

BOOK REVIEW

Hallucination: Philosophy and Psychology

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Hallucination is divided into three parts, and includes introductory material. Part one has articles on hallucination from psychology and neuroscience. Parts two and three have contributions by philosophers, which I'll comment on here.

Part two is concerned with disjunctivism. Consider a veridical experience in which one sees an apple as the red thing it is. The disjunctivist wants to preserve a naive realist account of the nature of such experiences: an account on which such experiences (i) consist in non-representational relations between perceivers and ordinary objects, where (ii) this is part of what explains the character of such experiences. To preserve such an account the disjunctivist rejects the *common kind assumption*, articulated by Martin (2004) as: whatever fundamental kind of mental event occurs when one is veridically perceiving an F for what it is, the same kind of mental event occurs in a subjectively matching hallucination (what in Ch. 14 Howard Robinson calls 'Philosophers' Hallucinations').

But as disjunctivists recognize, they need to take on further commitments about hallucinations. This is spelled out nicely in the contribution by Matt Nudds (Ch. 12). To simplify: take a veridical experience of an apple as red, and a hallucinatory counterpart. Suppose the veridical experience has a naive realist nature – it is of kind N, a relation to a red apple. But now a version of the causal argument from hallucination can be put: the distinct kind present in the hallucinatory case, H, will also be present in the veridical case, if the causal conditions for the presence of H are satisfied in the veridical case too. The argument here relies on some sort of same-cause, same-effect principle (Nudds: 274–275). The result is that even if the veridical experience is of kind N, it is also of kind H. Is that a problem for the naive realist? Well, there is something it is like for a subject to have an hallucinatory experience as of an apple as red, the experience seems to relate the subject to a red apple and this is grounded in its being of kind H. What is that? A popular candidate is that an experience's being of such a kind is for it to be a *representation* of the presence of a red apple. But now if an experience of that kind is present in the veridical case, it is difficult to see how what the naive realist says is fundamental to that case – the obtaining of a non-representational relation to an ordinary object – is doing anything by way of explaining what it is like for a subject to have the experience. Consequently the presence of H in the veridical case seems to make N explanatorily redundant, and this is at odds with naive realism ((ii) above).

The most well-developed disjunctivist response to these considerations is Martin's response – developed and defended in Nudd's excellent contribution. On this view the disjunctivist should conceive of H in a negative epistemic way. That is, what makes it

the case that one's hallucination is as of an apple as red is that it is an occurrence which cannot be told apart, introspectively, from a veridical perception of an apple as red. The particular subjective perspective that a hallucinator has in a causally matching hallucination as of an apple as red is explained just by the obtaining of this negative epistemic condition. But now H has a nature which means that the presence of H in the veridical case does *not* threaten the explanatory power of N. For H's explanatory force is parasitic on that of N:

That veridical experiences are actually relational therefore explains both why veridical experiences seem relational (they actually are so) and why hallucinatory experiences seem relational (they are indiscriminable from episodes that actually are so) (Nudds: 281).

As well as Nudd's, other notable contributions from part two are the more critical discussions of Benj Hellie (Ch. 8) and Howard Robinson (Ch. 14). Hellie is a disjunctivist, but rejects Martin's form of disjunctivism (he thinks a more positive characterization of H is available). Robinson rejects disjunctivism altogether. He fortifies his preferred form of the argument from hallucination and contends that disjunctivists have not successfully dealt with it.

Though philosophers thinking about hallucinations have been obsessed with disjunctivism, part three of *Hallucination* shows how there can be discussion of the nature of experience not focused around disjunctivism, yet informed by consideration of hallucinations (and not just 'Philosophers' Hallucinations'). A stand-out article in this part is Ian Phillips's 'Hearing and Hallucinating Silence'. Phillips considers a traditional view on which we can neither hear nor hallucinate silence. The traditional view involves the idea that we can at best hear that it is silent. But Phillips contends that we can hear and hallucinate silence itself. Such experience comes in at least two forms. First, Phillips argues that 'we can hear silences when they are, like pauses, silences whose experiential presence is parasitic on our experience of contrastive sound' (341). Imagine, for instance, brief periods of silence in musical passages. We can hear such silences. And presumably we can hallucinate them too. In such cases, it looks like the silence is heard in virtue of the hearing of encompassing sounds. This means, Phillips suggests that we have to reject a snapshot conception of all temporal experience, a conception on which 'we can analyse the stream of consciousness in terms of the momentary apprehension of momentary contents' (341).

But is there such a thing as hearing or hallucinating silence even when there is no experienced sound on which the experience of silence hinges? Suppose I awake from a dreamless sleep to *deathly silence*, and that is all I can hear before I fall back into a dreamless sleep. At no point do sounds enter into my stream of consciousness, I experience just the silence. And presumably one could hallucinate this too. Phillips agrees that there are such cases. But how are we to understand them? And how are they different from deafness, where there is a lack of auditory experience? Phillip's striking suggestion is that to make sense of such cases we have to reject a common view of experience on which there can be no object-less experiences. We are to conceive of silence not as an object, but as an absence of sound (337). Thus those 'experiencing silence, unlike the truly deaf, are subjects of conscious awareness, but . . . in the peculiar condition of being unrelated to any object' (346). So experiences of silence are *pure* cases of auditory awareness, cases of such awareness which are not

characterized in terms of any proper object of audition. Yet they are not cases of deafness, since they involve *auditory awareness* – a mode of consciousness, which is present, and which is auditory in that it is a sensitivity to sound (349).

In addition to what I've discussed, *Hallucination* involves much stellar work I haven't been able to mention. The editors are to be congratulated on this excellent contribution to the philosophy of mind and psychology.

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Reference

Martin, M.G.F. 2004. The limits of self-awareness. *Philosophical Studies* 120: 37–89.