporality is not experienced as blended in the way that our phenomenology of color is.[17] Thus, there is an important phenomenological difference between the Jamesian intuition and the atomistic intuition. While some philosophers may still favor the atomistic intuition, I want to see how far we can extend the Jamesian intuition by considering the phenomenological evidence for this metaphor of a stream of consciousness.

Take for example how O'Shaughnessy (2000) explains the dynamic nature of conscious experience:

> Characteristically the contents of experience are in flux, being essentially occurrent in nature. Then being as such occurrent we can say, not merely that it *continues* in existence from instant to instant, but that it is at each instant *occurrently renewed*. Indeed, the very form of the experiential inner world, of the 'stream of consciousness', is such as to necessitate the occurrence of processes and events at all times. The identity-conditions obtaining are those appropriate to events and processes—in contradistinction to those governing states (43; emphasis in the original).

These phenomenological considerations strongly imply that there is an important distinction between states/properties and mental events, insofar as these things are presented in experience in radically different ways. To clarify this distinction, I want to introduce a term of art, which I will call a thing's "temporal shape". I grant that there is no unproblematic way to define this term, but this does not mean that there is no ostensive

[17] I want to thank an anonymous colleague for pressing the importance of this issue.

definition available in logical space. So, let us define the notion of *temporal shape* as follows:

> *Temporal Shape*: X has a temporal shape *if and only if* the following conditions are satisfied: (i) X is dynamic; and (ii) X fills or occupies some arbitrary duration of time by being composed of temporal parts or stages.[18]

While the main support for this definition is primarily phenomenological, the fact that we cannot give a proper, non-circular analysis of this term does not mean that it is useless.[19]

Take for example a situation where you hear a song for the very first time. Maybe you hear it while in the car, or you might stream it while waiting on someone. But, phenomenologically speaking, there is something conceptually significant and unique about the *way* you hear the song for the first time as it unfolds and takes shape. The relevant occurrence of your hearing this particular tune has a sort of temporal structure, such that it is dynamic and fills the relevant stretch of time by being composed of temporal parts. Indeed, it (the event) changes as you listen; the perceptual content appears from the first-personal perspective to be in flux. If this is plausible, then, arguably, there is much more involved in the temporal structure of conscious experience than merely specifying and marking the various temporal dimensions of the experience. As Steward (1997) says:

> For vastly more important than these temporal reference points, in determining the ontological category of an item, is the *way* in which that item fills the relevant period of time—whether it *persists* through time, or *occurs during* the time or obtains throughout the time, etc. Continuants, for example persist *through* time and exist, as wholes, at every moment of their existence, whereas events occur *at* times or *during* periods of time, and are unlike continuants in having temporal parts (p. 73; emphasis in the original).

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[18] This definition is inspired by Steward (1997), pp. 72-74.

[19] We can use the concept of a thing's temporal shape to better understand the way that thing shows up to us in phenomenally conscious experience. However, this does not mean that objective metaphysical issues can be settled by appealing to phenomenological considerations.

But in order to adequately account for the temporal structure of an experience, we also need to be able to capture the dynamic nature of conscious experiences. And it is not clear how this can be done using a conceptual scheme of phenomenal mental states and properties. Additionally, we need to be able to make sense of the *way* that a thing fills or occupies a temporal duration. Intuitively, states and properties are not dynamic and do not have temporal parts. But they are the sorts of things that can persist, wholly present, at every moment *through* time.

Take for example the Empire State Building, which is currently 1,454 feet tall. Let us say that it is *currently* in the state of instantiating the property of *being 1,454 feet tall*. But being this height is a contingent property of the Empire State Building, since its height could change, if, say, the antenna was to be extended or removed. Of course, if this were to occur, the state or property of *being 1,454 feet tall* would not itself change from one moment to the next, though the building itself would change by losing a state/property and gaining a different state/property.[20] Rather, its height would persist, wholly present as long as it exists—that is, until the antenna is extended or removed. Thus, the Empire State Building *being 1,454 feet tall* would fill some arbitrary duration of time, not by being composed of temporal parts but by persisting wholly present. And if this is correct, then it would lack a temporal shape.

Now consider the occurrence of my writing this sentence and your reading these words. These sorts of cases of conscious experience take time to occur or happen; they unfold or evolve over time, and the content of such experiences are represented as being

[20] Imagine that on May 1st 2031 the antenna is going to be replaced. In such a case, we could say that from May 1st 1931 to May 1st 2031 the Empire State Building instantiates the state/property of being 1,454 feet tall and that this state/property persists, wholly present throughout this 100-year period of time.

dynamic (i.e., changing), insofar as the experience evolves and develops from one moment to the next. Indeed, the temporal structure of my writing these words and your reading these words is a palpable part of such experiences, insofar as they are dynamic and fill the relevant stretch of time by seeming or appearing to be composed of temporal parts. Thus, these conscious experiences have a temporal shape.[21]

But notice that states/properties are the sorts of things that can persist, wholly present and do not have temporal parts. They are phenomenologically distinct from events, since the way that they fill some arbitrary temporal duration is radically different.[22] But this does not mean that states/properties have different temporal shapes from events, which would imply that they have a temporal shape. Rather, what I am claiming is that states/properties lack a temporal shape, insofar as they are not dynamic and are not composed of temporal parts.[23] But since events are dynamic and are composed of temporal parts, they do have a temporal shape. If this is right, then our conscious experiences are better understood as first-personal, phenomenal mental events.

Someone might object by arguing that even if state/properties do not have temporal parts, perhaps the instantiation of properties can have temporal parts. For instance, suppose that you are watching someone take a bite of a red apple. If the *instantiation* of the property *being red* exists from time t_1—t_3, then why not say that it (i.e., the instantiation of redness)

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[21] Arguably, this helps make sense of the Jamesian intuition that conscious experiences resemble a flowing stream rather than chopped up isolated moments.

[22] See e.g., Steward's (1997), p 74.

[23] Someone might object by arguing that it is not clear what a temporal part is. I grant that this is an important question and that the dispute between endurantists and perdurantists is typically taken to be a straightforward ontological dispute. For a discussion of temporal parts See e.g., Hawley (2020). However, I want to remain neutral about the objective ontological reality regarding the nature of temporal parts and how things persist through time. In this way, I am not simply rejecting endurantism by fiat. Rather, what I want to focus on is better understood in terms of subjective, first-personal ontology or metaphysics. This sort of view can be modeled on Paul's (2017) view of subjective ontology.

can also be composed of temporal parts corresponding to the relevant temporal region? Answer: I grant that there may be an *appearance* or *seeming* of the instantiation of redness that persists, wholly present through the relevant time interval. But it is the experience itself that is dynamic and is composed of temporal parts, not the instantiations that one seems to perceive. So, this sort of worry is avoided.

With these phenomenological considerations having been addressed, we are now in a position to see why conscious experiences like Alex's experience of déjà vu is better understood in terms of a mental ontology of first-personal, phenomenal mental events that subjects undergo, not phenomenal mental states that instantiate phenomenal properties. Recall what the argument from the first section says:

(1) If phenomenally conscious experiences are phenomenal mental states that instantiate phenomenal properties, then the phenomenal character of these experiences will lack a temporal shape.

(2) The phenomenal character of our conscious experiences has a temporal shape.

(3) Therefore, phenomenally conscious experiences are not phenomenal mental states that instantiate phenomenal properties.

Notice that (1) follows from the fact that states/properties are like continuants, insofar as their identity persists wholly present at every moment that they exist. Since they are not dynamic and they do not fill some temporal period by being composed of temporal parts, phenomenal mental states/properties would lack a temporal shape. So, if what I argued above regarding temporal shape is plausible, then we will have grounds to accept (1).

What about (2)? I take it to be introspectively evident that conscious experiences typically have the *appearance* of being mental events that have a temporal shape. And to justify the negation of (2), one would have to demonstrate that what appears to have a temporal shape in fact does not. In effect, the rejection of (2) would amount to asserting

that when we take ourselves to introspectively notice X, we are just plain wrong about what *seems* to us to be X. Indeed, the negation of (2) hinges on rejecting the Jamesian intuition, which is just to say that it asserts the atomistic intuition as one's basic starting point. But this is hardly good grounds for accepting the negation of (2).[24]

Now, given that conscious experiences like Alex's experience of déjà vu is to be conceptualized in terms of a first-personal, phenomenal mental event that Alex undergoes, I propose an alternative account of PIT. On this approach, phenomenality and intentionality are conceptually distinct, proper parts of a single, unified whole—a first-personal, mental event. Call this "Mereological PIT". This view can be characterized in terms of the following theses:

(a) For any intentional content C, C is nothing but a distinctional proper-part of an agent's mental event ME.

(b) For any phenomenal content C, C is nothing but a distinctional proper-part of an agent's mental event ME.[25]

On my view, mereological PIT has the theoretical advantage of avoiding the problems that we encountered previously. It requires only that mental events have conceptually distinct phenomenal and intentional proper parts, not phenomenal mental states that instantiate phenomenal properties. And if this is plausible, then proponents of PIT are free to adopt the view that the phenomenal and the intentional are metaphysically intertwined by being proper-parts of a subject's first-personal, mental event, while still accepting that they are

[24] It could be argued that there are cases of unchanging or static conscious experience where one visually perceives a single color that fills their entire visual field. If so, then not all conscious experiences have a temporal shape, and (2) would be false. But this case still has a kind of temporal shape, insofar one's visual field is constantly being renewed. So, the objection can be avoided. See e.g., O'Shaughnessy (2000), pp. 42-43.

[25] These theses are based on Dewalque (2013) p. 460 proposal.

conceptually distinct. Thus, mereological PIT succeeds exactly where standard accounts of PIT fail.

But someone might object by claiming that what I have argued is a mere terminological dispute. After all, philosophers tend to use the term "event" in a broad sense to include states and properties.[26] And, perhaps, when philosophers use terms like "conscious state" and "experiential property" what they have in mind is a structured, complex entity of some form (i.e., an event). If so, then it would be an illicit move to ground what I have argued on our assigning different meanings to terms like "state", "property", and "event".[27]

In response, let me grant that there is a sense in which the arguments I have offered can be interpreted as a dispute about the meaning of the terms we use. But even if what I have said is in some sense terminological, it is not conceptually insignificant. This is because what matters are not the terms we use but the soundness of the conceptual scheme we deploy in our understanding of the relevant phenomena. To get a better sense of why the conceptual scheme matters, consider Kim's (1973, 1976) influential view of events as property exemplification at times. Call this view, "Property Exemplification at Times" (PET). According to PET: An event E can be represented in the form [*S*, *p*, *t*], whereby *S* stands for some substance, *p* stands for some property, and *t* stands for some interval of time. Thus, PET says that an event E exists *iff S* has *p* at *t*.

Now, if proponents of PIT either implicitly or explicitly assume the conceptual scheme of PETs in the background, this would help explain why one might think that talk

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[26] See e.g., Kim (1976), p. 34.

[27] Indeed, one might object by claiming that what I have argued commits a *tu quoque* fallacy. But I reject this objection, insofar as I have offered a principled reason for why mental states and properties lack a temporal shape, whereas mental events have a temporal shape.

of states/properties and events are interchangeable.[28] As Steward (1997) claims: "On the basis of this assumption, it is very commonly accepted that arguments and positions in the philosophy of mind which are formulated explicitly in terms of events may be applied without adjustment of any kind also to states and processes" (p. 5). But what exactly does it mean to say that an event just is a PET? The problem is that it is not clear whether a PET should be taken to refer to an abstract, set-like entity, (where abstract is understood as referring to entities that are not located in space, time, or spacetime), or whether PETs are better understood as concrete particulars of some suitable form. To put this point differently, it is not clear whether Kim's notion of a PET refers to a model or what is being modeled.

Notice that Kim's notion of a PET is a describing sentence like '*Rab*', which is clearly relational or predicative in form and indicates a description of something that may occur or happen. But these descriptors do not identify any particular occurrence or happening because they are not definite descriptions like "Franklin D. Roosevelt's first fireside chat in 1933". This is not by accident. Kim invoked PETs for a specific explanatory and theoretical purpose—they enable us to translate talk of events into talk of states/properties. As Steward (1997) says: "Kim wants the individuation of events to be closely tied to considerations about intersubstitutability in explanatory contexts" (p. 23). But there are places where Kim claims that for PETs to have this theoretical advantage, we must treat them as set-like entities (e.g., ordered pairs). This suggests that PETs are only models of events, not the event being modeled. If this is the correct view of what an event

[28] There are various theories of events that I have omitted that tend to construe talk of events as being in some sense interchangeable with talk of states/properties. See e.g., Bennett's (1988); Lewis (1986); Lombard's (1986); Vendler (1957); Kenny (1963); and Davidson (1967, 1970).

is, it would hardly be interchangeable with phenomenal mental states that instantiate phenomenal properties, since there is no ordinary way to understand how an abstract, set-like entity could be phenomenally conscious—that is, there is *nothing-it-is-like* to be a set, since sets lack a phenomenal feel.

Still, there are other places where Kim (1973, 1976) insists that PETs *can* be construed in terms of concrete particulars.[29] Indeed, Kim offers a criterion of identity for PETs, which suggests that if we can identify individual or distinct properties, this will secure that we have individual or distinct concrete PETs. But merely having a criterion of identity for PETs will not help. Here is the problem: Suppose that a PET is a structured complex concrete particular. If talk of states/properties is interchangeable with talk of mental events, this must be because they are either identical or one is composed of the other. But given that states/properties lack a temporal shape, whereas events have a temporal shape, it is not clear how they could be either identical or how one could compose the other.

On the one hand, we would need an account of the identity relation, such that states/properties that have a temporal shape can be identical to events that lack a temporal shape. But this would entail a contradiction, which suffices to show that they are not identical. On the other hand, if PETs are composed of states/properties (I think this is what most philosophers have in mind), then we would need an account of the composition relation, such that it can be shown how something with a temporal shape can be composed out of that which lacks a temporal shape. But, things lacking a temporal shape cannot be composed out of things that have a temporal shape. As Steward (1997) says: "…it seems

[29] See e.g., Kim (1976), p. 40. But, as Horgan (1978) observes, Kim must have been mistaken, since there is no ordinary spatiotemporal understanding of concrete particulars that include abstract objects like sets.

to me not implausible to hold that the composition relation can only intelligibly relate items which have the same temporal shape" (p. 73). If this is correct, then it is false to claim that we can unproblematically alternate between talk of states/properties and mental events. Thus, even if we grant that there is a sense in which what I have argued hinges on mere terminological differences, it is not the case that nothing conceptually significant hangs in the balance. Indeed, the soundness of the conceptual scheme used to understand the required mental ontology of conscious experiences hangs in the balance, which I take to be far more than a mere dispute about the proper use of words.

Given that states/properties do not have a temporal shape, but conscious experiences do have a temporal shape, this raises an obvious problem for PIT. Either there will be no intentional mental content or PIT will be an incoherent view. Of course, proponents of PIT can reject the standard view, which construes conscious experiences in terms of phenomenal mental states that instantiate phenomenal properties, in favor of the mereological account of PIT that I proposed above. But what, if any, upshot is there for adopting such an account, beyond what I have already mentioned? In the following section, I want to turn our attention to this question.

5. A Theoretical Upshot.

Before concluding, I want to consider a theoretical upshot for PIT, if what I have argued is correct. PIT asserts that all intentional content is phenomenally constituted. But what about alleged cases of unconscious thought, like your unconscious belief that "grass is green"? Many have found this problem about unconscious or non-phenomenal

intentionality to be the most difficult of all the challenges proponents of PIT face.[30] So, if a mereological approach to PIT does a better job of answering this problem than standard versions of the view, this will count as a compelling reason in support of my claim that conscious experiences are first-personal, subjective mental events.

Many proponents of PIT have endorsed some version of a derivativist strategy to the problem of unconscious intentional content, whereby non-phenomenal intentionality becomes genuinely intentional derivatively from phenomenally intentional mental states.[31] And given that the derivativist strategy promises to deliver the right answer in all cases of alleged non-phenomenal intentionality, it might seem like a plausible solution to the problem of unconscious thought. But, as Mendelovici argues, a derivativist strategy is doomed to fail because genuine intentionality simply is not the sort of thing that can be derived or passed from one state to another.[32] Here is how Mendelovici (2018) puts this objection:

> One thing cannot "catch" another thing's intentionality simply by being sufficiently close to it or by bumping into it. So, even if a derivativist theory's predictions are in line with prior expectations, there remains a further question of whether the derivation mechanisms in question can really "pass" content around as required (p. 165).

If Mendelovici's objection to the derivativist strategy is plausible, then one might be tempted toward a kind of skepticism about genuine cases of unconscious or non-phenomenal intentionality. Indeed, this sort of eliminativist strategy is precisely the approach that Mendelovici endorses.[33] But the intuitive costs involved in the eliminativist

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[30] See e.g., Pitt (forthcoming), chapter 6.

[31] For an overview and discussion of derivativist strategies to the problem, see e.g., Mendelovivi (2018) chapter 8. See also, Pitt (forthcoming) chapter 6.

[32] See e.g., Mendelovici (2018), p. 165.

[33] See e.g., Mendelovici (2018), chapters 7 & 8.

strategy are immense, since it involves rejecting paradigm examples of intentional content, like your belief that "grass is green", from being genuinely intentional. And it is not clear that the theoretical upshot is worth the price proponents of PIT must pay.

Fortunately, these are not our only options. If proponents of PIT abandon the assumption that conscious experiences are to be understood using the conceptual scheme of phenomenal mental states that instantiate phenomenal properties, they are still free to accept a conceptual scheme that takes the relevant mental ontology to be first-personal, phenomenal mental events. And in doing so, they can endorse a mereological account of PIT, whereby the phenomenal and the intentional are related (or metaphysically intertwined) by being proper parts of a single, unified whole—the agent's first-personal, mental event. Thus, cases of non-phenomenal intentionality, like your belief that "grass is green", are genuinely intentional as expected. But this is not because it (i.e., non-phenomenal intentionality) derives its intentionality from something else that is phenomenally intentional. Rather, your belief that "grass is green" is a primitive and unanalyzed proper-part of your occurrent phenomenal mental event, insofar as it is primitively *directed* at some way that the world is or might be.

The mereological account of PIT shifts the focus from attempting to explain how unconscious thought becomes genuinely intentional to a parthood relationship between intentionality and phenomenality. Indeed, Mereological-PIT dissolves the problem of unconscious thought by claiming that all intentionality *per se* (including unconscious thought) is related to phenomenality by being proper-parts of an agent's first-personal, subjective, mental event. This version of PIT has all of the advantages of the derivativist strategy but without the need to give an account of a mysterious derivation mechanism in

order to make sense of what appears to be one of the most obvious cases of genuine intentionality. Likewise, it fairs better than the eliminativist strategy insofar as it is not too revisionary. Thus, by embracing a mereological account of PIT, we have a straightforward answer to one of the most serious challenges proponents of PIT face.

In conclusion: I have argued that, if phenomenal mental states and properties lack a temporal shape, but conscious experience has a temporal shape, this generates a problem for proponents of PIT. Namely, either there will be no intentional mental content or PIT will be an incoherent view. But proponents of PIT can adopt mereological PIT, whereby intentionality is metaphysically related to phenomenal consciousness by being proper-parts of a cognitive agent's first-personal, phenomenal mental events that subjects undergo.

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CHAPTER FOUR

Toward A Mereological Account of Phenomenal Intentionality

1. Introduction.

According to the Phenomenal Intentionality Theory (PIT), all genuine or "original" intentionality is significantly related to phenomenality.[1] Arguably, one of the leading motivations for proponents of PIT is the goal of understanding the mind as unified, insofar as there is a significant connection between intentionality and phenomenal consciousness.[2] We can think about this motivation as offering an answer to the following questions:

(i) What reasons are there for thinking that there is a significant relationship or connection between phenomenal consciousness and intentionality—are they inseparable?

(ii) What would have to be the case regarding the nature of this relation, such that intentionality is counterfactually dependent on phenomenal consciousness?

Proponents of PIT like Horgan and Teinson (2002) have attempted to answer the first question by arguing that there is an intentionality of phenomenology and a

[1] See e.g., Kriegel (2013a); Horgan (2013); Mendelovici (2018); and Mendelovici & Bourget (2020). Proponents of PIT often describe intentionality as being phenomenally constituted. However, even on a charitable interpretation of what it means to be phenomenally constituted, it is not clear what this means. My claim is that what is needed is a kind of minimal condition for PIT. Namely, that intentionality is counterfactually dependent on phenomenality.

[2] See e.g., Brentano (1874); Graham et al. (2007, 2009); Farkas (2008); Nes (2012); Crane (2013b); Masrour (2013); and Chudnoff (2013; 2015).

phenomenology of intentionality.[3] If this is correct, then the view that the phenomenal and the intentional are separate would be false in at least some cases. Regarding (ii), standard versions of PIT typically hold that the nature of the relationship between the phenomenal and the intentional is either some form of an asymmetric grounding relationship like supervenience or an identity relationship that holds between them.[4] Call the asymmetric grounding approach "Grounding-PIT". Call the identity version "Identity-PIT". Notice, however, that these do not exhaust the possible views that exist in logical space, and the idea that intentionality and phenomenality are mental parts of a whole, mental event is not an incoherent thought.[5] So, a mereological account of PIT should be taken seriously as a live option.

Proponents of PIT do not typically offer a direct argument in support of their preferred answer to (ii).[6] Rather, they tend to answer this question by showing how their preferred account of the nature of the relationship between the intentional and the phenomenal has certain theoretical advantages and payoffs that alternative accounts lack. To put this point differently, they attempt to show how their view of PIT does a better job of offering a plausible solution to various difficult problem cases.[7] In what follows, I shall anticipate and focus on several answers to (ii) offered in the existent literature. But my primary goal in this chapter is to propose and partly defend an account of phenomenal intentionality that has been overlooked by proponents of PIT: Namely, a mereological account of phenomenal intentionality.[8] I will call this approach "Mereological-PIT". This

[3] See e.g., Horgan & Teinson (2002), pp. 521-523.
[4] See e.g. Kriegel (2013a); and Bourget & Mendelovici (2019).
[5] I take it to be fairly intuitive to that a mental event that cognitive agents undergo can have parts.
[6] For a discussion of this point, see e.g., Bailey & Richards (2013).
[7] The best example of this structure of arguing is Mendelovici (2018).
[8] This is not entirely correct. Dewalque (2013) proposes and partly defends a Mereological Account of PIT.

alternative approach to PIT says that the phenomenal and the intentional are inseparably related or significantly connected by being proper-parts of an agent's whole, first-personal, subjective, and unfolding mental event.

The paper is organized as follows: I begin by laying out the standard accounts of PIT and the most challenging problem that PIT faces—the problem of unconscious thought (Section 2). I then argue that standard versions of PIT fail to provide a plausible solution to the problem of unconscious thought (Sections 3 & 4). Once these failed solutions to the problem have been discussed, I will propose a mereological account of PIT and argue that this account of PIT is the most plausible solution to the problem of unconscious thought (Section 5). I will then consider and respond to various objections (Section 6), prior to concluding (Section 7).

2. Phenomenal Intentionality and the Problem of Unconscious Thought.

Many proponents of PIT take it to be a general theory of what intentionality *is*—that is, a theory of the deep, fundamental nature of intentionality.[9] On this approach, phenomenal consciousness is the source of all genuine or "original" intentionality.[10] So, if some mental state M is a phenomenal intentional mental state, then M is an intentional state that arises from the phenomenal character of some phenomenal conscious mental state or states.[11] But since PIT says that the intentional content of a phenomenal intentional mental state M is

[9] See e.g., Mendelovici (2013), chapter 5.

[10] See e.g., Kriegel (2013a), p. 3. See also, Mendelovici (2018), pp. 92-93.

[11] It is worth mentioning that most proponents of PIT describe the view in terms of mental states and phenomenal properties. In previous chapters of this dissertation I argued that this is a mistake. However, in this chapter I do not need to rely on demonstrating that mental ontology involved in phenomenal intentionality does not involve mental states and phenomenal properties, since my argument relies on showing why construing phenomenal intentionality in terms of first-personal, subjective mental events has theoretical advantages that standard accounts of PIT lack.

constitutively determined by the phenomenal character of M, then if M's content is intentional content, M's content is phenomenal content. Likewise, we can think of PIT as committed to the view that there can be no change in genuine or "original" intentional content without a corresponding change in the phenomenal character of some phenomenal conscious mental state or states. This is a strong way of characterizing PIT because it claims that *all* genuine or "original" intentionality has as its source phenomenal intentionality. Thus, this approach is a kind of Strong-PIT.

A weaker version of PIT claims that *all* genuine intentionality is either identical to or partly grounded in phenomenal mental states (i.e., the phenomenal character of a mental state). According to this approach, the source of all genuine forms of intentionality is phenomenal consciousness, since it affirms the claim that all genuine intentional content arises from phenomenal consciousness. However, it allows for different ways that this might occur; it might be the case that genuine intentional content C arises from a phenomenally conscious mental state M by being identical to M. Or C might arise from M in some derivative way, whereby a non-phenomenal intentional content C would get its intentionality from some genuine/original phenomenally intentional mental content. So, phenomenal consciousness might give rise to genuine intentionality because they are identical, or because the former is grounded in, supervenes on, or is in some sense realized by the latter. We can think of this as a kind of Moderate-PIT.[12]

[12] In what follows, I will argue that there is an alternative way of thinking about the relationship between intentionality and phenomenal consciousness. On the view I shall propose, if intentional content and phenomenal content are mental events of a whole, unified mental event, then intentionality and phenomenality are inseparably related, insofar as intentionality is counterfactually dependent on phenomenality. And this will satisfy (ii) above.

Before moving on, however, it is important to notice that Moderate-PIT acknowledges that all alleged cases of non-phenomenal intentionality count as genuinely intentional only if they get their intentional content from the source of all genuine intentionality. But this way of thinking about the relationship is stronger than what is minimally needed for PIT, since (ii) requires only that intentionality is counterfactually dependent on phenomenal consciousness.[13] So, if it can be shown that intentionality and phenomenality are mental parts of a unified, mental event, such that intentionality is counterfactually dependent on phenomenal consciousness, then we should not automatically reject a mereological account of PIT.[14]

Now, it might be tempting to think that alleged cases of non-phenomenal intentionality like one's standing or dispositional belief that "grass is green" are straightforward counterexamples to PIT construed as a fully general theory of what the nature of intentionality is. One might accept that there is a kind of intentionality that is constitutively determined by phenomenal consciousness but deny that this is true for all cases of genuine intentionality.[15] This is a form of Restricted-PIT, since it restricts the view to some but not all cases of intentionality. Notice, however, that Restricted-PIT does not count as a fully general theory of intentionality, insofar as it does not aim at explaining

[13] See e.g., Kriegel (2013b), p. 437. Kriegel says that this is a neutral way of characterizing the basic commitments of phenomenal intentionality. I suggest that this is a neutral characterization of phenomenal intentionality because it is what is minimally needed.

[14] One initial way of describing this counterfactual dependence relation is as follows: An intentional content C is phenomenally intentionality just in case if it were not phenomenal, then it would not be intentional. Of course, this counterfactual dependence will run in both directions. As such, one might worry that it is not obvious in what way phenomenal consciousness would be more fundamental than intentionality. I will discuss the details of the relevant counterfactual dependence relationship and this potential problem in Section 6.

[15] See e.g., Siewert (1998).

what the deep, fundamental nature of intentionality is.[16] Indeed, Restricted-PIT is really a kind of weakening of PIT—it allows that there are genuine cases of intentionality that are not derived from phenomenal intentionality.[17] But what is important for our current purpose is that both Strong-PIT and Moderate-PIT are typically taken to be fully general theories of what intentionality is. Hence, they must be able to give a plausible account of all alleged cases of *actual* and *possible* intentionality, including difficult cases of unconscious thought like one's standing or dispositional belief that "grass is green".[18] Prior to moving on, however, several clarifications regarding the difference between how proponents of PIT typically construe intentional content and how intentional content has been understood in contemporary philosophy of mind are in order. And making these differences clear now will allow us to better appreciate why a mereological account of PIT gives us the best answer to (ii).

Intentional content: There are various ways that contemporary analytic philosophers have attempted to understand the nature of intentional content. For instance, some philosophers have argued that contents are ordinary objects, facts, ways of representing something, platonic ideas, propositions, and so on. And each of these ways of understanding contents can be construed as being in some sense existing independent of

[16] It might be objected that the account I propose should be understood as a form of Restricted-PIT. If so, then it will not count as a fully general theory of what intentionality is. But I am not attempting to give a fully general account of all actual and possible instances of intentionality. For the purpose of this dissertation, I am only concerned with cases of alleged intentionality for adult human agents. This issue will be discussed in further detail in Section 6.

[17] For a discussion of this point, see e.g.., Mendelovici (2018), p. 85 footnote 4. In what follows, I shall set aside questions about Strong and Restricted-PIT. Instead, I will primarily focus on Moderate-PIT.

[18] I will not attempt to give an account of possible instances of non-phenomenal intentional content. But for a general overview of ways these problems have been addressed in the literature, see e.g., Mendelovici (2018), pp. 97-100.

the subject or cognitive agent.[19] But proponents of PIT hold that intentional content just is whatever the mind is directed at—that is, the aboutness of a subject's thought.[20] If this is right, then when Smith has the thought that "grass is green", then Smith's mind is directed at or about the grass being green. Indeed, this will be true even if there is no grass or if Smith is thinking about nonexistent things like Bigfoot. Thus, PIT is a strongly internalist picture of intentional content, insofar as it holds that intentional contents are internal to the subject's mind and are counterfactually dependent on phenomenal consciousness.[21] While we must keep this difference in mind as we continue, there are other important differences to consider.

Vehicles of intentional content: The Vehicle of an intentional content is what bears or carries that intentional content. Some philosophers have thought that the vehicles of intentional contents are linguistic symbols in a language of thought, token brain states of a subject, or subjects themselves. On my view, the vehicle of an intentional content is best understood as the subject that is undergoing the occurrence of a mental event because it is the relevant subject (i.e., cognitive agent) that has the experience of thinking that *p*, not merely a subject's brain or linguistic items that a subject uses to communicate the intentional content *p*. And if the subject is what bears the relevant intentional content, then that content is internal to the subject and is not capable of independently existing.[22]

Narrow and wide contents: The dominant view of intentional content in contemporary, analytic, philosophy of mind is that (a) the truth-conditions of intentional

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[19] These standard approaches are admittedly inconsistent with the mereological account of PIT that I want to defend. But the view I will defend is not inconsistent with PIT.

[20] See e.g., Mendelovici (2018), p. 6 for an ostensive definition of intentionality.

[21] Some philosopher take internalism about mental content as motivation for PIT. See e.g., Horgan & Tienson (2002) and Loar (2003).

[22] While this is not the standard approach to intentional content, it is consistent with PIT.

content are determined by things outside of the subject and/or (b) the content is itself at least partly determined by factors external to the subject. But this is another place where PIT differs from standard accounts of intentional content. Following Horgan and Tienson (2002), proponents of PIT claim that we need to make a distinction between narrow and wide contents and their corresponding truth-conditions. Wide contents are determined by factors external to the subject and, therefore, such contents could arguably exist independently from the subject if, for instance, they are propositions.[23] However, narrow contents are not determined by factors external to the subject; they are determined by factors that are "skin-in", to use Horgan and Tienson's description (p. 528). Thus, even if we allow that wide contents can exist independent of the subject, it is not the case that narrow contents can.

Attitude relation towards a content: It is also quite common in contemporary debates regarding intentionality for philosophers to construe a subject's attitude relation towards an intentional content (e.g., a belief relation) as an attitude that the subject takes toward a proposition. But I think this is problematic because this approach to intentional content presupposes a relational account of intentionality, which I reject. To see why, we need to make a distinction between aboutness and reference. Reference is clearly relational, but aboutness is not. It could be the case that certain linguistic items refer to something external and independent to the subject, which would imply that the linguistic item is relational. But why should we think that aboutness relates the subject to something independent and external to the subject? Since I think that intentional content just is the aboutness of thought or whatever the mind is directed at, it could be that narrow content is

[23] But see e.g., Soames (2015) for an account of propositions that internally structured cognitive acts rather than objects existing external to the subject.

non-relational, though reference is relational. While some proponents of PIT (e.g., Farkas 2013 and Masrour 2013), take a relational view of intentional content, others (e.g., Kriegel 2007; Crane 2013a; Mendelovici 2018; and Pitt forthcoming) do not. But PIT does not entail a relational account of intentional content the way that some standard accounts like teleosemantics and tracking theories of intentionality arguably do. Thus, we are under no rational pressure to endorse a relational account of narrow intentional content. The approach to narrow intentional content that I favor does not require an attitude relation to an independently existing item, an intentional content. All that is required is that what we call an "attitude relation toward a content" is understood as an item internal to the subject or the subject's mental experience construed as an unfolding, temporally extended mental event.[24] Having made clear how PIT differs from some standard approaches to intentionality in contemporary analytic philosophy of mind, let us turn our attention to an important problem case that proponents of PIT face.

Arguably, the most sobering challenge to PIT involves alleged cases of unconscious thought.[25] This is because PIT claims that it is a metaphysically necessary truth that there can be no genuine intentionality apart from phenomenal consciousness. Yet, it is not difficult to deliver a case where intentionality and phenomenal consciousness seem to come apart. For instance, many philosophers and cognitive scientists accept the Freudian idea that we must attribute to a thinker certain unconscious intentional contents

[24] One such account is Kriegel's (2007) adverbial view of intentional inexistence, whereby a subject's thought that *p* can be construed as thinking P-wise.

[25] See e.g., Pitt (forthcoming MS: chapter 6). Notice that there are different versions of what I am calling "the problem of unconscious thought", but since the crux of the problem for PIT involves explaining how something lacking a phenomenal character can become genuinely intentional, I shall deploy a simplifying assumption, which treats these problems as being of the same general type—problems concerning alleged cases of non-phenomenal intentionality.

(e.g., beliefs, desires, fears, etc.) in order to make sense of and explain certain human behaviors. Indeed, many philosophers take propositional attitudes, like a thinker's standing or dispositional belief that "grass is green" to be paradigm examples of genuine intentionality. But since we are not always consciously attending to such contents, insofar as they are not always before the conscious mind's eye (so to speak), then proponents of PIT need to either explain how unconscious beliefs get their intentionality or explain away such cases.

There are several choice points that proponents of PIT might take in attempting to explain (or explain away) the problem of unconscious thought. First, one might take a *derivativist* strategy, whereby one must show how all alleged cases of unconscious (or non-phenomenal) intentional contents get their intentionality derivatively from phenomenal intentionality. Second, one might take an *eliminativist* strategy, whereby one must show why, contrary to what we pretheoretically think, all alleged problem cases involving so-called paradigm examples of genuine intentionality are in reality not genuinely intentional after all.[26] Moreover, these choice points correspond to the different ways proponents of PIT typically characterize the nature of phenomenal intentionality. For instance, proponents of Grounding-PIT tend to endorse a derivativist strategy, which says that in cases of unconscious thought like your belief that "grass is green", unconscious belief must

[26] One could always endorse an *inflationist* strategy, whereby one argues that cases of unconscious beliefs, like your belief that "grass is green", are in some coherent sense phenomenally conscious after all. But most proponents of PIT deny that standing or dispositional cognitive states can be phenomenally conscious in the required way because, arguably, intrinsically unconscious states by definition cannot be intrinsically phenomenally conscious. If this is correct, then an inflationist strategy can be dismissed as not a serious solution to the problem.

get its intentionality by deriving it from a different phenomenal intentional mental state or states.[27] As Kriegel (2013a) claims:

> It is when the relevant phenomenal character shows up that intentionality makes its first appearance on the scene. Here too, once this phenomenal character appears, and brings in its train "original intentionality," intentionality can be "passed around" to things lacking this (or any) phenomenal character. But the source of all intentionality is the relevant phenomenal character (p. 3).

On the other hand, those who endorse Identity-PIT tend to argue that paradigm cases of intentionality, like your standing or dispositional belief that "grass is green", are not genuinely intentional. Thus, proponents of Identity-PIT typically endorse an eliminativist strategy to the problem of unconscious thought, insofar as they are committed to the view that what we call "unconscious thoughts" are not in reality genuinely intentional, though they might count as being some other form of representational mental goings-on.[28]

However, there is a third way of characterizing phenomenal intentionality, which has been largely ignored in the literature and will, arguably, provide an alternative strategy for handling cases of unconscious thought. One could hold that intentionality and phenomenal consciousness are inseparably related by being proper-parts of a first-personal, subjective, mental event, which cognitive agents can undergo.[29] I will argue that by

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[27] Arguably, the majority of advocates of PIT have taken a derivativist approach to the problem of unconscious thought. See e.g., Searl (1991); Loar (2003); Graham et. al (2007); Pautz (2008); Horgan & Graham (2009); Bourget (2010, 2015); Kriegel (2011).

[28] For examples of philosophers who either explicitly endorse or appear sympathetic toward a strong identity version of PIT, see e.g., Pitt (2004); Mendelovici (2010, 2018); Farkas (2008); and Strawson (1994, 2004).

[29] To my knowledge, the only attempt to defend a mereological account of PIT recently (in the past twenty years) and discussed in the existent literature on phenomenal intentionality is offered by Dewalque (2013). However, the mereological account of PIT I will propose is different from Dewalque's view, insofar as I maintain that we should construe the intentional and phenomenal to be proper-parts of an agent's mental event. Dewalque takes them to be mental states and properties of the agent. But in previous chapters, I offered various objections to standard views of PIT that construes phenomenal consciousness in terms of mental states. This represents an important difference between the view that I defend and Dewalque's approach. But I will leave it to the reader to decide for themselves whether and/or to what extent our views are sufficiently different.

accepting this characterization of phenomenal intentionality, the problem of unconscious thought is solved because it never arises. Therefore, Mereological-PIT is an important improvement over Grounding-PIT and Identity-PIT, insofar as it has all of the promised theoretical advantages of the standard accounts but without the intuitive costs.[30] Let us turn our attention to how these views attempt to solve the problem of unconscious thought and why we should reject them.

3. Derivativism.

In this section, I will examine various ways that proponents of PIT have attempted to show that unconscious thought gets its intentionality by deriving it from phenomenal consciousness. And I will argue that each of these versions of the derivativist strategy are implausible.

The guiding idea behind derivativism about unconscious thought like your belief that "grass is green" is that some forms of intentionality can be transferred or transmitted from one mental state to another, such that non-phenomenal states can become genuinely intentional states. Advocates of PIT have taken different approaches to how we should understand the idea that intentionality can be "passed" from one state to another. In what follows, I will consider the leading accounts of derivativism and show why they fail to solve the problem of unconscious thought.

3.1. The Potentialist Derivativist Strategy: According to this strategy, there are intentional mental states that are phenomenally conscious (i.e., phenomenal intentional

[30] Indeed, I believe that intentionality and phenomenality understood in terms of mental parts of a whole mental event can help us understand and explain what is going on in each alleged problem case of actual intentional content. But to pursue this issue in sufficient detail would take us beyond the scope of this chapter. So, I will let set this issue aside temporarily.

states), and there are intentional mental states that are only potentially phenomenally conscious. If this is true, then it offers a way for proponents of PIT to claim that unconscious thoughts, like your standing or dispositional belief that "grass is green", derives its intentionality *in virtue of* being, in some sense, potentially phenomenally conscious.[31] The basic problem with this strategy is that the notion of a potentially phenomenally conscious mental state is thoroughly dispositional—that is, such a state is *possibly* but not *actually* phenomenally conscious. And given that most advocates of PIT are not willing to accept that dispositional states or properties can be phenomenally conscious, this strategy would require an independent argument for inflationism about unconscious thought. Put differently, this strategy requires a defense of the claim that dispositional or counterfactual goings on can be phenomenally conscious, where a part of what this means involves a first-personal, subjective point-of-view.[32]

However, someone could always respond to this sort of problem by arguing that we should not construe an unconscious belief as literally becoming genuinely intentional. Instead, we can think of unconscious thoughts and phenomenally conscious thoughts as sharing the very same intentional contents—hence, accentuating Kriegel's (2013a) claim that intentionality is "passed" from one state to another. On this view, the content of your unconscious belief that "grass is green" may be accessible to you immediately in conscious experience, though most of the time the content will remain only potentially phenomenally conscious. But it is not clear how this response is an improvement, since it maintains that

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[31] See e.g., Searle (1991); Graham et al (2007); and Bourget (2010).

[32] For instance, Mendelovici (2018), p. 97 claims that "it is implausible that these contents are phenomenally represented". The idea here seems to be that an inflationist strategy toward unconscious thought is implausible because there is *nothing-it-is-like*, phenomenologically speaking, associated with non-phenomenal intentionality. While I am not convinced that this is true, in what follows, I will not attempt to argue to the contrary.

the content of your unconscious belief that "grass is green" is possibly but not actually phenomenally intentional. And if it is metaphysically necessary that all genuine intentionality is phenomenally constituted, then one would either need to provide an independent argument for inflationism about unconscious phenomenology or accept the apparent fact that potentially phenomenally conscious states are not phenomenally conscious.

At this point, someone might attempt to argue that a potentially phenomenal conscious mental state M might have a kind of "basic" or proto-consciousness, though M would not count as being phenomenally conscious. Perhaps one could then hold that the former is a primitive form of consciousness that does not require a first-personal, subjective point of view for someone, whereas the latter does require a first-personal, subjective point of view for someone.[33] Thus, one might think that the content of your unconscious belief that "grass is green" might count as actually conscious but not actually phenomenally conscious, if it has a proto-consciousness that is not conscious for anyone. Indeed, it might be the case that phenomenal consciousness requires consciousness. And if this is plausible, it might give us a way to argue that a potentially phenomenal conscious mental state M has a basic, non-phenomenal form of mere consciousness, though M is only potentially phenomenally conscious.

There are two problems with the above proposal. First, it would still require an independent reason to endorse inflationism about unconscious thought, since it would involve non-phenomenal "things" that can have a basic kind of mere consciousness.

[33] See e.g., Pitt's (2004) p. 3 footnote 4 claim that we need to distinguish between consciousness and phenomenal consciousness. If this is correct, then one might be able to show that non-phenomenal intentionality can have a basic kind of consciousness but lack phenomenal consciousness—that is, lack a first-personal point of view for a subject.

Second, even if an inflationist account about non-phenomenal consciousness can be made plausible, we would still not have a good reason to think that things lacking a first-personal, subjective point of view for someone can become genuinely intentional by deriving the relevant intentional content from a phenomenal intentional mental state. The main problem remains the same—it is not clear how intentionality can be transferred from an actually phenomenally intentional mental state to a merely potentially phenomenally conscious mental state. To put the problem in a different way: Intentionality is not the sort of thing that can be "passed around" from one thing to another.[34]

3.2. Functionalist Derivativism. According to the functionalist derivativist strategy, if an unconscious mental state M has the right causal-functional relations to an actual phenomenal conscious mental state (or set of phenomenally conscious mental states), then M can *derive* the required intentionality from the relevant actual phenomenally conscious mental state or states.[35]

The problem with a functionalist approach is that, arguably, when we detach intentionality from an agent's first-personal, subjective, point-of-view, this inevitably results in the wild view that everything counts as being genuinely intentional.[36] Take, for

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[34] See e.g., Mendelovicic (2018), pp. 163-166.

[35] See e.g., Loar (2003); Graham et al. (2007); Pautz (2008); Horgan & Graham (2009); and Bourget (2010). For an example of someone who is sympathetic to some of the claims made by PIT regarding a functionalist derivativist solution to unconscious thought but does not explicitly endorse the view, see e.g., Chalmers (2010). It is worth calling attention to the fact that the picture being considered here is neutral on whether the relevant functional relations are to be construed in terms of sub-personal, information carrying causal relations or a kind of *a priori* functionalist view that construes the relevant functional roles to be determined by folk-psychology. This is important because both approaches claim that causal-functional relations are supposed to work as a kind of "anchor point" to help determine or constitute phenomenal intentional mental states. While this claim can be questioned (see e.g., Pautz 2013; and Brailey & Richards 2013), the general points is just that we have some grounds to doubt this sort of derivativism about unconscious thought.

[36] See e.g., Strawson (2004).

instance, Strawson's (2004) argument that intentionality and consciousness are inseparable:

> (1) There are objectively legitimate ways of cutting the world…into causes and effects and this can be done in such a way that
> (2) the things picked out as effects are reliable signs of the things picked out as their causes and that in this sense
> (3) every effect may be said to 'carry information' about its cause. It may be that there is a way of cutting the world into cause and effects in such a way that
> (4) every effect carries uniquely identifying information about its cause. But whether or not this is so…it seems plausible to expand (3), that
> (5) every effect can be said to carry information about its cause, and in that sense to be about its cause, and in that sense to represent its cause, and therefore that
> (6) [Underived Aboutness] is utterly ubiquitous.

I take this argument to provide a powerful, independent, though defeasible, reason to doubt that a functionalist derivativist strategy—irrespective of whether we construe the causal-functional relations in terms of sub-personal, information carrying causal relations or as being in some sense determined by our folk-psychology—can give us a solution to the problem of unconscious thought, unless the view that genuine or "original" intentionality is ubiquitous is coherent. Arguably, it is not; to assert that it is coherent would involve too high of an intuitive price to pay for an otherwise unsupported account of unconscious thought. Thus, I would argue that we have grounds to reject the functional derivativist strategy to the problem of unconscious thought.

3.3. Ideal Interpreter Derivativism. The main problem with the above derivativist strategies is that they treat unconscious mental states *as if* they were intentional mental states; they say that a mental state can become intentional by deriving intentionality from some possibly conscious mental state. But treating some mental state M *as if* it were a genuine intentional state does not make M genuinely intentional any more than treating a

murderer *as if* they were a good person makes them in fact a good person.[37] To avoid this worry, one might appeal to an ideal interpreter to show how unconscious thoughts can become genuinely intentional, if it is interpreted *as if* it has genuine intentionality by an ideally rational interpreter.[38] For instance, Kriegel (2011) claims: "…what makes a phenomenally unconscious item have the intentionality it does, and an intentional content at all, is (very roughly) that it is profitably interpreted to have that content" (p. 82). Of course, this is still a form of treating unconscious stuff *as if* it were genuinely intentional. But given that an ideal interpreter would not mistakenly attribute intentionality to a subject, we can be sure that the relevant characteristics would not fail to be literally true. After all an ideal-interpreter would not treat a murderer *as if* they were a good person under any conditions. Likewise, it seems plausible that an ideal-interpreter would not attribute to you the belief that "grass is green" if you did not actually possess that intentional mental content in some philosophically plausible sense.

According to the ideal interpreter strategy, your unconscious belief that "grass is green" counts as genuinely intentional *if and only if* an ideal interpreter would treat your unconscious mental state *as if* it were genuinely intentional. Thus, proponents of PIT can maintain that the problem of unconscious thought is solved, insofar as these mental states get their intentionality by deriving it from the contents that an ideal interpreter would interpret them as having. While this proposed solution may be able to avoid some of the worries outlined above, it cannot avoid the basic problem of explaining how intentionality can be "passed" or transferred from one state to another, and this problem that is at the

[37] For further discussion of this objection, see e.g., Pitt (forthcoming MS: chapter 6).
[38] See e.g., Kriegel (2011).

heart of why derivativism fails to give a plausible solution to the problem of unconscious thought.[39]

Consider, for example, what Mendelovici (2018) says regarding derivativism's promise of a more mollifying account of unconscious thought. Mendelovici argues:

> Even if derivativism yields predictions that are more in line with our prior expectations…there is a fundamental concern with the view, which is that intentionality is just not the kind of thing that can be passed around as would be required. The worry is that *even if* derivativism appears to give us what appears to be the right answers in all cases, the view fails because the various derivation mechanisms are not in fact sufficient for generating new instances of intentionality (p. 165; emphasis in the original).

The objection is twofold: First, intentionality is not the sort of thing that can be passed around. And second, there remains an open question regarding what the derivation mechanism is and how it can "pass around" or transfer genuine intentional mental content from a phenomenal mental state to a non-phenomenal mental state. What is needed to make the derivativist strategy work is an account of the relevant derivation mechanism. But this is an empirical question that cannot be settled on *a priori* grounds alone. Additionally, it is not clear why we should favor one mechanism over another apart from the background assumptions motivating the derivativist view. Indeed, it is not implausible to think that there simply is no philosophically acceptable way to determine what the correct derivation mechanism is. Thus, the derivativist strategy to the problem of unconscious thought is unmotivated. Let us now turn our attention to an alternative approach.

[39] See e.g., Stratman's (2018) claim that Mendelovici's (2018) defense of Identity-PIT should have significant

4. Eliminativism.

While the derivativist solution tries to explain how unconscious thought can become genuinely intentional, the eliminativist strategy attempts to explain away the problem. My goal in this section is to explain this attempted solution and why this approach to the problem is implausible.

Identity-PIT holds that all genuine or "original" intentional mental states are identical to phenomenal intentional mental states—that is, intentionality and phenomenality are related because they are identical. Once this view is accepted, it must be shown that all problem cases of alleged unconscious thought, like your standing or dispositional belief that "grass is green", are not genuinely intentional mental contents (contrary to what we may have pretheoretically assumed), though they may count as non-intentional, derived representational contents/states.[40] But cases involving the propositional attitudes are paradigmatic examples of intentionality. Hence, views that claim that such "things" are not genuine instances of intentional content foretell a worry that this strategy might turn out to be too revisionary to be taken seriously.

Suppose that you have the belief that *p*. Assuming that this belief counts as genuinely intentional when it was originally formed, insofar as you were immediately aware of it occurring before your mind's eye (so to speak), then there is a point when you were phenomenally conscious of the content *p*. If so, then *p* counts as genuinely intentional upon your immediate forming of it. But beliefs do not always remain constantly occurring or running through one's mind. If you happen to forget that *p*, or think about something other than *p*, or if you happen to fall asleep, then we can still reasonably attribute to you

[40] For a discussion of this approach, see e.g., Mendelovici (2018) chapter 7.

the belief that *p*. But since Identity-PIT claims that your belief that *p* counts as genuinely intentional only when you are immediately aware of it and most of the time the content is not immediately present and running through your mind, it follows that most of the time the content *p* will not count as genuinely intentional. Of course, there are moments when possibly the content of your belief that *p* would once again run through your mind. Indeed, this could happen rather routinely throughout your normal go of things. But if Identity-PIT is correct, then your belief that *p* would shift and fluctuate between being genuinely intentional and merely representational. This would be wholly inexplicable and mysterious.[41] What sort of cognitive mechanism might be responsible for or determine this sort of flashing of intentionality? And why should we think that intentionality is the sort of thing that can flash on and off?

A more plausible view would hold that unconscious (or non-phenomenal) propositional attitudes like standing or dispositional beliefs are either always genuinely intentional or always non-intentionally representational. But if these so-called standing/dispositional beliefs are always genuinely intentional, then we have a straightforward counterexample to Identity-PIT. And if such beliefs are not genuinely intentional but only representational, then this eliminativist strategy would be deeply revisionary and mysterious. I take this to be a severe problem for eliminativism.

Still, various philosophers (e.g.. Mendelovici 2018, and Pitt forthcoming MS: chapter 6) have attempted to defend this sort of eliminativist strategy regarding the problem of unconscious belief. For instance, Pitt (forthcoming MS: chapter 6) argues that we should endorse a view of unconscious thought that claims there are no such states, though there

[41] See e.g., Stratman (2021) where I propose this problem for Identity-PIT.

are states that represent or encode conscious content in some suitable form. What sorts of representational states might these be? One intuitive example suggested by Pitt is a so-called photograph said to be on the hard drive of your computer. Of course, no one thinks that things like images are literally to be found contained on the hard drive of a machine like a computer, though we can think of them as being on your computer in some sense. Likewise, most cognitive stuff, like your standing or dispositional belief that "grass is green", are not genuinely intentional but only encoded representational information, though it may be natural to think of such stuff as being paradigmatic examples of intentionality in some sense.

However, endorsing this way of understanding the eliminativist strategy undermines one of the most fundamental motivations for PIT. It concedes to so-called naturalistic theories of intentionality (e.g., tracking theories and functional role theories) the core motivation for PIT as an important alternative to such views. To claim that what we pretheoretically take to be paradigm examples of genuine intentionality are best understood as representational states that encode and carry information, rather than genuinely intentional mental goings-on, would be to admit that there is no difference between unconscious thought and the causal-functional relations that encode information presumably in a subject's nervous system.

Consider Pitt's example of photographs on a hard drive. If unconscious thought is not genuinely intentional but only representational states that encode and carry information, then this example would not merely be a way to illustrate this eliminativist strategy; if it is true, then it would be an instance of unconscious thought, since the relevant thought and the photograph would both count as literally being encoded representational

information of some suitable form. And as we have already seen, if we divorce cognition from conscious experience in the way required by the eliminativist strategy, then the relevant causal-functional, representational information would be utterly ubiquitous.[42] And if these worries show that the functionalist deriviativist strategy fails to accommodate unconscious thought, then it should likewise suffice to show that the eliminativist strategy fails. Thus, we have grounds to conclude that the eliminativist strategy to the problem of unconscious thought is unsupported. Let us now turn our attention to a neglected alternative.

5. Mereological Phenomenal Intentionality.

There is an alternative approach to PIT, which *can* provide a plausible solution to the problem of unconscious thought and has not been adequately addressed in the existent literature on PIT. But in order to show how this solution works, we need to introduce a different conceptual framework for PIT, one that construes the relationship between intentionality and phenomenal consciousness in terms of proper-parts of a unified, whole mental event. My goal for this section is to articulate and elaborate upon this mereological model of phenomenal intentionality. But to achieve this goal, I need to introduce some terminology.

Begin by considering the broad unification program that motivates PIT.[43] My claim is that this unification program is best construed in terms of a mereological framework or model, whereby intentionality and phenomenality are construed as being mental parts of a

[42] See e.g., Strawson (2004).

[43] See e.g., Horgan & Tienson (2002); Pautz (2008); Kriegel (2011); Horgan (2013); Nes (2012); and Chudnoff (2013).

unified whole. What is this unified whole? While some may think of this unity as a mental state of some sort, I take it to be a subject's first-personal, subjective, mental event. But this leaves open several questions: First, we might wonder what exactly the relevant mental event is, such that it counts as a unified whole; and second, we may reasonably inquire about the nature of the parts of the relevant mental event, and whether the resulting view can deliver a plausible version of PIT. I will consider these questions each in turn.

What is a mental event? First, mental events have a first-personal point of view, which makes them essentially subjective.[44] This appeal to the subjectivity of conscious experience may seem unsupported to some, since the arguments that tend to be offered in support of this claim rely on phenomenological observations. But all that matters for the proposal under consideration is that there is often (if not always) a kind of *subjective significance* attached to the conscious experiences that creatures like us undergo. If this is plausible, then it suffices to generate support for my claim that mental events have a subjectivity unlike objective, non-mental events.[45]

To say that a mental event has a kind of subjective significance introduces a novel ontological approach to intentional mental content. It allows us to make sense of mental events using an essentially first-personal ontological method rather than an objective third-personal ontological method.[46] Consider, for instance, Paul's (2017c) approach to a first-personal, subjective ontology, where it is argued that a first-personal ontology is extremely useful for modeling what we intuitively mean by various metaphysical problems. Paul states:

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[44] See e.g., Kriegel (2013a), p. 11.
[45] But see e.g., Guillot (2016).
[46] See e.g., Paul (2014, 2017c).

> In addition to objective reality, which is usually understood and explored from an impersonal, quasi-observational and metaphysical realist perspective, we can also explore the nature and structure of subjective reality. The nature and structure of subjective reality is defined by the nature and structure of first-personal, conscious experience. Subjective reality is as real as objective reality, and a metaphysical realist…can endorse the existence of both kinds of ontology (p. 262).

This first-personal ontological approach to metaphysical problems helps to clarify an important feature of mental events without being committed to any particular claims about the objective ontology of events. That is, when I claim that mental events are significantly subjective, this is consistent with impersonal, objective ontologies of enduring and perduring objects.[47] I will call Paul's first-personal, ontological approach to metaphysical questions a "Pauline ontology".[48]

Now, Paul illustrates this first-personal ontology by discussing first-person-shooter games. Here is how Paul (2017c) describes this example:

> When you play the game, you play as though you were looking out of the eyes of your character. Your line of sight is the one the character you are playing has. You are presented as seeming to hold a weapon, you "turn your head" to gain a line of sight, etc. In general, you know where you are from the first-personal perspective of your character, the character whose "boots" you are occupying as you play the game. You are given an artificial simulation of the first-personal perspective of your character using a visual line of sight, as a first-personal, subjective way for you to know who you are and where you are in the game. In this way, you are immersed in the game. This game perspective is analogous to the subjective perspective (p. 263).

I take this to be a highly intuitive way to think about an agent's first-personal, subjectively lived conscious experience. And given the advancements in game technology involving

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[47] The idea here is that we are concerned with the way things seem or appear from the first-personal point of view, not with the objective metaphysical reality understood from a third-personal, objective point of view.

[48] Interestingly, Paul (2002, 2006, 2017a, 2017b) also argues in support of a mereological version of a bundle theory of composite objects. This Pauline ontology may have advantages over standard impersonal and objective ontological approaches to metaphysical questions, but see e.g., Kriegel (forthcoming) for an argument against Paul's account.

virtual reality, we could potentially extend this example in such a way that effectively eliminates most, if not all, elements that would otherwise distract from the example.[49] This will suffice to answer the first question regarding what I mean by an agent's first-personal, subjective mental event.[50] But what about the second question regarding the nature of the parts of the relevant mental event and whether the resulting view can deliver a plausible version of PIT?

Recall that proponents of PIT take intentional content to be whatever the mind is about or directed at. So, if an agent's mind is *about* or *directed* at X, then X is an intentional content. And given that intentional content is a proper-part of an agent's mental event, this will enable us to use a Pauline ontology to consider how various things (e.g., an intentional content, a subject's attitude relation to that content, an occurrence of phenomenal consciousness, and an unconscious belief) can be understood in terms of proper-parts of a whole mental event.[51] What is not yet clear, however, is whether a view that claims intentionality and phenomenality are best conceived of as significantly subjective, mental parts of a unified, whole mental event is warranted.[52]

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[49] Chalmers (2017) argues that virtual objects (i.e., digital objects experienced in virtual reality simulations) are real objects, and virtual events involving digital objects should be treated as real events. If this is plausible, Paul's example of first-person-shooter games could be treated not merely as an example that helps to illustrate the first-personal, subjective nature of mental events, it might arguably be an instance of an agent's mental event.

[50] While more can be said to make sense of what I mean by a mental event, this is enough for our current purpose.

[51] It is important to recognize that I am not attempting to give the correct analysis of what we mean by "part" or "proper-part". Rather, I want to construe a mereological model using the Pauline ontology discussed above. In this way, then, it is not incoherent to think of the mind and cognition in terms of parts of the mental, irrespective of what turns out to be the correct objective-metaphysical account of the part-whole relationship.

[52] Someone might complain that this sort of appeal to introspection and one's subjective, point of view is in need of an independent argument. An so, the view is in general unwarranted. While I generally agree with those views motivating this sort of questions, let me just say that if a mereological account of phenomenal intentionality can be made plausible, then this should give us a way to make sense of unconscious mental goings-on.

Consider the following mereological model of how intentionality and phenomenality might be construed as mental parts of a whole, unified mental event.

> (A) Take some mental event E. In E, there are various mental parts, which are to be understood as proper-parts of E. Thus, there is an intentional content, a belief relation to that content, an occurrence of phenomenal consciousness, and a standing or dispositional unconscious belief.

Notice that (A) is based on a classical mereological model. While this may be a natural way of initially construing a mereological model of PIT, it will not do for several reasons. First, a classical mereological approach would likely treat the relationship between the various proper-parts analogous to that of one's four chairs and dining table have to the relevant dining room set. If so, then the relevant parts will be entirely separable. But what do we mean by the term "set"?

We can distinguish between two ways of understanding what is meant by "set": There is a mathematical use of the term "set", and there is also a folk use of the term "set". The analogy of a dining room set assumes that the latter is being used. This is important, since it would be a mistake to use "set" in a mathematical way to understand the parts of a mental event because members of a set are very different from a mental part. And given that I am thinking of mental events in terms of a first-person shooter game or a theatrical performance like, say, the movie *Star Wars*, it seems correct to say that when Luke finds out that Vader is his father, this is a part of the movie. But it would be odd to think of this part of the movie as being a member of a set—the movie *Star Wars*.[53] So, the analogy should be understood as employing a folk use of the term "set".

[53] Perhaps this suggests that I am at least taking on a kind of pluralism about mereology, but I want to avoid contentious issues like this if I can.

Second, given that the analogy employs a folk use of the term "set", we can identify the problem with (A), insofar as the parts of a mereological sum are classically conceived of as metaphysically separable elements. This would imply that each proper-part of the relevant mental event is completely capable of existing independently of each other. Thus, there would be no sense in which (A) would be consistent with PIT or the metaphysical inseparability thesis that is arguably a central tenant for both strong and moderate versions of the theory. Therefore, we have grounds to reject (A).

However, there are ways to respond to this worry, which will provide the basis for an alternative mereological model. For instance, we must remember that proponents of PIT take intentional content to be internal to the thinking subject, which is importantly different from how philosophers typically understand intentional content. Recall that instead of construing intentional contents in terms of ordinary objects, facts, ways of representing things, platonic ideas, or propositions, which are capable of existing independently of the subject, proponents of PIT typically hold that intentional content just is whatever the mind is *directed* at or *about*. And recall that, following Horgan and Tienson (2002), proponents of PIT typically hold that there is an important distinction between narrow and wide contents and their corresponding truth-conditions. Wide contents are determined by factors external to the subject and, therefore, such contents could arguably exist independently from the subject.[54] Narrow contents, on the other hand, are not determined by factors external to the subject; they are determined by factors internal to the subject. On this approach, then, it simply is not the case that narrow contents can exist

[54] Notice, however, that we can treat these sorts of wide contents in terms of reference rather than the aboutness or directedness of a subject's mind. As such, the account of intentional content currently under consideration can bracket wide content and focus primarily on narrow contents internal to the subject.

independently from the subject. Thus, the contents that I claim are proper-parts of the relevant mental event are to be understood in terms of narrow contents, not wide contents.

Regarding the attitude relation toward the intentional content, recall that I reject a relational account of intentionality in favor of a non-relational account. As I discussed previously, PIT does not entail a relational account of intentional content the way that some standard accounts like teleosemantics and tracking theories of intentional content arguably do. But since intentional content involves the aboutness of thought or what the mind is directed at, it could be that intentional content is non-relational, though reference is relational.[55] Thus, we need not accept a view that requires an attitude relation to an independently existing intentional content. It will be sufficient if what we call an attitude relation toward a content can be construed as something internal to the subject's mental experience or the whole mental event. Such an intentional attitude can count as a proper-part of the whole mental event in such a way that does not entail that it can exist independently of the subject.

Now, to be clear, it is not necessary to give a single mereological model of PIT that will treat all cases of intentional content uniformly, since different cases can be treated differently. As a result, the mereological strategy to the problem of unconscious thought will come in two steps. In the first step, I will consider a non-classical mereological model of PIT that claims there is a necessary connection between some particular intentional content and some particular phenomenal content. This will suffice to show that there is an inseparability relation that holds between some intentional and phenomenal contents but not all. In the second step, I will consider an agent-based mereological model, which

[55] See e.g., Crane (2013a), p. 9.

claims that an unconscious belief is to be understood as a proper-part of a subject or cognitive agent. And given that the cognitive agent is a proper-part of the whole mental event, the relevant unconscious belief will also count as a proper-part of the whole, unified mental event. This mereological model allows that the relevant unconscious intentional content can accompany some phenomenology but not necessarily any particular phenomenology. But before presenting these mereological models, I need to introduce an important term to be deployed in each of the following models.

Following Dewalque (2013), I will take "distinctional" parts to be proper-parts of a whole that can be conceptually distinguished in thought only, but not in reality.[56] So, when we apply this to mental events, we can make the following distinction for intentional and phenomenal contents:

(a) For any intentional content C, C is nothing but a distinctional-proper-part of an agent's mental event E.

(b) For any phenomenal content C, C is nothing but a distinctional-proper-part of an agent's mental event E.[57]

But why should we accept this notion of a distinctional part? Consider some small patch of color. Arguably, one can conceptually distinguish between things like the color, brightness, shape, and extension of this patch of color, though in reality they are inseparable. We could then deploy this notion in such a way that would deliver a kind of inseparability relation between intentionality and phenomenality, insofar as these things can be conceptually separated only, but not in reality. Thus, there would be no intentionality without phenomenality and the other way around.[58] If this is plausible, it

[56] See e.g., Dewalque (2013), p. 450.
[57] These theses are based on Dewalque (2013) p. 460 proposal.
[58] I want to be fully transparent here: this dependency relation might very well run in the other direction too.

would arguably provide further support for the unification program underlying PIT.[59] And it is this unifying principle of being conceptually distinct but inseparably related that arguably marks the core of what proponents of PIT are seeking in attempting to show that intentionality is counterfactually dependent on phenomenal consciousness.

With these provisions in mind, let us now consider whether a non-classical mereological model of PIT can avoid the above objection that the proper-parts of a mental event are capable of existing independently of each other:

> (B) Take some mental event E. In E, there are various mental parts, which are proper-distinctional-parts of E. Thus, there is a narrow intentional content, an internal intentional relation to that narrow content, and an occurrence of phenomenal consciousness. And necessarily each of these proper-distinctional-parts cannot exist without being in a unity (the whole mental event E) with exactly the others.

This model is an improvement over (A), insofar as it does not require that the relevant parts of the whole mental event E are capable of existing independently of each other. Thus, (B) is consistent with some instances of phenomenal intentionality. To illustrate this point, suppose that you are looking at a blue coffee cup on a desk in an office. *Inter alia*, the mental event that you are undergoing will likely have various parts—it will have a <blue cup> intentional content, and it will have a "blueish" phenomenal content. So, we can conceive of these contents in terms of a counterfactual relationship that holds between them: If the relevant mental event did not have the "blueish" phenomenal content, then it would not have the <blue cup> intentional content. To put this point differently, if there were no "blueish" phenomenal content in the relevant mental event, then there would be

[59] Someone might object at this point by arguing that this sort of counterfactual dependence relation runs in both direction, which would mean that phenomenal consciousness is not fundamental to intentionality contrary to the general goal of PIT. This is an important objection, which I will address in detail in the next section.

no <blue cup> content either. Therefore, one can maintain that there is a kind of essential or philosophically significant connection between some intentional and phenomenal contents. Indeed, according to the B-type mereological model, there is a necessary connection between particular instances of intentional contents and phenomenal contents.

But even if (B) can deliver a plausible mereological model for some of the relevant mental parts (e.g., a narrow intentional content, an internal intentional relation to that narrow content, and an occurrence of phenomenal consciousness), this model does not deliver an account of other items in the whole mental event E: Namely, unconscious thought. The problem is that (B) lacks the resources to show that in E, we can have instances of intentional content that accompany different phenomenology. But this does not mean that we should completely abandon (B) for all cases of intentionality, since the B-type of model will do for intentional and phenomenal contents that are present before the conscious mind's eye, so to speak. What is needed for cases involving unconscious belief is a more general relation that allows for unconscious intentional content to be accompanied by some phenomenology but not necessarily any particular phenomenology.

Consider the following case: You form the belief that "I have a meeting today at 4:00 pm". For most of the day, however, you will not be consciously entertaining or affirming the content of this belief. It may be true that the content of this belief is entertained or affirmed for a short-lived period if, for example, you think to yourself "my meeting is at 4:00 pm, not at 4:30 pm". But for most of the day, this belief will count as an unconscious belief only. So, what we need is a general relation between the unconscious belief and some phenomenology but not any particular phenomenal content—that is, we

need a model whereby some phenomenology must accompany the relevant unconscious belief, but unlike (B), it need not be any specific phenomenology.

For instance, clearly you can call to mind the content of your belief that "I have a meeting today at 4:00 pm" whenever the content might be needed. But presumably, this would be true only if you were undergoing a phenomenally conscious experience. If you were not undergoing a phenomenally conscious experience, then you could not entertain or affirm the content of your belief that "I have a meeting today at 4:00 pm". This suggests that your cognitive ability to call to mind the content of this belief presupposes that the mental event you are undergoing has certain phenomenal mental parts, though calling to mind this content does not require any particular phenomenology. All that is required is that the relevant mental event has some form of phenomenology. If this is right, then it follows that your unconscious belief that "I have a meeting today at 4:00 pm" must be accompanied by some form of phenomenology but not any specific phenomenology. Thus, if the relevant mental event lacked phenomenal mental parts, then the unconscious content "I have a meeting today at 4:00 pm" could not be entertained or affirmed. So, we need a mereological model for unconscious content that can capture this general relation between unconscious content and phenomenology.

Consider whether the following mereological model:

> (C) Take some mental event E. In E, there are various mental parts, which are proper-distinctional-parts of E. Thus, there is a narrow intentional content, an internal intentional relation to that narrow content, an occurrence of phenomenal consciousness, and a standing or dispositional unconscious belief. And each of these mental parts is of a type such that they must exist in a whole mental event with a thinking subject or cognitive agent and *something*, which is of all of the other types, but not the particular ones in question.[60]

[60] In what follows, I shall use the terms "thinking subject", "agent", and "cognitive agent" interchangeably.

Notice that this model takes a cognitive agent understood as a thinking subject to be a proper-part of the relevant mental event. But one may wonder what reasons we have to think that this is true. Consider the intuition that, at least in some cases, if a proper-part is removed from a whole, this does not mean that we are left with a remainder. While this sort of non-classical mereological approach is controversial, insofar as it is a violation of the supplementation principle, there may be some reason to accept the basic intuition. For instance, Brentano (1890) argued that a "subject" is a proper-distinctional-part of a "thinking subject".[61] So, even if we could somehow remove the "thinking" part of a "thinking subject", there would be nothing left of this whole, since the act of thinking arguably cannot exist or occur without a subject who thinks. Indeed, it may be that the act of thinking is just a mode of being a conscious, cognitive agent.

Arguably, phenomenal consciousness is a proper-distinctional-part of a mental event, insofar as upon the removal of phenomenal consciousness from the mental event, there would be no other mental parts left over. I take this to support the general intuition that at least in some specific cases (e.g., a thinking subject), removing a proper-part from a whole would not entail a remainder. And this in turn provides *prima facie* evidence in support of (C). But admittedly, this model involves a violation of the supplementation principle, which asserts that a whole cannot be decomposed into a single proper-part.[62] So, even if we have *prima facie* reason to accept (C), this would only be defeasible evidence for the model. And someone could object to this model by arguing that (C) is an *ad hoc*

[61] See e.g., Brentano's (1890) typology regarding the so-called *apparent* parts of the mental.
[62] Supplementation can be state as follows: $PPxy \rightarrow \exists z(Pzy \wedge \neg Ozx)$. See e.g., Varzi (2019).

appeal to a form of non-classical mereology that is tailored-made for cases of unconscious thought.

In response, let me grant that (C) is a non-classical mereological model. But this is not a good reason to reject the view because I am not attempting to give the proper analysis of "part" or argue that a classical conception of mereology should be rejected. My claim begins with the very plausible view that the mind has parts.[63] But I am not interested in the necessary and sufficient conditions for what these mental parts are from an objective, ontological point of view. Rather, my strategy is to use a Pauline ontology (i.e., a first-personal, ontological point of view), in order to make sense of the relationship between intentionality and phenomenal consciousness. Indeed, this is why it was important to make clear what exactly I mean by a mental event. This section began by addressing this point. So, while I recognize the force of the objection, it seems to me that it would only land a blow against the view if I were attempting to give an analysis of "part" from an objective, ontological point of view. But since my strategy uses a Pauline ontology in order to makes sense of how intentionality and phenomenality can be mental parts of a whole, unified mental event, this objection can be avoided.

How will this agent-based mereological model provide an account of unconscious thought? To answer this question, I first need to explain what unconscious thought really is. I will then show why this agent-based model solves (or dissolves) the problem of unconscious thought.

According to (C), each of the proper-distinctional-parts of the relevant mental event E is of a type such that they must exist in a whole mental event with a thinking subject or

[63] I take this assumption to be intuitive and generally unproblematic.

cognitive agent, such that they are a type of all of the other proper-distinctional-parts, but not the particular ones in question. Put differently, in the relevant mental event E, there must be some phenomenology that accompanies the unconscious belief in question, but any phenomenology will do—that is, we do not need to specify any particular phenomenology. And given that the thinking subject or cognitive agent of E is itself a proper-distinctional-part of E and the relevant unconscious belief is construed in terms of a standing/dispositional part of the subject or agent, then that unconscious belief will also count as a proper-distinctional-part of the whole mental event E because a part of a part of something is itself a part of that thing. So, if an unconscious thought is a part of a thinking subject and that thinking subject is a part of the whole mental event, then because of the principle of transitivity, the unconscious thought is itself a part of the whole mental event E. And since we are focused on narrow intentional content rather than wide intentional content, it follows that the relevant unconscious thought cannot exist independently of the relevant mental event E. But why should we think that an unconscious belief is a standing or dispositional part of a thinking subject?

Take for example Schwitzgebel's (2002) "Phenomenal Dispositional" account of belief.[64] According to this view, we begin with a "dispositional stereotype", where this refers to "a cluster of properties we are apt to associate with a thing, a class of things, or a property" (p. 250). And if an unconscious thought like your belief that "grass is green" is taken to involve a dispositional stereotype of some suitable form, then this would plausibly give us a way to characterize unconscious thought in terms of appropriately constructed conditional statements. For instance, if you believe that "grass is green", then you will be

[64] See e.g., Schwitzgebel (2002), p. 250.

disposed to behave in various ways in the presence of grass, when discussing the grass's being green, and so on. Indeed, there are various ways of being disposed to behave that would indicate you believe that "grass is green". This suggests that your belief that "grass is green" is best understood as consisting in a cluster of dispositional stereotypes. As Schwitzgebel (2002) claims: "Think of the dispositional stereotype for the belief that P…as consisting of the cluster of dispositions that we are *apt* to associate with the belief that P" (p. 251; emphasis in the original).[65] But how is this appeal to the notion of dispositional stereotypes useful for our understanding of unconscious thought?

One way of thinking about the dispositional stereotypes for an unconscious thought like your belief that "grass is green" is to construe it as involving phenomenal dispositions or simply dispositions to undergo certain conscious experiences.[66] Thus, if a thinking subject S has an unconscious thought like the belief that "grass is green", then S has a disposition to undergo certain conscious experiences. And if we construe S's having a disposition to undergo certain conscious experiences as a proper-distinctional-part of S, then it follows that this dispositional part of S is also a proper-distinctional-part of the mental event E that S is undergoing, since S is a part of E. Indeed, the fact that an important element involved in the unconscious belief that "grass is green" is the disposition to undergo certain conscious experiences indicates that necessarily for the relevant belief to count as genuinely intentional, it must be possible for that intentional content to become conscious.

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[65] Someone might object at this point by arguing that I am assuming a dispositional account of belief without arguing for this claim. While it is true that I am assuming a dispositional account of belief, it is not true that a view of belief that takes such things to be some form of standing state of the subject would be inconsistent with the mereological model under consideration. I leave it to the reader to decide whether a dispositional account or a standing states account is better suited to play the required theoretical role here.

[66] See e.g., Schwitzgebel (2002), p. 252.

Someone might object by arguing that if different agents can have the same unconscious belief (e.g., the belief that "grass is green"), then it is not clear how an agent-based model can help with the problem of unconscious belief, since that unconscious intentional content will be capable of existing independently of the relevant mental event. In response, proponents of PIT can evoke the distinction between wide and narrow contents. Since I have bracketed alleged wide contents, insofar as these can be plausibly treated in terms of reference rather than the mind's aboutness or directedness, then the relevant unconscious belief should be understood in terms of narrow content that is internal to the subject or agent. So, while I recognize the importance of this objection, we can treat it the same way that we treated the problem when it was raised regarding the classical mereological model—that is, we are only interested in narrow contents, not wide contents.

Now, if what I have argued regarding this agent-based mereological model is plausible for cases of unconscious content, then there would be a counterfactual dependence relationship between unconscious intentionality and phenomenality. Indeed, being intentionally related to something is arguably just a mode of being phenomenally conscious. Thus, Mereological-PIT does not violate the inseparability thesis at the core of PIT; and this would likely generate the kind of inseparability relation that could induce a sense in which phenomenal consciousness is more fundamental than intentionality. Of course, proponents of PIT might desire a stronger relation like identity or grounding, but without an independent reason for why we should reject the account that I have proposed here, it is not obvious that Mereological-PIT violates the inseparability thesis. Indeed, I have given various principled reasons for why we should reject these stronger versions of

PIT—namely, they are unable to deliver a plausible solution to the problem of unconscious thought, which is the most serious challenge confronting PIT.

Arguably, then, proponents of PIT face an important choice point. On the one hand, they can reject Mereological-PIT in favor of a stronger inseparability relation between intentionality and phenomenality. But this will come at the cost of lacking a plausible solution to the problem of unconscious thought. And on the other hand, advocates of PIT can reject Identity-PIT and Grounding-PIT in favor of a version of PIT that delivers a plausible inseparability relation between intentionality and phenomenality, though not one that makes intentionality metaphysically determined by phenomenal consciousness. Some may think that this is an unacceptable option, insofar as it is a considerably weaker relation than Identity-PIT and Grounding-PIT. But if it can be shown that Mereological-PIT delivers a plausible solution to the problem of unconscious thought, this will be a powerful theoretical advantage over standard versions of PIT.

In summary: I argued that different cases of intentional content can be treated differently. As a result, the mereological model utilized for some instances of intentional content will be different from the mereological model developed for cases involving unconscious intentional content. Thus, we can think of this mereological strategy for the problem of unconscious thought as coming in two steps. The first step (i.e., the B-type model) showed that there is a necessary connection between particular intentional contents and particular phenomenal contents. This was sufficient to account for some but not all intentional content; we needed a different model for cases of unconscious content. The second step (i.e., the C-type model), involved developing a more general relation for cases of unconscious contents. This model says that an unconscious belief is of a type such that

it must exist in a whole mental event with something, which is of all of the other types, but not the particular ones in question. Thus, there must be some form of phenomenology that accompanies the unconscious content but the phenomenology need not be any specific phenomenology. And given that unconscious content counts as a proper-part of the cognitive agent, which is also a proper-part of the mental event, then that unconscious content likewise counts as a proper-part of the relevant mental event. If this proposal is plausible, then it arguably has the resources to provide a solution to the problem of unconscious thought exactly where standard accounts of PIT fail.

6. Objections.

In this section I will consider and respond to several important objections. This will provide further grounds to accept Mereological-PIT.

First Objection. One might worry that since Mereological-PIT claims that there is a counterfactual dependency between intentionality and phenomenal consciousness, then the relevant counterfactual dependency must run in both directions, such that phenomenality would likewise be counterfactually dependent on intentionality. If so, then it would seem false to claim that phenomenal consciousness is in some philosophically significant sense more fundamental or basic than intentionality. This would be a problem for Mereological-PIT, insofar as proponents of PIT generally take the view to be a kind of consciousness-first approach to intentionality, whereby we explain intentionality in terms of phenomenal consciousness because the latter is more basic than the former.[67] Thus, it

[67] See e.g., Pautz (2008, 2013)

would not make sense to claim that Mereological-PIT provides an account of intentionality in terms of phenomenal consciousness. Afterall, if Mereological-PIT is true, then one could always give an account of phenomenal consciousness in terms of intentionality consistent with the truth of Mereological-PIT.

To my mind, this is an important objection, but it is not a knock-down objection. While it is true that proponents of PIT frequently take phenomenal consciousness to be more fundamental or basic than intentionality, this is not necessarily required.[68] What is required to count as a version of phenomenal intentionality is only that there is a counterfactual relation that holds between them. Second, this is arguably a *general* objection to *all* versions of PIT. As Mendelovici (2018) notes regarding this objection: "…the worry does apply to PIT *in general* since not all versions of it can clearly be seen to be theories of intentionality in terms of phenomenal consciousness rather than theories of phenomenal consciousness in terms of intentionality" (p. 110). Indeed, some versions of PIT (e.g., Identity PIT) are compatible with some versions of representationalism, which take phenomenal consciousness to arise from intentionality.[69] So, the above objection is really just a species of this more general worry that all versions of PIT arguably face.

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[68] See e.g., Kriegel (2013b), p. 437. Kriegel claims that the basic commitments of phenomenal intentionality can be characterized in terms of a counterfactual relation that constitutes a dependency between intentionality and phenomenality and that this will be a relatively neutral approach to phenomenal intentionality. I suggest that this is a neutral characterization of phenomenal intentionality precisely because it is what is minimally needed.

[69] See e.g., Mendelovici (2018), p. 110. Mendelovici claims: Identity-PIT is consistent with a strong version of representationalism, which claims: "every phenomenal state, property, and character is identical to some intentional state, property, and content respectively, and every intentional state, property, and content is identical to some phenomenal state, property, and character respectively" (p. 110). But the mere fact that the identity relation between intentionality and phenomenality is symmetrical does necessarily entail that PIT cannot be understood is as a kind of consciousness-first approach to intentionality, and the same will also apply to Mereological-PIT.

Furthermore, the fact that the dependency runs in both directions will be a problem for my proposal only if we lack certain additional assumptions, which will help clarify why intentionality can be explained in terms of phenomenal consciousness rather than the other way around. So, if proponents of PIT have at their disposal these auxiliary assumptions regarding the nature of certain ingredients of the view, then one can be forthright in accepting that the counterfactual relation constituting a dependency runs in both directions, while still maintaining that Mereological-PIT is a kind of consciousness-first approach to intentionality. In order to explain the importance of these auxiliary assumptions, let me first state four basic assumptions regarding the nature of intentionality and phenomenal consciousness that many philosophers are likely to accept, but proponents of PIT are likely to reject.[70]

> **First assumption**: Intentionality is relatively abundant, but phenomenal consciousness is relatively rare.
>
> **Second assumption**: Intentionality is at least partly determined by external features in a subject's environment, but phenomenal consciousness is determined by factors internal to the subject.
>
> **Third assumption**: Intentionality is relational, but phenomenal consciousness is not.
>
> **Fourth assumption**: Intentionality can be naturalized ,but it is not immediately obvious that phenomenal consciousness can be naturalized.

Now, proponents of PIT will likely deny at least some of these assumptions about the nature of intentionality. As Mendelovici (2018) claims, some versions of PIT, which hold that both intentionality and phenomenal consciousness are "scares, internalist, non-relational, and resistant to naturalization" can be understood as a theory of intentionality in

[70] For further discussion of these assumptions, see e.g., Mendelovici (2018), pp. 112-113.

terms of phenomenal consciousness (p. 112). Here is what Mendelovici says on this matter in more detail:

> Such a theory claims that, at bottom, phenomenal consciousness/intentionality is more like what we generally take phenomenal consciousness to be like than what we generally take intentionality to be like. Such a theory is best thought of as a theory of intentionality in terms of phenomenal consciousness rather than a theory of phenomenal consciousness in terms of intentionality. In contrast, a theory that takes intentionality/phenomenal consciousness to be relatively abundant, externalist, relational, and clearly naturalizable "fits" phenomenal consciousness to intentionality. Such a theory is best considered a theory of phenomenal consciousness in terms of intentionality rather than a theory of intentionality in terms of phenomenal consciousness (pp. 112-113).

Given that proponents of PIT can endorse these auxiliary assumptions that "fit" intentionality to phenomenal consciousness, then the fact that the relevant counterfactual relation constituting a dependency can run in both directions is not a knock-down objection. This is because one can always appeal to these auxiliary assumptions as impetus for why Mereological-PIT will still count as a kind of consciousness-first approach to intentionality. Of course, these assumptions are themselves highly controversial; one cannot simply assert them without argument.[71] But given that at least some of them (i.e., the negation of the four assumptions stated above) are likely to be endorsed by proponents of PIT, I will not directly argue for them here.[72]

However, I need to be clear that certain concessions are in order regarding the objection being considered. Clearly the main challenge to Mereological-PIT is to show

[71] A fully worked out version of PIT must offer compelling reasons for why one should accept these auxiliary assumptions—that is, the negation of the four assumptions stated above.

[72] It is worth mentioning that some of the primary motivations for PIT discussed in the literature can be understood in the claim that intentionality is scares, internalist, non-relational, and resistant to naturalization. So, it is likely that proponents of PIT will in some sense rely on these auxiliary assumptions to motivate the view that intentionality can be explained at minimum in terms of a counterfactual relation that holds between intentionality and phenomenality.

how intentionality and phenomenality are in some philosophically important sense inseparable. And admittedly, Mereological-PIT does not deliver an account of phenomenal intentionality, whereby intentionality is either identical to or partly grounded in phenomenal consciousness. But as I argued previously, these versions of PIT are too strong, insofar as they imply that phenomenality must somehow give rise to intentionality. But this is not what is required for PIT.

At minimum, what is required for an inseparability relation between intentionality and phenomenality is that intentionality is counterfactually dependent on phenomenal consciousness. And in this regard, Mereological-PIT does have the resources to deliver such an account. While it may be technically true that there is no obvious sense in which phenomenal consciousness can be construed as being more fundamental or basic than intentionality, this is not what matters for the purpose of this chapter. What matters is that Mereological-PIT can solve the problem of unconscious thought exactly where competing versions of PIT fail. So, in conjunction with the auxiliary assumptions mentioned above that proponents of PIT are likely to endorse, this may in fact be sufficient to generate the kind of inseparability relation that would arguably induce a sense in which phenomenal consciousness *is* more fundamental or basic than intentionality. If this is plausible, then Mereological-PIT would not violate the inseparability thesis at the core of PIT and the above objection can be avoided.

Second Objection. In order to demonstrate that Mereological-PIT does give us a plausible solution to the problem of unconscious thought, we need to consider whether this solution is sufficiently different from the Identity-PIT and Grounding-PIT theories that I criticized above.

Recall that these approaches to PIT failed to account for unconscious thought for various reasons. According to Identity-PIT, paradigm cases of intentional content like your belief that "grass is green" do not count as genuine cases of "original" intentionality. Thus, Identity-PIT fails to give a plausible solution to the problem because it is too revisionary. But Mereological-PIT is not revisionary in this regard; it is not committed to the claim that paradigm cases of intentionality are not genuine instances of intentionality. So, far from being too revisionary, Mereological-PIT fits our pre-theoretical intuitions about unconscious thought better than Identity-PIT. I take this to be a significant difference between Mereological-PIT and Identity-PIT.

What about Grounding-PIT? Recall that, according to Grounding-PIT, the problem of unconscious thought is solved by appealing to a derivativist strategy, whereby non-phenomenal intentionality gets its intentionality by deriving it from phenomenal intentional mental goings-on. Thus, the relevant unconscious thought becomes genuinely intentional because the "original" intentionality of a phenomenal mental state is "passed" to the relevant non-phenomenal mental state. But as we saw previously, this account fails because intentionality is not the sort of thing that can be "passed" around or transferred from one thing to another. And even if intentionality could be "passed" to a non-phenomenal thing, it is not clear what cognitive mechanisms would be required to do this sort of "passing" of intentionality. Mereological-PIT, however, can avoid this problem because there is no sense in which intentionality gets passed from one thing to another. Unconscious thought, like your belief that "grass is green", counts as both non-phenomenal and genuinely intentional. Indeed, unconscious intentionality is a mental part of a subject's first-personal, subjective mental event because it is a proper-part of the subject or cognitive

agent. And since the agent is a distinctional-proper-part of this mental event, the unconscious belief will also count as a mental part of the whole mental event. Thus, Mereological-PIT is sufficiently different from Grounding-PIT.[73] I take this to provide support the claim that Mereological-PIT has the resources to solve the problem of unconscious thought exactly where standard views fail.

Third Objection. Finally, someone could complain that Mereological-PIT is really a form of Restricted-PIT, which claims that there is a kind of intentionality that is counterfactually dependent on phenomenal consciousness, but denies that this is true for all cases of genuine intentionality, since there can still be cases of non-phenomenal intentionality. For instance, there are cases of *possible* non-phenomenal intentionality, which would presumably count as a species of the problem of unconscious thought. One such case is Chalmers' (1996) Hard Problem of Phenomenal Consciousness, which involves conceptualizing functionally equivalent zombies that are molecule-for-molecule replicas of you or me but completely dark inside. These zombies are conceptualized as having non-phenomenal intentionality, though there is *nothing-it-is-like* to be such a thing.[74] Arguably, such cases present a special problem for PIT because, if PIT is true, then philosophical zombies would be impossible. Indeed, if PIT is true, then we should

[73] There is a sense in which proponents of these failed solutions could embrace Mereological-PIT. One could argue that the relevant potentially conscious mental stuff or the merely derived representational mental stuff can also count as mental parts of the relevant mental event. Indeed, proponents of PIT could employ the very same strategy to the problem that I have developed in this chapter. But in doing so, this would provide further support to why Mereological-PIT should be adopted over competing views. Moreover, the strategy that I have developed accepts unconscious thought for what it is and does not require offering a revisionary account of these apparently paradigmatic cases of intentionality. So, while it may be true that these failed solutions could adopt some version of Mereological-PIT, my claim is that we have good grounds to adopt the version that I have defended in this chapter.

[74] See e.g., Chalmers (1996).

not be able to conceive of such zombies because the notion of genuine intentionality separate from phenomenal consciousness would be incoherent.

To my mind, it is difficult to see how one could believe that philosophical zombies are incoherent, since it seems plainly obvious that at least some philosophers take themselves to conceive of them.[75] Some even think that such zombies are in fact metaphysically possible.[76] However, we need not appeal to philosophical zombies to motivate this version of the problem of unconscious thought, since the conceivability of a purely cognitive being (e.g., God) would suffice to raise the exact same worry regarding non-phenomenal thought. And if we can conceive of a God (or any purely cognitive being) that has genuine intentionality but lacks any phenomenology, then we should be able to conceive of non-phenomenal intentionality too. Indeed, it is this conceptual possibility that at least partly generates the problem of unconscious thought.

In response, let me first grant that this objection might motivate grounds to be skeptical about whether Mereological-PIT will count as a fully general theory of what intentionality is. This is because, even if Mereological-PIT can deliver an account of all *actual* cases of intentionality, it is not clear that it can explain all *possible* cases of intentionality. But my own inclinations on this matter is that we need an abundance of caution and epistemic humility. Indeed, I have not claimed to give an account of all possible problem cases of alleged intentionality; the goal of this chapter was simply to show that one of the alleged problem cases (the most difficult problem case) can be solved

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[75] According to the results of an online survey conducted by Bourget & Chalmers (2014): 35.6% of philosophers said that zombies are conceivable but not metaphysically possible and 23.3% said they are metaphysically possible. However, Only 16% said that zombies are inconceivable but I think this still seems rather high; 25.1%" said other.

[76] See e.g., Chalmers (2002).

by embracing a mereological model of PIT. Moreover, I have not attempted to give a fully general theory of all alleged actual and possible cases of intentionality. Rather, I have focused on intentionality for creatures like us—that is, adult, human, cognitive agents. And while I fully admit that there are other problem cases involving alleged actual and possible intentional contents, investigating each of these cases would go beyond the scope of this dissertation, though such an investigation would be necessary for a fully developed mereological account of PIT.

Furthermore, even if we grant that cases involving philosophical zombies and purely cognitive beings are straightforward counterexamples to the view, suggesting that it is a version of Restricted-PIT, this does not mean that we should not abandon Mereological-PIT. If what I have argued in this chapter is plausible, then Mereological-PIT constitutes a serious contribution to what Kriegel (2013a) calls the "Phenomenal Intentionality Research Program".[77] Thus, Mereological-PIT represents progress for PIT, insofar as the view has the potential to energize proponents of PIT to rethink the details of phenomenal intentionality. Thus, the above objection can be avoided because Mereological-PIT makes a major contribution to the further development of the *Phenomenal Intentionality Research Program*, even if it is not a fully general theory of all actual and possible cases of intentionality.

7. Conclusion.

Mereological-PIT aims at making sense of how intentionality and phenomenality are mental parts of a whole, unified mental event, such that intentionality is counterfactually

[77] See e.g., Kriegel (2013a), p. 1.

dependent on phenomenal consciousness. I have argued that intentionality is counterfactually dependent on phenomenality, insofar as if there were no intentional mental parts of an agent's mental event, then there would be no phenomenal mental parts of the relevant mental event. Thus, there is a significant inseparability relation that holds between intentionality and phenomenality. Arguably, then, the conditions of satisfaction for a first-personal, mental event just are the conditions of satisfaction for phenomenal intentionality. If this is right, then Mereological-PIT should be recognized as a live competitor to Grounding-PIT and Identity-PIT, insofar as it has the theoretical resources to answer the most serious and difficult challenge that proponents of PIT face, the problem of unconscious thought. This is a significant advantage that Mereological-PIT has over standard versions of PIT. Indeed, this proposal is simpler and more elegant than standard versions of PIT. Thus, Mereological-PIT delivers a novel way of thinking about phenomenal intentionality, which provides a powerful theoretical advantage over standard versions of PIT. And this suffices to show that we have *prima facie*, defeasible grounds to accept Mereological-PIT.

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