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Kant's One-World Phenomenalism

How the Moral Features Appear

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> For otherwise there would follow the absurd proposition that there is an appearance without anything that appears.
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> —Bxxvi

1. The Primacy of the Practical as Interpretive Guide

The interpretative debate about the relationship between the sensible and intelligible worlds in Kant's philosophy is entrenched. Ask two commentators why they are in their respective trenches, and each will wearily produce an array of preferred texts and decisive theoretical considerations, and profess to be unimpressed by the preferred texts and decisive theoretical considerations produced by their opponents. There is rarely any movement across trenches.

My aim here is to break new ground by employing a neglected but very Kantian interpretative tool. In addition to textual and systematic considerations, I think we should take Kant's admonition about the "primacy of the practical" as seriously as we can when reading the entire *oeuvre*. More specifically, we should strive to give primacy to practical concerns not just when describing the relationship between Kant's ethics and other parts of his system, but also when interpreting his main theoretical doctrines. In this spirit, I will propose an account of Kant's signature metaphysical doctrine here that (a) has no supporters—as far as I am aware—in the contemporary literature, and (b) draws its primary motivation (as interpretation) from considerations regarding our *practical* situation and needs as agents.

Given space constraints, I can only focus on one of these considerations in this chapter—namely, the practically crucial idea that people not only *have* mental and moral features but also *appear* to us—in our daily experience—to have such features. Kant speaks for instance in the second *Critique* of the "appearances (*Erscheinungen*) of the fundamental disposition (*Gesinnung*) that the moral law is concerned with (appearance of the character (*Charakter*))" (*KpV*, 5:99). In a lecture from the Critical period, he used straightforwardly perceptual language: "[w]e can perceive virtue in our experience" (*Wir können in der Erfahrung wohl Tugend wahrnehmen*) (*V-Lo/ Wiener*, 24:906). The same presumably goes for vice: when I see you casually torturing a cat, you appear to me to be brown-haired, wearing jeans, moving your arms, laughing, and so on, but you also appear to me to be vicious and cruel. Your character

shines through in your actions. I can then make a defeasible inference from those appearances to the moral reality. Such appearances and inferences play a central role in our practices of praise, blame, forgiveness, and punishment, as Kant goes on to say in the second *Critique* passage:

> …[A]ctions (*Handlungen*) can give us acquaintance (*kenntlich machen*) with a natural connection that does not thereby make the vicious constitution of the will necessary, but is rather the consequence (*Folge*) of a freely (*freiwillig*)-adopted evil and unwavering principle, which in turn makes the agent all the more culpable and deserving of punishment.   (*KpV*, 5:100)

Vicious actions are the natural consequence of a freely-adopted evil principle; they can also acquaint us with that very fact.

We find further hints of this picture in *Religion*, where Kant speaks of "persons in appearance, i.e., persons as experience acquaints us with them" (*Menschen in der Erscheinung, d. i. wie ihn uns die Erfahrung kennen läßt*) (*RGV*, 6:25n), of "human morality as appearance" (6:39n), and of events in history as "a phenomenon of the mostly hidden inner predispositions of humanity" (*Phänomen der uns großentheils verborgenen inneren Anlagen der Menschheit*) (6:36n). An interpretation of transcendental idealism that gives primacy to the practical will seek to analyze the concepts of *experience*, *acquaintance*, and *phenomenon* in a capacious enough way that they apply to mental and moral features too. Such an interpretation would have a clear practical advantage over those that leave us merely conjecturing from experiences of bodies, gestures, and secondary qualities to moral features that do *not* appear, or even to the non-appearing features of *a distinct set of things*. (Note that I am using "appearance" and "phenomenon" synonymously to mean "object of possible experience." There is another, narrower sense of "appearance" in Kant's writings that refers strictly to the content of intuitions. I'm not using the term in that narrower sense.)[1]

Although practical considerations like these provide the primary motivation for the interpretation proposed here, it will take a while to get back to them (in section 5 below). Before that I will paint the theoretical picture (section 2), distinguish it from some prominent alternatives (section 3), and discuss what kind of mind-dependence it ascribes to the core physical features of objects (section 4). At the end of the chapter (section 6), I'll pose and answer some central questions about the view. Along the way I will cite key passages, but a full textual defense is a project for another day.[2]

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[1] Tolley (present volume) makes important use of this way of distinguishing between "appearance" and "phenomenon." He also encouraged me to make this clarification.

[2] Even a book-length treatment of this would not settle the relevant exegetical issues to everyone's satisfaction. That's because Kant's texts simply do not support one self-consistent, coherent position on the relationship between appearances and things in themselves. However, I do think that the key texts from 1783 onwards at least *generally* go in the direction of the hybrid view I present below. For some helpful totting up of the various passages for and against Two-World Phenomenalism, see Collins (1999) and Oberst (2018).

2. Three Levels of Features, One World of Things

In *Prolegomena* (1783) and in the B edition *Critique* (1787), Kant writes and revises in ways that are designed to rebuff the charges of Berkeleyanism that had bedeviled the reception of the A edition of 1781.[3] He also presents his considered account of the ontology of empirical objects. That account, I submit, is that

such objects—trees, tables, oceans, and particles—are things (substances) that really (i.e., mind-independently, transcendentally) exist and have various features in- and amongst-themselves. When these things are given to minds like ours in experience, they appear to us to have many features, only a few of which they really (i.e., mind-independently, transcendentally) have.

To use Kant's own empirical analogy: the universe is like a collection of raindrops that is caught in a "sun-shower" (*Sonnregen*) and appears to us to be a solid, multi-colored arc. Most of the features that the collection appears to us to have (solid, multi-colored, arced, etc.) are *merely* apparent, and not features that the collection genuinely has (A45/B63). Analogously (and quite stunningly), Kant says, *all* of the spatiotemporal-mechanical-dynamical features that things appear to have are merely phenomenal, and not features that they really have.[4]

Another useful metaphor here is that of *projection*: Kant's claim is that when we "look on" (*schau an*) the world, the core physical structure that things appear to us to have is contributed by the various faculties of the projecting mind, though in a manner that is responsive to unknown features of the things themselves.[5] That allows him to accommodate our central commonsense commitment regarding external things—namely, that they exist and have various intrinsic and relational features in and amongst themselves. But it also underwrites his famous Copernican turn, for we can deduce a lot of substantive a priori principles about how those things must appear to us by reflecting on the structure that the mind itself projects.

The view that I take Kant to be proposing is thus *metaphysically realist* about things and their features, but also *broadly phenomenalist* about bodies. Because "Realist Phenomenalism" has such a paradoxical ring, I will use the somewhat less paradoxical name "One-World Phenomenalism." "One-world" and "two-world" talk has become a bit confusing in the literature, but what I mean by "one-world" is simply the view that there is just one set of things—namely, substances with their various features (both intrinsic and relational). However, some of the features these substances really have are *also* features that they appear to us to have. I will call these "*straddling*

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[3] By Christian Garve, in the book review first published in 1782 in an edited and abbreviated (by J. G. H Feder) form in the *Göttinger gelehrten Anzeigen*, and later reprised in its original length in the *Allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek*.

[4] Here and throughout I use "real" as short for "transcendentally real." There is another, empirical/intersubjective sense in which the features things merely appear to us to have are "real," and support claims about them that are phenomenally or empirically true. This is not meant to be a kind of Vedic illusionism about the empirical world.

[5] See Ameriks (2003, pp. 154–55) for a seminal version of this "meeting in the middle" account. For more detail regarding how things in themselves can be part of the explanation of the specific a posteriori content of our experience, see Rosefeldt's contribution to the present volume.

features," or "straddlers" for short. Among the straddlers are basic ontological features (e.g. *existing*, *being a substance*, *having various grounding abilities*) as well as the key mental and moral features mentioned earlier (e.g. *having a mind*, *having rational capacities*, *being free*, *being radically evil*).[6] The view still counts as a kind of *phenomenalism* about bodies, however, because all of the spatiotemporal-material-causal features are *not* straddlers: they are *merely phenomenal* features that things do *not* really have. That is why Kant remains willing, even amid his anti-Berkeleyan labors, to call bodies "mere representations."

There is a third level: some of the features things appear to *me* or *you* or *me and you and Lampe* to have are a contingent matter of perceptual perspective or equipment, and so not features things appear to *us* to have, much less features things *really* have.

> Ordinarily we distinguish quite well between that which is *essentially attached* to the intuition of appearances and is *valid for every human sense* in general, and that which pertains to them only *contingently* because it is not valid for the relation (*Beziehung*) of sensibility in general but only for a *particular situation or organization* of this or that sense.   (A45/B62, my emphasis)

Kant characterizes smells, tastes, and colors as "contingent" features of this sort: they are "linked with the appearance as contingently added effects of the special (*besondere*) organization [of the subject]" (A29/B44; cf. B69–70n). For present purposes, we can also include in this category various misleading seemings: dreams, hallucinations, illusions, color inversions, and so on.

Note that this distinction between the features a thing appears to us to have and the features it appears to some of us to have is *modal* rather than statistical. The former are such that, if the thing appears to well-functioning finite minds[7] at all, then it must appear to us to have those features. The latter, by contrast, are a function of contingent context, perspective, and perceptual equipment. It is possible for the thing to appear to someone else without those specific features.

Kant's ontology thus contains three main levels:

Noumenal: *Features things have.*
   (Straddlers): *Features things both have and appear to us to have.*
Phenomenal: *Features things appear to us to have.*
Perspectival or Illusory: *Features things appear to only some of us to have.*

Three levels of features; one set of things.[8]

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[6] I use "feature" throughout rather than "property" or "predicate" because I want to include ontological statuses like *existence* that, for Kant, are not "real" predicates or determinations (*Bestimmungen*). So some of the straddling features are real predicates in Kant's sense; others aren't. Kant himself is willing, at least in some lectures, to say that *existence* and *being a substance* are two of the "realities" that "things in general" have; he calls *existence* a "universal attribute" and even an "ontological predicate" (*V-Phil-Th/Pölitz*, 28:1020).

[7] I refrain from talking about "human" minds since Kant wants to stay neutral on whether to include animal, alien, or angelic minds in the story (see B72). But the modal claims here only govern receptive-discursive finite minds that are saliently like ours; the divine mind is an entirely different story. See Brewer (2018, 2021) for accounts of the doctrine of intellectual intuition in Kant.

[8] My proximate inspiration here is a paper by the first of the two famous Westphals in Kant scholarship, namely, Merold (Westphal, 1968). I'm not sure this is Westphal's view exactly, but it is in the same spirit. There are hints of the view in Adickes (1924), although Adickes is hard to decipher on some of the key

3. How Is This Different from Other Metaphysical Readings?

There is no room here for an extensive comparison between the present account and other recent metaphysical readings of Kant's transcendental idealism, but the main differences should be clear. One-World (realist) Phenomenalism differs from Two-World (idealist) Phenomenalism in rejecting the notion that the objects of our experience are distinct from things in themselves—by being mere collections of (or logical constructions from the content of) mental states, for instance.[9] Rather, One-World Phenomenalism says that there is just one set of things (substances), and that these things appear to us to have many features that they do not really have. In other words, it rejects the assumption that to accommodate all of the texts that phenomenalist readers cite you have to hive bodies off into a separate mentalistic world.

One-World Phenomenalism differs from other recent metaphysical "one-world" or "dual-aspect" readings by rejecting strict property dualisms. A strict property dualism says that the distinction between appearances and things in themselves consists in the difference between "two kinds of properties that belong to one and the same object" (i.e., intrinsic properties vs. relational properties; mind-independent properties vs. essentially manifest properties; response-independent properties vs. response-dependent properties; different kinds of "*qua*-properties"; and so on).[10] One-World Phenomenalism, by contrast, says that the key difference is between *the features things really have* and *the features things appear to us to have*—these are *not* distinct sets of features but rather partially overlapping.[11] In effect, One-World Phenomenalism employs the ancient appearance/reality distinction to plow a viable middle way between the two-worlds trench and the two-kinds-of-properties trench—one that can accommodate the key texts on both sides.

Kant often emphasizes an analogy between his view and a certain early modern account of the primary–secondary quality distinction. Advocates of other one-world

issues. Nick Stang categorizes views like this under the heading of "dual aspect phenomenalism" or "phenomenalist identity theory." I prefer "One-World Phenomenalism" because (a) I think talk of "dual aspects" is inevitably associated with Epistemic One-World readings like that of Prauss (1971, 1974) and (Allison (1987) and (b) it is not clear that a hybrid collection of features that a thing appears to us to have (only some of which the thing really has) should be regarded as *numerically* "identical" with the thing. There is certainly no guarantee of a one-to-one correspondence between the collections of features and the things whose features they appear to us to be. That said, One-World Phenomenalism is an "identity" theory in the sense that there is ultimately only one set of things. See Stang's (2018a) extremely useful taxonomy.

[9] Perhaps the most influential defense of this view in the recent anglophone literature is by Van Cleve (1999). Other two-world phenomenalist interpreters include Stang, Paul Guyer (1987), Timothy Jankowiak (2017), Michael Oberst (2015, 2018), and Mark Pickering (n.d.). Jauernig (2021) appeared after this volume was submitted and so I don't know the details, but I gather her view is also going to be in this camp.

[10] "Strict property dualism" is R. Lanier Anderson's (2021) phrase; intrinsic vs. relational is from Langton (1998); mind-independent vs. essentially manifest is from Allais (2015); response-independent vs. response-dependent is from Rosefeldt (2013); "*qua*-objects" is from Marshall (2013). The quotation is from Rosefeldt's contribution to the present volume (2022).

[11] I'm not suggesting that each of the theorists listed in the previous note is a strict property dualist, although I think some of them must be (how could one and the same property be both mind-dependent and mind-independent?). Some of these theorists might allow that one and the same feature (e.g. *being a substance*) can be ascribed in thought under the unschematized version of the category and ascribed in cognition under the schematized version. This would be very close to treating *substantiality* as what I call a straddling feature. Thanks to Karl Schafer for discussion here.

pictures have made extensive use of this analogy,[12] and so it is worth looking at how One-World Phenomenalism accommodates it. Here is a key passage:

> As little as someone can be called an idealist because he wants to admit colors as properties that *attach not to the object in itself, but only to the sense of vision as modifications*, just as little can my system be called idealist simply because I find that even more, nay, all *of the properties that make up the intuition of a body* belong merely to its appearance: for the *existence of the thing that appears* is not thereby nullified, as with real idealism, but it is only shown that through the senses we cannot cognize it at all as it is in itself.   (*Prol*, 4:289, my emphasis)

Kant says here that the "thing that appears" and its "existence" do not consist in being perceived; rather, they are mind-independent, and so he is not a Berkeleyan idealist. When that thing appears to us, however, there are many other features—including (stunningly) all the spatiotemporal features "that make up the intuition" of it as "a body"—that it "merely" appears to us to have but does not really have.

The early modern debate Kant is referencing concerned the status of secondary qualities like *being red* and *being bitter*. One side held that these are *merely* qualities of consciousness that are caused by objects in the world but do not occur outside the mind. (This kind of "eliminativism" is typically associated with Galileo.) The other side held that the primary qualities that *cause* those conscious sensations are, in virtue of doing so, *also* the secondary qualities. On this view there are indeed red, bitter objects in the world, but redness and bitterness are very different qualities than we perceive them to be. (This kind of "reductionism" is typically associated with Locke.)

Note that the two sides agree that primary qualities (extension, shape, texture, motion) are features that objects both have and appear to us to have. They also agree that primary qualities are disposed to cause specific sensations in us. So the "side-on" ontology is similar. The debate is over whether the secondary qualities—the colors, smells, and tastes—are features that objects *merely appear* to us to have (and can thus be eliminated from a scientifically perspicuous description of the world), or whether they are features that they really have (i.e., dispositions to produce specific kinds of sensations in us).

The difference between One-World Phenomenalism and other recent metaphysical "one-world" (or "dual aspect") accounts is analogous. The one-world phenomenalist advocates eliminativism about *all* the spatiotemporal features of bodies: they are "nothing more than the way in which we represent (in appearance) the existence of things," even if they are responsive to unknown features of those things (A186/B229). Other recent one-world accounts, by contrast, seem to *reduce* the phenomenal features to the dispositional features of things in themselves. In Rosefeldt's words:

> To have a response-dependent appearance property just is to have some response-independent property that is characterized by its mental effect. (present volume)

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[12] See Rosefeldt (2007), Allais (2007, 2015, ch. 6).

The response-dependent property is still a property *of the thing*, and not a feature it merely appears to us to have:

> *A response-dependent property is a property of an object* that has essentially to do with the kinds of responses, or effects, that object has on certain things, typically human beings. It can be understood as the disposition of the object to elicit these effects.   (ibid.; my emphasis)

How should we adjudicate between these two kinds of account? As usual there is no knock-down textual argument, but Kant certainly *sounds* eliminativist in the *Prolegomena* passage above when he draws an analogy between his view (at the transcendental level) and the Galilean view (at the empirical level). Intuited spatiotemporal features, he says, are analogous to colors that "attach *not to the object in itself*, but *only* to the sense of vision as modifications" (*Prol*, 4:289, my emphasis). In the Aesthetic, likewise, he declares that "space represents *no property at all* of any things in themselves *nor any relation* of them to each other" (A26/B42, my emphasis). Analogies and declarations like these make it awkward to say that space is nonetheless a feature of things: i.e., an "essentially manifest" property (à la Allais); a "response-dependent" property (à la Rosefeldt); or a "*qua*-property" (à la Marshall). Analogies and declarations like these make perfect sense if space is not a feature of things at all, but rather a feature that things merely appear to us to have.

One of the main reasons this difference matters is practical: if a response-dependent property just *is* a response-independent property characterized in a specific way, and the former is determined by reciprocal relations with other items in the phenomenal realm, then the latter are clearly at risk of being caught up in deterministic relations. That result is *precisely* what Kant wants to avoid, on practical grounds. One-World Phenomenalism avoids the problem, since it says that all the deterministic features (*materiality*, *extension*, *location*, etc.) are merely phenomenal, and not features that the thing really has. Things may appear to us to be determined, but in reality they are not.[13]

Another reason the difference matters is this: other metaphysical one-world (or "dual aspect") readings imply that there is one complete set of objects in space and time—namely, all the things that have (response-dependent, essentially manifest) spatiotemporal-causal properties. As harmless as that implication seems, it is in tension with Kant's conclusions in the first two Antinomies, according to which the sensible world "does not exist as such a whole, either with infinite or with finite magnitude" (A505/B533). One-World Phenomenalism again has the advantage here: it says that there is just one world of intelligible substances, and that this world *merely appears* to us to be in space and time. So there is no complete set of objects in space and time.[14]

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[13] I will discuss the extra complications involved in taking freedom to be a straddling feature at the end of section 5 below.

[14] This is another reason not to think of it as an "identity" theory with one-to-one correspondence relations between things and appearances. Thanks to Nick Stang for discussion of the point in this paragraph.

Two further clarifications: one about truth, the other about cognition. First, as should now be obvious, "appears to us to have" is shorthand for "*appears to all well-functioning, properly-situated finite cognizing minds to have*," where "finite cognizing mind" refers to our essential faculties of intuition and understanding. What appears to us in this way is the basis for intersubjective truth-claims. Kant gestures at this when he analyzes "truth" in the phenomenal world as "correspondence" with facts that are given in "absolutely complete" or "universal" experience.[15] Stang provides a helpful sketch of the latter notion:

> Universal experience is the maximally unified and lawful representation of objects in space and time that is compatible with the *a priori* forms of experience and justified by the totality of subjects' perceptual states, or the conjunction of such representations if there is no unique such representation.
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> (Stang, 2018a, n.p.; for discussion, see Stang, 2018b)

This is the Kantian gloss on the Leibnizian idea that empirical objectivity consists in lawlike intersubjectivity: representations that "are connected and determinable in these relations (in space and time) according to the laws of the unity of experience, are called **objects**" (A494/B522). Leibniz called them "well-founded phenomena."

So it is phenomenally true that there is a wooden table before us that is five feet long and two feet wide just in case it is noumenally true that there is a substance that appears to us to have those spatiotemporal features together with the material and causal profiles of wood. The truth-makers of phenomenal truths are facts about how things appear to us (including their straddling features).[16] But as we have seen, finite minds also have subjective perspectives and idiosyncratic equipment (colorblindness or scurvy, for instance). These result in "mere semblance" (*bloßen Schein*), i.e., features that things merely appear to *some of us* to have, but not well-founded *Erscheinungen*, i.e., features that things appear to *all of us* to have (see B71 and *FM*, 20:269). So it is not phenomenally true that there is a dagger hanging before me in mid-air, or even that this table is brown.[17]

Second, and relatedly, something's appearing to us to have a feature—even *merely* appearing to do so—involves a complex cognitional process including affection by the thing, the synthesis of intuitional content, the conceptual apprehension of this manifold, and the production of discursive judgments ascribing determinate properties.[18] Mere semblance, by contrast, does not implement this entire process.[19]

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[15] For "truth" as correspondence of cognition with its object, see A58/B82. For "possible experience in its absolute completeness" see A495/B524. For "universal experience" see A45/B63 and A110.

[16] Note that this claim about truth-makers is much weaker than the full-blown reductionism about spatiotemporal properties that other one-worlders seem to endorse.

[17] It may still be phenomenally, empirically true that the table seems to me to be brown. But that is a second-order claim about a seeming, not a first-order claim about the table.

[18] For more on Kantian cognition, and Kant's occasional uses of "false cognition," see Chignell (2014), Watkins & Willaschek (2017), Chignell (2017), Tolley (2017), and Schafer (forthcoming).

[19] See Sethi (2020).

Here is the taxonomy of features again, now with further details:

Noumenal: *Features things have; in Kant's terms, they are* **transcendentally real**.

    (Straddlers): *Features things both have and appear to us to have; these are still transcendentally real.*

Phenomenal: *Features things appear to us to have (in virtue of our shared, essential cognitive faculties). A few of these (the straddlers) are features things also have. The rest are merely phenomenal but still part of "universal experience"; in Kant's terms, these latter (but not the straddlers) are* **transcendentally ideal**.

Perspectival or Illusory: *Features things appear to* **some** *of us to have (in virtue of our contingent perspectives, environments, or equipment) but do not appear to us to have (in virtue of our shared, essential cognitive faculties). In Kant's terms, they are* **empirically ideal**.

I think this picture is coherent, supported by key texts, and offers resources to accomplish some of Kant's central goals: answering the Humean challenge, repudiating Berkeleyan idealism, refuting Cartesian skepticism, preserving libertarian freedom, and giving primacy to the practical. By retaining a three-level ontology in the one world ("the thing for God, the thing for us, and the thing for me") it also makes Kant's view genuinely novel, and not an exercise in merely "giving fancy names to familiar distinctions."[20] But I can't defend all of that here, obviously. In what remains, my aim is to lay out the view a bit further, advertise one of its key practical attractions, and answer some key questions.

4. Straddling the Phenomenal/Noumenal Divide

4.1 Straddling Features

We pull up our chairs to the table in preparation for a meal. The table appears to us to have a certain size, shape, texture, and so on. It also appears to be made of wood, which is a certain dynamical configuration of matter. According to One-World Phenomenalism, what's happening is that there is something that really has features such as

(Noumenal Level):
existence
being a substance
being in dependence relations with other things
being the ground of thus-and-such perceptions in us

as well as many other intrinsic and relational features that are inaccessible to us. It also appears to us to have various features:

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[20] Westphal (1968, p. 119).

(Phenomenal Level):
existence

being a substance
being in dependence relations with other things
being the ground of thus-and-such perceptions in us
being material
being in thus-and-such causal relations
having thus-and-such an extension
having thus-and-such a quantum
having thus-and-such a temporal location
being in thus-and-such spatial relations
etc.

"Thus-and-such" is just a placeholder for specific perceptions, relations, and locations—in the present case, perceptions of a wooden table with a certain position, shape, texture, and so on. As the two lists make clear, some of the features that things appear to us to have are overlapping straddlers (in **bold**): they are also features that they really have in themselves. But most features of phenomena are not straddlers—they are *merely* phenomenal.

Unlike the merely phenomenal features, straddlers can support inferences across the phenomenal–noumenal divide. If the table appears to us to exist, then we can infer that there is something that exists. If the table appears to us to be a substance, then we can infer that there really is a substance, "for otherwise there would follow the absurd proposition that there is an appearance without anything that appears" (Bxxvi). If the table appears to us to be grounding our perceptions of it, then we can infer that there is a ground of our perceptions of the table. In general: when something appears to us, we can infer that it (a substance) exists, and that it is in various dependence and grounding relations, including the relation of grounding precisely those perceptions in us.

It would be worth considering each of the straddlers in turn to work out what the straddling content is, what merely phenomenal content is added when it appears to us, and how all this fits with Kant's talk of pure categories, schematized categories, and the pure principles of the understanding. Here I will set most of that aside for the sake of space. I do want to say a bit more about the straddling feature of *being a substance*, however.

In the chapter on the Analogies of Experience, Kant deduces the principle that (A edition:) substance appears to persist through all state- and property-changes and (B edition:) material substance is an absolute permanent whose "quantum is neither increased nor diminished in nature" (A182/B224). But in addition to such "substances in appearance" (A188/B231) or "substances in space" (A525/B553), Kant says that we can also ascribe the feature of *being a substance*, quite properly, to things in themselves. When we do that, we abstract from the features things merely appear to us to have (i.e., *being material*, *having thus-and-such an extension*, etc.): "with that which is called substance **in appearance** things are not as they would be with a thing in itself which one thinks through pure concepts of the understanding" (ibid.).

Kant goes on to clarify that the content we univocally ascribe to both sensible and intelligible things under the category of <*substance-attribute*> is that of *being "an absolute subject"*—i.e., an "ultimate subject of existence," one that is not a predicate of

something else (ibid.; see also B148). This straddling content is quite thin, of course, and sensible substances will have lots of additional features that they merely appear to us to have. When we perceive the table, something appears to us to be a substance (an absolute subject), and we can infer on this basis that a substance exists and is the ground of these perceptions in us. But the table inevitably also appears to have spatiotemporal-dynamical attributes (*persistence*, *a certain shape*, *material-dynamical features*, etc.). The central (and stunning) thesis of Kant's transcendental idealism is that none of these latter attributes straddle; rather, they *merely* appear.

We might wonder, however: do tables and chairs and galaxies really appear to us as absolute subjects? Does this straddling content really shine through? A key passage from *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science* indicates that the answer is Yes. There Kant moots the Cartesian idea that the external substance that appears is *matter in general*—the ultimate subject of spatial predication. Loosely speaking, however, we can still call individual configurations of matter "substances" insofar as they are subjects and not "merely predicates" of "other matters":

> The concept of a substance refers to *the ultimate subject of existence*, that is, that which does not itself belong in turn to the existence of another merely as predicate. Now matter is the subject of everything that may be counted in space as belonging to the existence of things. For, aside from matter, no other subject would be thinkable except space itself, which, however, is a concept that contains nothing existent at all, but merely the necessary conditions for the external relations of possible objects of the outer senses. *Thus matter, as the movable in space, is the substance therein.* But all parts of matter must likewise be called substances, and thus themselves matter in turn, insofar as one can say of them that they are themselves subjects, and not merely predicates of other matters.
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> (*MAN*, 4:503; see also *MAN*, 4:540–41, but cf. B148)[21]

One-World Phenomenalism reads this as the claim that *being a substance* is a straddling feature. When something appears to us in outer sense, it appears to us to have the feature *being a substance* (a feature that it also really has) and the merely phenomenal features associated with *being material*. Put another way: cognition of external substances inevitably involves *schematization* and *materialization*—that is, the ascription of temporal, spatial, and mechanical-dynamical features (e.g. a "quantum" that is conserved through transformations). But when we make an inference across the straddling feature we "abstract" from all that and retain only the content of the "pure concept" (i.e., absolute subjecthood) (A525/B553).

Note that the first three items in the list refer to intrinsic features of a thing, but the fourth—*being the ground of thus-and-such perceptions in us*—can refer *either* to an intrinsic, standing ability to ground specific perceptions in us, or to a relational *manifestation* of that ability in a particular case. Both of these features may be

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[21] Thanks to Adwait Parker for highlighting the importance of these passages in *MAN* and to Jessica Leech for discussion. I leave as homework a discussion of other relevant passages about the category of substance and its phenomenal and noumenal instantiations, as well as an engagement with Messina's (2021) important work on this issue.

straddlers, but the latter is also a relation that requires there to be at least one mind in which the power is made manifest. I will call a feature that, by its very concept, entails the existence of a mind an "analytically mind-dependent feature." Other examples include *being a mind*, *being in a world with a mind*, *being seen*, *being free*, *being known*, and various second-order features such as *appearing to a mind to have a feature*. Another and more interesting way for a feature to be mind-dependent is for it to be *merely phenomenal*. I'll now turn to Kant's account of that.

4.2 Merely Phenomenal Features

One of Kant's revolutionary aims is to establish the (stunning) synthetic a priori thesis that spatial extension and temporal "persistence" are merely phenomenal—i.e., "nothing more than the way in which we represent the existence of things (in appearance)" (A186/B229). Here is an account of mere phenomenality that applies to features that are not analytically mind-dependent:[22]

Merely Phenomenal (MP): For any feature F that is not analytically mind-dependent, any object O, and the set of finite cognizers, ψ, O's being F is merely phenomenal if and only if it is impossible that **both** *(i) O is F* **and** *(ii) no normal[23] member of ψ is able to cognize that O is F.*

For example: the fact that the table is, say, rectangular at time *t* is *merely phenomenal* just in case the table cannot be rectangular-at-*t* unless there is a finite mind that is able to cognize that the table is (or was) rectangular-at-*t*.[24] This is merely a modal connection rather than a real explanation. But the connection is grounded in the fact that part of what it is for an object to have a phenomenal feature is for it to be *able to be cognized to have* that feature. I will not say anything here about what the "ability to cognize" consists in, or how it serves as a partial ground in this way. But obviously Kant has a big story to tell about that.

According to MP, a finite mind need not exist at the time when O has F in order for that fact to be merely phenomenal: we can cognize the dinosaurs' having large teeth via the fossil record, millions of years after they walked the earth. So the

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[22] This is not an analysis of mere phenomenality *simpliciter*. It's hard to find a principle that doesn't end up making analytically mind-dependent features like *being a mind* or *appearing to a mind* merely phenomenal—something no Kantian wants to allow. Note too that strictly speaking this is an analysis of a fact. So really it's *O's being F* that is merely phenomenal. However, I speak loosely here and throughout of features being merely phenomenal.

[23] "Normal" here is supposed to make the cognizability of *O's being F* compatible with various contingent and philosophically uninteresting incapacities. We want to allow that even if all the actual cognizers in the world just happen to be deaf, a falling tree still makes a (merely phenomenal) sound. Thanks to Christopher Benzenberg for a question about this issue.

[24] Note that the minds in question are "finite" cognizers with faculties of intuition and discursivity like ours. Any theist is going to say that almost everything is dependent on the infinite mind, but that's not enough to make them merely phenomenal in the MP sense.

connection between having the feature and being cognized by an existing mind to have that feature may be either *Potential* or *Indirect*.

Potential: *O's being F at t* can be merely phenomenal in the MP fashion even if that fact is not cognized or even cognizable by us at *t*. All that is required is that at some time or other an actual finite cognizer exists and was or will be able to cognize that *O* was *F-at-t*. Note, however, that it is not enough for merely possible finite mind to be able to cognize *O's being F-at-t*. A non-actual mind is not ontologically substantive enough to be a partial ground of something's having a feature, even in a merely phenomenal way. Put more starkly, if there were no finite cognizers of our sort, there could not be any F-bearing things. The relation invoked in (ii) of MP is thus *actual cognizability*. This is another place where One-World Phenomenalism seems to differ from other recent one-world readings.[25]

Indirect: cognition of a tree falling in a forest (or a dinosaur, or a particle) need not be directly *sense-perceptual*: it can go by way of inference and extrapolation from other observations, testimony, and background knowledge. Kant speaks of expanding our cognition beyond what we perceive by appeal to general and specific natural laws as well as the pure principles of the understanding—together, these are "the laws of empirical advance" (A493/B521). In this way the features of gluons, galaxies, and "magnetic matter" count as actually cognizable and thus as (merely phenomenal) components of the empirical world.

A final, related point: MP says that *if O* is F, then some finite mind exists and is able to cognize its being F. MP does not affirm the absurd converse: i.e., that if some finite mind exists and is in principle able to cognize *O's being F*, then *O* exists and is F. In other words, the fact that an actual mind would be *able* to cognize horses with horns does not entail that unicorns exist. There are other partial grounds of a thing's appearing to us to have a feature, even a merely phenomenal one.

5. Practical Cognition of Persons in Appearance

I noted at the outset that a key advantage of One-World Phenomenalism is that it allows Kant to say that various mental and moral properties are straddlers: they are *both* real features and apparent features of certain things—ourselves included. Here I'll focus on specifically moral features such as *being rational agents*, *being free*, *being*

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[25] Allais says that the mind-dependent properties that constitute appearances are "essentially manifest." In the passage that looks like her official gloss on this notion she says: "To capture the idea that a [property, F] is *essentially manifest* we need something stronger: an object is [F] only if there is a way it would appear to subjects who are suitably situated and suitably receptive. Here, the object's being [F] is dependent on its possible appearance to conscious subjects" (2015, p. 123). The subjunctive formulation here suggests that an object can be F even if there are no *actual* finite minds that are able to cognize it as F. Elsewhere Allais says that "[f]or something to be empirically real it is necessary that it could be present in a possible empirical intuition" (p. 144). MP, by contrast, is stronger: it says that O cannot be F unless there *actually* is, at some point, a finite mind that is able to cognize it as F. MP is much weaker, however, than a two-world phenomenalist principle like that defended by Oberst: "all talk about appearances can be reduced to talk about some sort of mental content" (2018, p. 120).

radically evil, *being courageous* and so on. My suggestion is that these too are strad-dling features that substances (i.e., agents) both have and appear to us to have.

Kant says in the first *Critique* that our "empirical character" is just a "sensible schema" of our "intelligible character" (A553/B581). In the second *Critique* he says that there is a "natural to our reason, but inexplicable perspective" that "conscience" offers, such that we can be "assured" of a relation by which our "actions as appear-ances" can be ascribed to "the intelligible substratum in us" (*KpV*, 5:99; compare 5:43–46). One-World Phenomenalism reads this as the claim that something in our experience appears to us to *act*—i.e., it appears to be a rational agent rather than a mere body, whether mechanical or organic. But agency is a function of a rational will—the "intelligible substratum in us." Thus when we observe ourselves (or some-one else) *acting*, a substance appears to us to be a rational agent. Just as with the other straddlers, we can then infer on that basis that it really is such an agent: it is a person.

Rational agency is a very general feature, but something similar is true of specific moral maxims and dispositions. Someone appears to us to have a specific moral character, and on this basis we can (defeasibly) infer that he *really has* that specific character. In *Religion*, Kant says that someone's deeds—which we cognize in experi-ence or indirectly via testimony—may be "so constituted that they allow the infer-ence of evil maxims in him" (*RGV*, 6:20). In fact, empirical "anthropological research" gives us "grounds that justify us in attributing one of these two characters [evil or good] to a human being" (*RGV*, 6:25). In one of the most reliable logic tran-scripts from the critical period ("*Wiener*") Kant reportedly said:

> We cannot encounter a virtue among human beings. But my reason must nonethe-less have a concept of virtue, as it must be in its complete perfection. *We can very well perceive* (*wahrnehmen*) *virtue in experience* (*in der Erfahrung*). But much must still be added to it; thus it is an idea.   (*V-Lo/Wiener*, 24:906–907, my emphasis)[26]

Certainly we do not encounter a perfected virtue among imperfect human beings, and so that remains a mere idea. But we can nonetheless experience *some* moral qualities in ourselves and others.

These texts (together with those already quoted in section 2) indicate that by 1788, at least, Kant has expanded his official notion of "phenomena" or "objects of experi-ence" to encompass moral features, and not merely the empirical-theoretical features that are the focus of the first *Critique* and *Metaphysical Foundations*. Judgments about moral-agential features are presumably generated in what he sometimes calls "practical cognition," and those that involve straddlers can support defeasible infer-ences to claims about the features things really have. The parallel to the theoretical case here is very close: in empirical cognition of the table, a substance that grounds

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[26] Note that here and elsewhere Kant seems to be saying that we "perceive" these moral features not just in ourselves but also in others ("human beings"). A weaker claim would be that we can perceive them in ourselves but not in others. Although I take texts like these to support the stronger claim, it would be worth considering whether the weaker claim offers philosophical advantages. Thanks to Clinton Tolley for discussion of this difference.

our perceptions appears to us, and this supports the inference that there really is a substance that grounds these perceptions. In practical cognition of someone torturing a cat, a person who is vicious appears to us, and this supports the inference that he really is vicious. That's what it means to say that some noumenal features "*shine through*" (*hervorleuchtet*) in our experience.[27]

In moral cases we are typically dealing with much more specific features than in the empirical case, and so the inferences from the moral features things appear to have to the moral features things really have will not be as reliable. Sometimes what appears will be mere moral semblance, rather than a well-founded moral phenomenon. In the *Groundwork* Kant says that it is absolutely impossible by means of experience to make out *with complete certainty* (*mit völliger Gewissheit*) whether a maxim "rested wholly on moral grounds." The "dear self" is adept at hiding all manner of immoral intentions from others and from itself (*GMS*, 4:407–408).[28] In the *Religion*, however, he allows there is a limited "extent to which one can expect and ask for *evidence* (*Beweisthümer*) *of the inner moral disposition* (*Gesinnung*) *from an external experience*." Such an experience "does not reveal the inner disposition but only allows inference to it, though not with strict certainty" (*RGV*, 6:63, my emphasis). Kant is saying here again that we can defeasibly infer from moral appearances to the features of someone's fundamental maxim and character—*occasionally* if the person is virtuous (as in the case of the "teacher" of the Gospels (*RGV*, 6:66) or a longtime practitioner of the good (6:68)), but much more often if her actions are done from "vice (*peccatum derivativum*) and her ultimate maxim is evil (*peccatum originarium*)" (*RGV*, 6:31; cf. 6:36–37; 6:71; 4:408). Likewise in self-observation: "[someone] can derive no certain and definite concept of his actual disposition (*wirklichen Gesinnung*) through immediate consciousness, but *only* from the conduct he has actually led in life" (*RGV*, 6:77, my emphasis). We appear to ourselves to act courageously, and from that we defeasibly infer that we really are courageous.

A significant advantage of One-World Phenomenalism is that it can make sense of how all this works via the doctrine of straddlers. Some of the intelligible moral features of agents (*being evil*, *being courageous*) shine through, and thus support the relevant inferences from moral appearance to moral reality. In other words, such moral features are phenomenal, but they are not *merely* phenomenal. Of course, as just noted, it's possible for you to appear to some of us to have a moral feature that you do not really have: that's why inferences across straddlers are defeasible in the

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[27] In *Perpetual Peace*, Kant says that we have a "guarantee" that we are approaching perpetual peace because through the "mechanical array" generated by "the great artist *nature* (*natura daedala rerum*) purposiveness shines forth visibly (*sichtbarlich hervorleuchtet*)" (*ZeF*, 8:360). This is a nice image that I think the one-world phenomenalist can use to describe how not just purposiveness but also rationality, freedom, and other moral qualities directly appear.

[28] "Indeed even a human being's inner experience of himself does not allow him so to fathom the depths of his heart as to be able to attain, through self-observation, an *entirely* reliable cognition of the basis of the maxims which he professes, and of their purity and stability" (*RGV*, 6:63). For this reason, Kant says we "are acquainted with (*kennen*) ourselves" by "estimating our disposition not directly but only according to our *actions* (*Thaten*)" (*RGV*, 6:75–76, my emphasis). Note, however, that actions are quite different from mere bodily behavior.

moral case. But other things equal, *how you* morally *appear to us* in practical cognition licenses a prima facie conclusion about *how you* morally *really are*.[29]

Note that the inference pattern is typically just one step: from practical cognitions of the moral features people appear to us to have, to a defeasible conclusion about the moral features they really have. Occasionally, however, there will be a *preliminary* inference from mere bodily behavior to the apparent moral features: "I don't have my glasses with me, but tell me: is that person really *laughing* while harming that cat? Or is he *grimacing* while performing a difficult but necessary medical procedure on it? He's laughing? Well, then, it appears he really is vicious!" In such cases, the moral features still appear, but in the indirect way that dinosaurs, distant planets, and magnetic matter appear in empirical cognition. They are features things appear to us to have, but not directly: we infer that they are "given" from testimony or observation of instruments, fossil records, satellite data, etc. In many cases—both theoretical and moral—if we had "finer" faculties, or were closer in space or in time, we might be able perceive the appearances directly. As it is, though, we first infer the moral appearances from physical appearances, and only then make *further* inferences about the features someone really has. Again, however, this two-step process is not the norm: typically it's just a one-step inference across straddlers: from the moral features of appearances to the moral features of things in themselves.

It's not clear how competing views can say something equally attractive here. Two-World Phenomenalism presumably construes human bodies as something like constructed, spatiotemporal avatars of numerically distinct, non-spatiotemporal substances. So with respect to other people, what appears are just the movements and sounds of bodies, from which we then make judgments about the mental and moral features of something *else*—something that does not appear at all. In other words, actions and agents are not given to us in experience, and no character is "made visible"—rather, there is only the opaque and tendentious move from perception of bodies to conjectures about noumena. This is unappealing from a moral-epistemological point of view, and may even lead to a kind of moral skepticism. Interpreters who give primacy to practical concerns should thus prefer One-World Phenomenalism regarding persons at the very least.[30] But once we have the structure in place for persons, it seems impractical if not churlish to refuse to extend it to all the substances that appear to us (which may, after all, be minds or monads of some sort).

Other metaphysical one-world pictures do better in this regard: the things (people) that we observe speaking untruths and violating the bodily integrity of others are the very things that are evil and vicious. Still, all the one-worldisms I'm aware of fail to make room for moral straddlers, and so they aren't able to say that personal, agential, and moral features are genuinely *given* as objects of experience. Rather, we only perceive the "essentially manifest" or "response-dependent" sensible properties—i.e., bodily behavior—and must then try to conjecture about the response-independent properties of which they are the mental effect. But again,

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[29] Karl Schafer (forthcoming) discusses the practical need to systematically connect phenomenal and noumenal features.
[30] Compare Adams (1997).

this is both phenomenologically dubious and moral-epistemologically unattractive: typically I simply observe that you appear to be evil; I don't try to infer from your bodily behavior to some *non-appearing* features. In fact, tellingly, Rosefeldt says that I *couldn't* do so:

> Whereas we have access to specific response-dependent properties of objects…we will never be able to specify a single response-independent property and say anything determinate about it.   (present volume)

According to One-World Phenomenalism, by contrast, the moral features often shine through in the empirical world: they appear, even if they are not *merely* phenomenal.

There is a special complication here involving the feature of freedom, and so I will conclude this section by considering it. Any plausible reading of the critical philosophy says that incompatibilist, transcendental freedom is a feature that at least some substances—namely, our fundamental selves as agents—really have. In the second *Critique*, for example, Kant says that we can "know" (*wissen*) we are free indirectly via our awareness of the *Faktum* that we are under the demands of the moral law (*KpV*, 5:4). But elsewhere the awareness is more direct: "the human being…recognizes (*erkennt*) himself also through pure apperception, and indeed in actions and inner features" as a "merely intelligible object" and thus as undetermined (A546–47/ B574–75). A few pages later, he says that the "causality of reason in the intelligible character **does not arise** or start working at a certain time in producing an effect." Nevertheless,

> this very same cause [i.e., freedom] *in another relation also belongs to the series of appearances. The human being himself is an appearance. His power of choice has an empirical character*, which is the (empirical) cause of all of his actions.
>
> (A551–52/B579–80, my emphasis)

The "causality of reason" is just freedom,[31] so it looks like Kant is saying here that freedom is a feature that the "human being" both has and *appears* to us to have in its empirical character—freedom can shine through in inner and outer experience of actions in the world. Presumably many of the other passages that say that various moral features appear could be taken to imply that freedom (a Kantian precondition for morality) also shines through.

Kant also claims, however, that in other contexts—when we are doing physics or history or empirical psychology, for example—people appear to us to be determined. The compatibilist just leaves it at that: we appear to be free and we appear to be determined because we *are* both free and determined. Kant rejects such compatibilism as incoherent—the mere "freedom of a turnspit"—and instead resolves the antinomy by saying that the deterministic features are *mere* appearances. One-World Phenomenalism reads this as the claim that the deterministic physical features are *merely* phenomenal

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[31] Kant wrote here in the margins of his copy of the A edition: "If pure reason has causality, then the will is a pure will, and its causality is called freedom" (*HN*, 23:41).

in the MP way, while freedom is a straddling feature that persons both appear to us to have and really have.

There is a hitch here, however. We saw earlier that it is phenomenally true that O is F just in case O appears to us to be F. Given what I just said about the feature of freedom, this suggests that it is both phenomenally true that S is free and phenomenally true that S is not free. That's a bad result.

One response to the problem is to say that "appears to us to be" is strictly speaking about the theoretical, scientific image (see Stang's account of "universal experience" above), and so we do not, in fact, appear to ourselves to be free, even though we know we are free. This would be disappointing for friends of One-World Phenomenalism, since then freedom and other moral features would not be straddlers after all. A less concessive approach would relativize phenomenal truth to certain large-scale contexts (the scientific image vs. the manifest image, say). So it can be phenomenally true, relative to the scientific image, that *not-p* and yet still phenomenally true, relative to the manifest image, that *p*. The Kantian way to put this is to say that *not-p* is a *theoretical* phenomenal truth ascertained in empirical cognition, whereas *p* is a *practical* phenomenal truth ascertained in practical cognition. But both are still phenomenal truths—i.e., truths about how things appear to us.

The relativizing approach has some appeal. But another, more radical approach also suggests itself. Since One-World Phenomenalism is already committed to the idea that most phenomenal truths are noumenally false, perhaps a contradiction between two phenomenal truths is less devastating than we usually assume, as long as *at least one of them is noumenally false*. And that is indeed the case here: we appear to ourselves to be free, and we appear to ourselves to be determined—so both of those judgments are phenomenally true. But only the judgment that we are free is noumenally true as well.[32]

6. Questions and Answers

Many questions remain. Here I'll address only a few of the most obvious ones:

1. *What are the implications of this picture for Kant's theory of intuition? How can a thing with a hybrid collection of apparent features—some of which it really has, and some of which it merely appears to us to have—be the object of intuition?*

For Kant, intuiting (literally, "looking on," *anschauen*) is the cognitive process by which the "matter" of sensation becomes susceptible to the "form" of discursive understanding. Intuitions are supposed to be "singular" and bear an "immediate" relation to their objects (A19/B33). One-World Phenomenalism says that when we look-on substances, most of the features they appear to us to have are *not* features that they really have—among these are the spatiotemporal features that are characteristic of

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[32] With thanks to Stang, Schafer, Benzenberg, Brennan, and Leech for discussion, I hereby assign myself further consideration of this tricky question (and its connection to the Third Antinomy) as yet more homework.

intuition. Full cognition involves adding conceptual structure to a cluster of such features and ascribing the structured cluster to a thing. So when I cognize the table, I am immediately and singularly related to a thing via a cluster of features that it appears to us to have; when I look on the chair, I am likewise related to a thing via a cluster of features that it appears to us to have. The clusters can be distinguished from one another; they are the content of different intuitions and have different causal profiles.

This does not entail, however, that the things that really have the features that partly constitute these two clusters are *themselves* distinct. For all we know, *one and the same thing* appears to us as both the table and the chair. Indeed, for all we theoretically know, one and the same thing appears to us as *all the matter in the universe*, although on practical grounds we will typically want to count the matter of two distinct human bodies as the appearances of two distinct moral substances. Put more simply: something can appear to us to be distinct from itself, even if it is not distinct from itself. The noumenal ignorance doctrine leaves it open that Leibniz or even Berkeley was right about the ontology of the intelligible world. That is another reason why speaking of the "numerical identity" of appearances and things in themselves is misleading, particularly outside of practical contexts.

2. Does this view entail that we cognize things in themselves in an objectionable way?

No. Kant himself is willing to say that we cognize what are in fact things with features in themselves, but by way of clusters of features that they appear to us to have:

> [T]he things that we intuit are not in themselves what we intuit them to be, nor are their relations so constituted in themselves as they appear to us…

What we intuit are *the things*, Kant says, but those same things are not in themselves what or how we intuit them to be. The passage continues:

> …if we remove our own subject or even only the subjective constitution of the senses in general, then all the constitution, all relations of objects in space and time, *indeed space and time themselves would disappear* (*verschwinden würden*), *and as appearances they cannot exist in themselves, but only in us*. What may be the case with objects in themselves and abstracted from all this receptivity of our sensibility remains entirely unknown to us. We are acquainted with nothing except our way of perceiving them, which is peculiar to us, and which therefore does not necessarily pertain to every being, though to be sure it pertains to every human being. We are concerned solely with this.   (A42/B59, my emphasis)

Kant says here that we do "perceive them"—i.e., the mind-independent things—although their non-appearing features—"abstracting from all this receptivity our sensibility"—are "entirely unknown to us." Moreover, if there were no cognizing subjects these things would not appear to have the core physical features that they do: rather, space and time would "disappear." This makes sense if the core physical

features are merely phenomenal in the MP way, for if there were no finite minds, then such features would not be actually cognizable.

I think that this passage from A42/B59 is a strong one for One-World Phenomenalism. It's also *the* place in the *Critique* (the "General Remark on the Transcendental Aesthetic") where Kant is "explaining as clearly as possible" what transcendental idealism is meant to be.

> 3. *Can't we still regard the clusters of features—the tables and oceans and particles—as mere mental effects that things have on our minds, as on Two-World Phenomenalism?*

The answer here, again, has to do with the straddlers: some of the key features in the cluster are features of the mind-independent things, and so those clusters cannot be hived off as distinct (mental) objects.

> 4. *Okay, but why say that the clusters are partly constituted by features of the things, rather than that the clusters and the things have* **some features-in-common**?

A good question. Let's consider a flat-footed but useful analogy from within the empirical world. Suppose that our ubiquitous table now has a one Euro coin on it, and we are looking on (intuiting) and cognizing that coin through a slightly deformed pink magnifying glass. The object of this cognition is the coin, not an image of it. The coin has numerous features, some of which it also appears to us to have. The latter include *having the word "EURO" etched on it*, *displaying a drawing of the venerable continent*, *lying on its side*, *lacking motion*, and so on. In addition to these features, however, there are also features that it *merely* appears to us to have: *being oblong* (due to the deformity of the glass), and *being pink*. Obviously there is no requirement to say that the hybrid cluster of features that the object appears to us to have constitutes an object that is distinct from the coin itself. In other words, the "mismatch" in properties does not force the conclusion that there are two distinct objects: the coin (which is circular and silver), and the coin-appearance (which is oblong and pink). To use Kant's own example, just because Saturn appears to us to have handles, we needn't say that there are two things: Unhandled Saturn (the planet in itself) and Handled Saturn (a mere appearance) (B70n). Instead we can say that there is a thing and a cluster of features that it appears to us to have, only some of which it really has. The "mismatch" is accounted for by the appearance/reality distinction.[33]

> 5. *The example indicates that the fact that we count only one set of things in these empirical cases is a result of the fact that there are a lot of empirical straddlers. What if there were very few?*

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[33] For discussion of this "mismatch" problem, I'm indebted to Timothy Jankowiak's recent work, including his presentations at the 2019 Kant Kongress in Oslo and the 2020 APA Eastern Division meeting. Jankowiak, however, takes the "mismatch" problem to be an insurmountable problem for one-world readings.

This too is a good question, and brings us to bedrock in this particular interpretative trench. Let's change the example so that the thing on the table before us is not itself a coin but just a device that projects an image of a Euro coin onto the surface of the pink glass. In that case, there would still be a couple of features shared between the mini-projector and the coin-image—*existing* and *being the ground of thus-and-such perceptions in us*. But the number of these shared features would be very limited, and the "mismatch" would be profound.

As Michelle Montague (2016) points out, when the mismatch is profound in this way, it is natural to say that there are two separate objects: the projector on the table *and* the image it projects on the glass surface.[34] This would mean that the "sharing" of a few features is not a matter of genuine straddling but rather of having some *features-in-common*. The projector is the *ground* of the coin-image, to be sure, and they share some features in common. But they are not the same thing. Likewise, in the transcendental context, given how different things really are from how they appear to us, we might be tempted to think of the cluster of features that appear to us as constituting a *distinct* phenomenal substance—one whose existence and substantiality, too, is merely phenomenal.

This is a good challenge: it shows that the decision whether to distinguish a thing from its appearance often comes down to how robust and numerous the shared features are, and to what sorts of interests we have in thinking of the latter as genuine straddlers rather than just features-in-common. The primacy of the practical again plays a role here, for there is pressure from the ethical point of view to include many of our personal, moral features among the straddlers that genuinely appear. That in turn gives us reason to prefer the One-World Phenomenalism over a two-world account on which those features are merely in-common. To be honest, it's not clear to me what it would mean to say that noumenal agents and their phenomenal avatars *merely* share some features in common. But it's certainly less appealing than to say that some of the features that things have are also features they appear to us to have.

7. Conclusion

My goal in this chapter was to offer grounds for thinking that, by 1783 anyway, Kant had adopted One-World Phenomenalism about the sensible and intelligible world. In other words, by 1783 Kant clearly held that things *exist* and have various features in a mind-independent way, but that (stunningly enough) all of their spatiotemporal-material-dynamical determinations are *merely phenomenal* features. "Mere phenomenality" was characterized in terms of (MP): such features are exemplified only if a finite mind like ours actually exists and is able to cognize them. So something in our manner of cognizing—and here I haven't specified what or how—at once *enables* the appearance of the core physical features of the universe and *ensures* that these features are intersubjective and nomologically stable. That's why Kant thinks we can deduce the categories and various synthetic principles in an a priori way.

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[34] See especially chapters 6 and 7.

Finally, I pointed out that a key advantage of this picture is that it allows some mental and moral features to be straddlers—that is, features that some things (persons) really have and also appear to us to have. The straddlers "shine through" in our experience. This is crucially the case with transcendental freedom: although we sometimes appear to ourselves and others to be determined, we also appear to be free. But what we really are is free.[35]

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