Three Perspectives on Perspective:
Lycan on Representationalism and Perspectival Experience*

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Abstract

William Lycan is a notable early proponent of *representationalism*, which is, roughly, the view that a mental state's phenomenal features are nothing over and above its representational features (perhaps in addition to some further ingredients). Representationalism faces a challenge in accounting for perspectival experiences, which are, roughly, experiences that arise from our occupying a particular real or perceived perspective on the world. This paper presents representationalism, situating Lycan's version of representationalism within the representationalist landscape, and describes the challenge from perspectival experiences. It considers three different representationalist treatments of perspectival experiences: the Layered View, which is developed by Lycan; the Relational Properties View, which Lycan eventually comes to endorse; and the Naive View, which, I will argue, combines elements from both views to achieve the best overall view.

Keywords: William Lycan, representationalism, perspectival experience, phenomenal consciousness, intentionality, mental representation, content

Word count excluding abstract, bibliography, and footnotes: 8823
Word count excluding abstract and bibliography: 10579

William Lycan is well known as an early defender of *representationalism*—roughly, the view that a mental state's phenomenal features are nothing over and above its representational features (perhaps in addition to some further ingredients). For example, a representationalist might say that what it is to have a reddish phenomenal experience is to perceptually represent redness. Once one perceptually represents redness, one is automatically having a reddish experience—nothing more needs to be added to one's overall state in order to have a reddish experience. When combined with a naturalistic account of mental representation, representationalism promises to offer a naturalistic account of phenomenal consciousness.

A well-known objection to representationalism is that it cannot account for perspectival experiences—roughly, experiences that arise from our occupying a particular real or perceived perspective on the world. For example, consider a perceptual experience of a coin viewed at an angle. There is a sense in which, in our experience, the coin's face appears elliptical, but there is also a sense in which it appears circular. The challenge for representationalism is to make sense of the phenomenal character of this experience in terms of its representational features. This might seem particularly challenging because we might be tempted to say that the only representational features of the experience represent the coin's face as circular—after all, we are under no illusion that it is *actually* elliptical!

This paper presents representationalism, situating Lycan's version of representationalism in the representationalist landscape, and describes the challenge from perspectival experiences. It then considers three different representationalist treatments of perspectival experiences: the Layered View, which is developed by Lycan (1987, 1996a); the Relational Properties View, which Lycan eventually comes to endorse (2000); and the Naive View, which, I will argue, combines elements from both views to achieve the best overall view.

1. Representationalism

One of William Lycan's most significant contributions to philosophy is his representationalism about phenomenal consciousness (see especially Lycan's 1996a *Consciousness and Experience*), which he developed and defended at around the same time as other notable representationalists like Gilbert Harman (1990), Fred Dretske (1995), and Michael Tye (2000).[1]

Representationalism is a view of *(phenomenal) consciousness*, the felt, subjective, or "what it's like" (Nagel 1974) aspect of mental life, the aspect of mental life for which there is a "hard problem of consciousness" (Chalmers 1995) and for which physicalist and functionalist accounts face an "explanatory gap" (Levine 1983). For example, there is something it is like to perceptually experience redness, feel a sudden pain, or experience déjà vu. Let us call mental states that have phenomenal features *experiences* and the particular properties that characterize what they are like their *phenomenal characters*.[2]

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[1] Lycan names his representationalism "the hegemony of representation". See Bourget and Mendelovici (2014) for an overview of tracking representationalism focusing on the works of Lycan, Dretske, and Tye.

[2] In Chapter 1 of *Consciousness and Experience* (1996), Lycan is critical of the idea that there is a single, univocal sense of "consciousness" at play in philosophical discussions of consciousness. Part of his aim in that chapter is to tease apart distinct senses of the term and distinct consciousness-related challenges to physicalism. The book's overall aim is to defend physicalism from these consciousness-related challenges using a "divide and conquer" strategy, responding to different challenges in different ways and using different tools.

Lycan offers his representationalism as an account of *qualia*, which he describes as "the introspectable monadic qualitative property of what seems to be a phenomenal individual, such as the color of what Russell called a visual sense datum." (69, footnote suppressed) Qualia are, very roughly, phenomenal characters in our sense, though Lycan resists identifying the two. One reason is that he does not want to accept that it is a definitional truth that qualia cannot exist without being consciously experienced (p. 9). Indeed, on Lycan's overall view, we can have qualia that we are not consciously aware of (pp. 76–7). For Lycan, what is required for us to be consciously aware of a quale is for it to be the target of a higher-order perceptual state (Chapter 2). It is not clear whether the best way to interpret Lycan's view is as claiming that (1) our brains can house experiences that we are unaware of or, instead, that (2) having an experiences requires having a higher-order perceptual state directed at it a state representing a

Representationalists aim to account for phenomenal consciousness primarily in terms of another mental feature: intentionality. Some mental states seem to in some sense be "of", "about", or "directed" at something; they seem to "say", "represent", or "present" something. For example, a perceptual experience of a blue mug before you is "of" or "about" a blue mug being before you or perhaps the proposition that there is a blue mug before you. A thought that grass is green is likewise "of" or "about" grass and greenness; it is "directed" at the proposition that grass is green or "says" that grass is green. *Intentionality* is that feature of mental states such as those mentioned above that we are tempted to describe using representational language like "of" or "about". States of intentionality are *intentional states* and what they "say" or *represent* are their *contents*.[3]

Representationalism is the view that the phenomenal character of a subject's experience is nothing over and above the subject's having of certain intentional states (perhaps in addition to some further ingredients). For example, a representationalist might take an experience with a reddish phenomenal character to be identical to or grounded in a perceptual intentional state that represents redness. On this view, once one has a perceptual intentional state representing redness, one automatically has an experience with a reddish phenomenal character—nothing more need be added to one's overall state.

Lycan's version of representationalism takes the phenomenal character of a subject's experiences to be nothing over and above their having intentional states playing particular functional roles. He writes: "[T]he mind has no special properties that are not exhausted by its representational properties, along with or in combination with the functional organization of its components." (1996a, p. 11) Though, on Lycan's view, intentional states do much of the work in determining a mental state's phenomenal character, the view allows that intentional states that represent the same contents can nonetheless have different phenomenal characters so long as they differ functionally. For example, an experience of hearing a low rumble has a different phenomenal character from that of feeling a low rumble but might nonetheless be thought to have the same intentional contents. Lycan's view allows us to say that the two mental states do indeed represent the same contents but have different phenomenal characters because they have different functional roles.[4]

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particular content with a state having a particular functional role. If (2) is the correct interpretation, then the statement of Lycan's representationalism will have to be slightly amended, but this would not affect the discussion of perspectival experiences.

Since these details do not directly affect the significance and impact of Lycan's representationalism or the main points of this paper, I will assume that Lycan's representationalism is not uncharitably understood as aiming to account for phenomenal consciousness in terms of intentional states that play particular functional roles, the interpretation that will be developed in the main text.

[3] For this way of fixing reference on intentionality, see Mendelovici (2018b, Chapter 1) and Kriegel (2011, Chapter 1).

[4] But see Lycan (1996a, pp. 135–6) for a treatment of similar cases purely in terms of representational features.

A *naturalistic* theory of intentionality is one that invokes only ingredients that are condoned by the natural sciences, which are generally taken to be physical or functional ingredients.[5] If we combine representationalism with a naturalistic theory of intentionality (and a naturalistic theory of whatever other ingredients are thought to be required for phenomenal consciousness), we end up with a naturalistic theory of consciousness. The prospect of naturalizing consciousness via representationalism is exciting, since consciousness is generally thought to be resistant to naturalization. For any account of consciousness in terms of physical or functional ingredients, it is unclear why *those* ingredients should be metaphysically sufficient for consciousness. Any such putative grounds of phenomenal consciousness don't seem up to the task of giving rise to consciousness.[6] But intentionality seems somehow closer to consciousness. It *does*, arguably, seem that representing redness—perhaps in a certain way, say, visually––should be sufficient for there being something it is like to be in that state. So, while mere physical and functional features seem incapable of resulting in phenomenal consciousness, intentional states, perhaps of certain sorts, seem like they might be up to the task. And if we combine the resulting representationalist view with a naturalistic theory of intentionality, we might just end up with a naturalistic theory of consciousness.[7]

Lycan, along with many other representationalists, like Dretske and Tye, has combined his representationalist view with a commitment to naturalism about intentionality.[8] Lycan does not endorse a particular naturalistic theory of intentionality, but he claims his sympathies lie with teleological accounts of the sorts offered by Van Gulick (1980), Richardson (1981), Millikan (1984), and Dretske (1988)—see Lycan (1996a, p. 75). *Teleological theories of intentionality*, roughly, take intentional states to represent whatever environmental conditions or other items it is their function to be caused by or to correspond to. Importantly, the notion of function is that of a biological function, where biological functions are determined by natural or artificial selection or learning. For example, according to a teleological theory of intentionality, representing the content *there is a cat present* might amount to being in an internal state whose function it is to be caused by the presence of cats. Teleological theories are versions of *tracking theories of intentionality*, on which (at least the most basic or fundamental kind of) intentionality is nothing over and above carrying information, indicating, having the function of indicating, or otherwise *tracking* environmental conditions or other items. Since the points I want to make about representationalism combined with teleological theories apply more generally to all tracking theories, I will focus the discussion on tracking theories.

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[5] For examples of versions of representationalism that are either non-naturalistic or neutral on the question of whether intentionality can be naturalized, see Chalmers (2004), Pautz (2009), and Mendelovici (2013b, 2013a, 2018b). See Bourget and Mendelovici (2014) for discussion.

[6] This is the explanatory gap (Levine 1983).

[7] But see Mendelovici and Bourget (2014, forthcoming) for critical discussion.

[8] Lycan writes:

> [O]nce representation itself is (eventually) understood, then not only consciousness in our present sense but subjectivity, qualia,"what it's like," and every other aspect of the mental will be explicable in terms of representation together with the underlying functionally organized neurophysiology, without our positing any other ingredient not already well understood from the naturalistic point of view.
>
> I do not think there will be any "problem of consciousness" left. (1996a, p. 11)

In sum, representationalism is a theory of phenomenal consciousness. Lycan endorses a version of representationalism on which the phenomenal characters of experiences are nothing over and above intentional states playing particular functional roles. When combined with a naturalistic theory of intentionality, the view is promised to yield a naturalistic account of phenomenal consciousness.
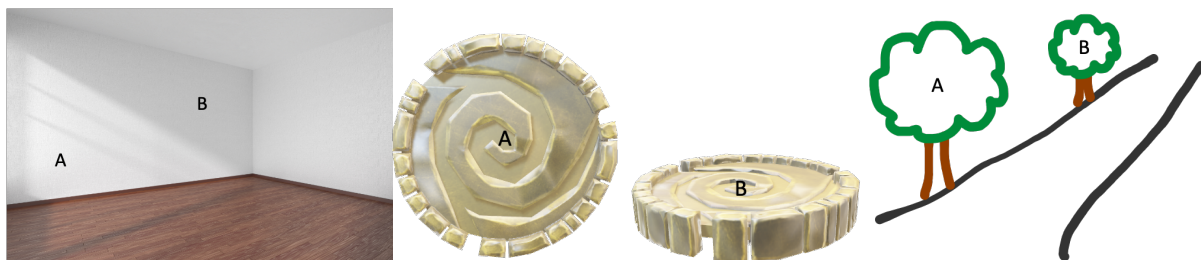
2. The problem of perspectival experiences

Lycan (1996a, 1996b) offers an extended representationalist treatment of the perspectival aspects of experience, where *perspectival aspects* of experience are features or components of experience that appear to vary with our location or contextual factors like illumination conditions. The perspectival aspects of experience can be distinguished from what we might call the *stable aspects* of experience, which are the features or components of experience that are not perspectival. The stable aspects of experience reflect how experience presents things as being independent of our position in the world, illumination conditions, and other such contextual factors.

Perspectival effects on experience are ubiquitous, so in practice, most, if not all, experiences will have perspectival aspects as well as stable aspects. The worry for representationalism is that only the stable aspects of experience appear to be representational. It might seem, then, that the perspectival aspects are *mere* phenomenal characters, phenomenal characters that are not a matter of which contents we represent. If experiences have phenomenal characters that are not a matter of their representing particular contents (perhaps in addition to certain further ingredients), then representationalism cannot account for them and the view is false.

Another way to put the problem is this: If there are perspectival aspects of experience that cannot be accounted for representationally, then we might be able to concoct counterexamples to representationalism consisting of pairs of experiences that are alike with respect to their stable aspects but that differ with respect to their perspectival aspects. The experiences in such pairs would be representationally alike but phenomenally different. If the experiences in such a pair do not differ with respect to any of the additional ingredients a version of representationalism invokes, then that version is false.

Much discussion of perspectival experience focuses on vision. However, since the phenomenon occurs in other sense modalities, one would hope that an account of perspectival experience can generalize beyond vision. For convenience, I will also focus on three examples from vision, though I will briefly consider how accounts discussed might treat a fourth auditory example. Here are the four examples:

(a)   (b)   (c)

Fig. 1. Examples of perspectival experiences: (a) White Wall. (b) Tilted Coin. (c) Two Trees.

White Wall (Fig. 1 (a)). A subject has an experience of a white wall that is variously illuminated. There is a sense in which points A and B are experienced as being the same color (they both appear white); this is the stable aspect of the experience. There is also a sense in which they are experienced as being different colors (A appears white and B appears gray); this is the perspectival aspect of the experience.

White Wall poses a problem for representationalism because there is a phenomenal difference between experiencing point A and experiencing point B but it is not clear that there is an intentional difference that plausibly accounts for the phenomenal difference—it might seem that the experience represents both points as being the same color: white.

Tilted Coin (Fig. 1 (b)). A subject has an experience of two coins viewed at different angles. There is a sense in which coins A and B are experienced as having the same shape (roughly, they both appear circular); this is the stable aspect of the experience. There is also a sense in which they are experienced as having different shapes (A appears circular and B appears elliptical); this is the perspectival aspect of the experience.

Tilted Coin poses a problem for representationalism because there is a phenomenal difference between experiencing coin A and experiencing coin B but it is not clear that there is an intentional difference that plausibly accounts for the phenomenal difference—it might seem that the experience represents both coins as having the same shape: circular.

Two Trees (Fig. 1 (c)). A subject has an experience of two intrinsically identical trees along a path. There is a sense in which trees A and B are experienced as having the same size; this is the stable aspect of the experience. There is also a sense in which they are experienced as having different sizes (A appears twice as big as B); this is the perspectival aspect of the experience. This example originates in Peacocke (1985).

Two Trees poses a challenge for representationalism because there is a phenomenal difference between experiencing tree A and experiencing tree B but it is not clear that there is an intentional difference that plausibly accounts for the phenomenal difference—it might seem that the experience represents both trees as having the same size.

Two Honks. A subject has an experience of two cars of the same make honking their horns. One car is farther away than the other. There is a sense in which the two honks, A and B, sound equally loud; this is the stable aspect of the experience. But there is also a sense in which the nearer honk, A, sounds louder; this is the perspectival aspect of the experience.

Like the examples from vision, Two Honks poses a challenge for representationalism because there is a phenomenal difference between experiencing honk A and honk B but it is not clear that there is an intentional difference that plausibly accounts for the phenomenal difference—it might seem that the experience represents both honks as being equally loud.

3. Three representationalist treatments of perspectival experiences

Most representationalists respond to the challenges arising from perspectival experience by suggesting that perspectival experiences represent two distinct contents, *stable contents* and *perspectival contents*, which respectively capture the phenomenal characters of the stable and perspectival aspects of experience.[9]

It is widely held that the stable aspect of experience is representational, but the claim that the perspectival aspect is also representationalism is more controversial.[10] I cannot provide a full defense of the claim that both the stable and the perspectival aspects of experience are representational here. My aim is to assess different representationalist strategies that presuppose this claim. However, it is worth noting that the claim is not implausible: It is supported by the observation that we can ask whether things are as we experience them both with respect to their perspectival and their stable aspects of experience. For example, in Tilted Coin, we can ask whether coin B is as the stable aspect of the experience "says" it is and we can ask whether coin B is as the perspectival aspect of the experience "says" it is. It is natural to say that the experience is inaccurate with respect to what its perspectival aspect "says" but accurate with respect to what its stable aspect "says"—the coin is circular, not elliptical. This suggests that there are two distinct contents (or components of contents) corresponding respectively with the stable and the perspectival aspects of experience.

This section considers three views of the contents of the stable and the perspectival aspects of experience that the representationalist might appeal to: (1) the Layered View, which Lycan (1996a, 1996b) develops and defends, (2) the Relational Properties View, a view held by most representationalists that Lycan (2000) eventually comes to accept, and (3) the Naive View, the view I will endorse.

For simplicity, I will assume that the contents of perspectival experiences are structured propositional contents: They are *propositional* in that they "say" that something is the case; they do not merely represent a property or object. They are *structured* in that they are composed of contents. In the case of perspectival experiences, I will assume that the constituent contents are *objectual contents*—particular represented objects (which may or may not exist)—and *proprietal contents*—represented properties (which may or may not exist or be instantiated). So, the contents of perspectival experiences are propositional contents of the form

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[9] Early representationalists employing this strategy include Lycan (1996a), Harman (1990), and Tye (1996, 2000).

[10] For the view that both the stable and the perspectival aspects of experience are representational, or something near enough, see Lycan (1996a), Harman (1990), Tye (2000), Schellenberg (2008), Brogaard (2010), Cohen (2010), Hill (2009), Chalmers (2006), and Morales, Bax, and Firestone (2020). For the view that only the stable aspect of experience is representational, or something near enough, see Schwitzgebel (2011), Briscoe (2008), and Siewert (2006).

o is F,

where o is an objectual content and F is a proprietal content.[11,12]

3.1. The Layered View

Lycan argues that experiences typically have multiple, hierarchically arranged layers of content, each ascribing particular proprietal contents to particular objectual contents. He takes perspectival experiences to exhibit just this sort of layering, involving a layer of experience corresponding to the perspectival aspect of experience and a layer corresponding to the stable aspect. Each layer involves the representation of distinct objects as having particular properties. Thus, a perspectival experience has contents that can be depicted like this, where o_1 and o_2 are distinct objects:

o_1 is F
o_2 is G

One propositional content captures the perspectival phenomenal character of the experience, while the other captures its stable phenomenal character. Lycan further claims that the two layers are hierarchically arranged: the experience represents the stable content *by* representing the perspectival content in much the same way that an experience of the dogs barking might represent that someone is at the door.[13]

Lycan focuses his discussion on the Two Trees example, so let us begin by seeing how his account handles that case. Lycan claims that in Two Trees, our experience has two layers, respectively representing (1) two two-dimensional, green and brown, tree-shaped objects, one of which, A*, is twice as big as the other, B*, and (2) two three-dimensional, green and brown trees, A and B, of a particular size. Simplifying a little, we can represent these contents as follows, where A*, B*, A, and B are distinct objectual contents:

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[11] Though it is tempting to identify propositional contents with (perhaps abstract) propositions, objectual contents with existing objects, and proprietal contents with (perhaps abstract) properties, this is not obligatory. My preferred way of understanding the notions of propositional, objectual, and proprietal contents is in terms of their "superficial characters", the superficial features that distinguish contents from other contents regardless of their deep, metaphysical natures (see Mendelovici 2018a).

[12] Readers who do not accept structured propositional contents might nonetheless be able to reconstruct the discussion in this paper in terms of the properties and objects involved in the representation of unstructured propositional contents. Presumably, even the defender of the view that propositional contents are unstructured will want to accept that unstructured propositions represent things as being certain ways, even if this does not strictly speaking involve a representation of those things and those ways.

[13] Lycan discusses the Layered View in relation to olfaction, arguing that olfaction represents everyday objects, like roses, by representing odors, like rose odors (1996a, p. 144–149, 2000). While this may be so, the case is disanalogous to the perspectival cases we've considered in that it involves the representation of a non-perspectival content (e.g., a rose odor) by means of which we represent a high-level content (e.g., a rose). The claim that high-level contents can be accounted for by the Layered View is compatible with the claim that perspectival experiences can be thus accounted for, but the claims are distinct and do not entail one another. One might, for example, accept the Layered View of perspectival experience while denying that there are any high-level contents in experience. Conversely, one might accept the Layered View of high-level representation but accept a different view of perspectival experience.

Perspectival contents:
A* is big
B* is small

Stable contents:
A is big
B is big

As this rendition helps make clear, the perspectival and the stable aspects of experience represent distinct objectual contents, but they can represent the same proprietal contents. For example, colored shape A* and tree A are both represented as having the same property of being big.

So far, this is only a view of the content of perspectival experiences. Lycan combines this view with his representationalism, taking the phenomenal characters of the perspectival and the stable aspects of the experiences to be captured by the represented contents of the perspectival and the stable layers, respectively.

In White Wall, the subject has an experience with (1) a perspectival layer representing a two-dimensional expanse that is white at one point, point A*, and gray at another point, point B*, and (2) a stable layer representing a three-dimensional uniformly white wall that is differently illuminated at points A and B. Simplifying a little, we can represent these contents like this, where A*, B*, A, and B are distinct objectual contents:

Perspectival contents:
A* is white
B* is gray

Stable contents:
A is white
B is white

Tilted Coin is handled in the same way. In Tilted Coin, the subject has an experience that represents (1) two two-dimensional colored shapes, A* and B*, one of which (A*) is represented as circular, the other of which (B*) is represented as elliptical, and (2) two three-dimensional circular coins, A and B, one of which is tilted (B) and one of which is not (A). Simplifying a little, we can represent this content like this, where A*, B*, A, and B are distinct objectual contents:

Perspectival contents:
A* is circular
B* is elliptical

Stable contents:
A is circular

B is circular

Though Lycan does not specifically discuss auditory examples, Two Honks can be treated in the same way. Just as visual experience represents two-dimensional visual objects that are distinct from the everyday, three-dimensional objects represented by the stable aspects of experience, so too can we say that auditory experience represents two sound-like objects, A* and B*, which differ in loudness, and A and B, which are equally loud but differ in the represented location of their source. Simplifying a little, we can represent this content as follows, where A*, B*, A, and B are distinct objectual contents:

Perspectival contents:
A* is loud
B* is quiet

Stable contents:
A is loud
B is loud

Lycan is happy to accept that the perspectival aspect of experience usually misrepresents—there aren't *really* any two-dimensional colored shapes of different sizes or other such objects of perspectival experiences existing out there in the world. In Two Trees, for example, colored shapes A* and B* are *merely* intentional objects; they are merely represented but do not actually exist. The same goes for other perspectival experiences: the perspectival aspects, strictly speaking, (at least often) misrepresent.[14]

One might object that we have reason to think that perceptual experience is generally veridical. One oft-cited reason for thinking this is that it is part of the best explanation of how perception helps us navigate the world.[15] It is not clear that this is so, though, since we can easily make sense of how perceptual states that misrepresent—so long as their misrepresentation is reliable and systematic—can help us navigate the world. In order for our behaviors to be successful, what is required, arguably, is that certain regularities obtain between our intentional states and the outcomes of our behaviors. Such regularities can obtain even if we misrepresent, so long as we misrepresent the same way on similar occasions.[16]

While I think the above response may be enough to satisfy the representationalist that the Layered View's commitment to the general non-veridicality of the perspectival aspect of experience is not problematic, a representationalist who is committed to a tracking theory of intentionality might face additional worries. The problem is that since tracking theories take us to represent what we indicate, carry information about, or otherwise track, it is difficult for them to allow for cases of reliable and systematic

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[14] Lycan allows that the perspectival aspect of visual experience can sometimes be veridical (1996a, p. 152). The relevant colored objects might in fact exist, perhaps if there were some cut-out shapes before the experiencing subject. It seems the idea is that such cut-outs would have a flat two-dimensional surface that satisfies the representation of a two-dimensional object.

[15] See, e.g., Shea (2022).

[16] For discussion, see Mendelovici (2013c, 2016), Green and Rabin (2019), McLaughlin (2016), Artiga (2013), Rubner (2023), Cutter (2021), and Hoffman (2019).

misrepresentation, since these are arguably cases in which we track one thing but represent another (see Mendelovici 2013c, 2016). Whether a given tracking theory is compatible with the systematic misrepresentation that the Layered View attributes to perspectival experiences depends on the specifics of that tracking theory. We saw that Lycan commits himself to a teleological tracking theory, though he remains neutral on which such theory is correct. But in order to properly defend the consistency of his overall view, one would need to make plausible that some such teleological tracking theory can accommodate the intentional states required by the Layered View.

Let us consider whether the Layered View provides the representationalist with an introspectively plausible account of the contents and phenomenal characters of perspectival experience, one that captures how our contents and phenomenal characters introspectively seem to us. I want to suggest that the account of the content and phenomenal character of perspectival experiences has many virtues but that it also faces some worries.

A virtue of the Layered View is that it can at least partially account for the fact that the perspectival and the stable aspects of experience can disagree or agree with each other—in other words, that they can be inconsistent with one another or be such that one entails the other. At the start of Section 3, we noted that it makes sense to ask whether the world is as the stable aspect of experience "says" it is and it makes sense to ask whether the world is as the perspectival aspect "says" it is. Likewise, it makes sense to ask whether what the stable and perspectival aspects "say" disagree or agree, whether the two "sayings" are inconsistent or bear any relations of entailment. For example, in Tilted Coin, the stable and perspectival aspects of the experience of coin A seem to agree—intuitively, the coin perspectivally looks circular and it is represented as really being circular. But the stable and the perspectival aspects of the experience of coin B seem to disagree—intuitively, the coin perspectivally looks elliptical but it is represented as really being circular. In White Wall, the stable and perspectival aspects of the experience of point A agree, while the stable and perspectival aspect of the experience of point B disagree. In short, in general, perspectival and stable contents are such that they can agree or disagree. Call this the *Comparability Claim*. As illustrated by these examples, the Comparability Claim is supported by our introspective awareness of the stable and perspectival aspects of our experience. It is supported by how these aspects of experience introspectively seem to us.

The Layered View is in some ways congruent with the Comparability Claim. On the Layered View, the contents of the stable and the perspectival aspects of experience involve the same stock of proprietal contents, contents like *white*, *big*, *circular*, and *loud*. In the perspectival aspect of experience, these proprietal contents are ascribed to colored shapes and other objectual contents that are special to the perspectival aspect of experience. In the stable aspect of experience, these very same proprietal contents can be ascribed to everyday objects, like trees, coins, and walls. So, on the Layered View, the very same properties can be ascribed by perspectival and stable aspects of experience, allowing the way their objects are represented as being alike or different.

However, the Layered View is not in fact compatible with the Comparability Claim. Although, on the Layered View, the perspectival and the stable aspects of experience represent the same proprietal contents, they represent distinct objects. For example, in the experience of coin B in Tilted Coin, the stable aspect represents coin B as circular, while the perspectival aspect represents a distinct object,

colored shape B*, as elliptical. Strictly speaking, there is no conflict between B being circular and something else, B*, being elliptical. Similarly, there is no agreement in coin A being circular and colored shape A* being circular—this is just a case of two distinct objects having the same property. So, since the Layered View takes perspectival and stable contents to involve different objectual contents, it is not compatible with genuine agreement or disagreement between stable and perspectival contents.

Independently of the plausibility of the Comparability Claim, one might worry that the claim that the perspectival and stable aspects of experience represent distinct objects is implausible because it seems to inappropriately multiply represented objects. In Two Trees, for example, we don't introspectively seem to represent two trees *and* two colored shapes. We only seem to represent one set of objects, which are represented as trees, and which are represented as both being of the same size and as in some sense being of different sizes.[17] Likewise, in White Wall, it does not seem that there are *two* expanses, one a wall and one a mere colored shape, perhaps in some sense superimposed on top of the wall. There is only one represented object, a wall, which is represented as both in some sense white all over and in some sense of varying shades of gray. That the Layered View seems to implausibly multiply represented objects is both a worry about the Layered View of the content of perspectival experiences—the Layered View seems to get the contents wrong—and a worry about the representationalist treatment of perspectival experiences appealing to the Layered View—representationalism combined with the Layered View combined fails to capture what it's like to have perspectival experiences.[18]

Another worry with a representationalist appeal to the Layered View is that it fails to account for the phenomenal difference between the perspectival and stable aspects of experience. For example, in Two Trees, there is a phenomenal difference between the stable aspect of the experience of tree B and the perspectival aspect of the experience of tree A—the "bigness" involved in the perspectival aspect of the experience of tree A seems more vivid or salient than the "bigness" involved in the stable aspect of the experience of tree B. In White Wall, there is a phenomenal difference between the stable aspect of the experience of point B and the perspectival aspect of the experience of point A. But it is hard to see how we can make sense of this on the representationalist picture if the stable and perspectival aspects of experience represent the same stock of proprietal contents.

Let us turn, now, to a second view of perspectival experience, one that is widely accepted by representationalists.

3.2. The Relational Properties View

According to the *Relational Properties View*, the perspectival aspects of experience represent objects' relations to contextual factors—such as their relations to particular subjects, viewpoints, or illumination conditions—while the stable aspects represent other properties of objects. Versions of the

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[17] Tye (1996) misinterprets Lycan's view as attributing conflicting properties to single objects, but Lycan (1996a, p. 156–7) clarifies that he really does mean to say that perspectival experience represents multiple objects.

[18] Note that this multiplication of objects is not implausible in the case of the Layered View of olfactory experience, which Lycan also defends, on which we represent both odors and the objects from which odors emanate. In this case, it is arguably introspectively plausible that we represent two distinct objects having two distinct sets of properties. See also fn. 13.

Relational Properties View are developed by Tye (1996), Harman (2003), Schellenberg (2008), and many others. This view is arguably the most popular view among representationalists. In his 2000 paper, Lycan himself briefly notes that he's abandoned the Layered View in favor of Schellenberg's version of the Relational Properties View (2000, Section 4.5.2).

Unlike the Layered View, the Relational Properties View takes the perspectival and the stable aspects of experience to represent the same objectual contents but distinct proprietal contents. Thus, a perspectival experience has stable and perspectival contents that can be depicted as follows, where F and G are distinct proprietal contents:

o is F
o is G[19]

Let's see how the Relational Properties View might handle our examples. In White Wall, the subject's experience represents both points A and B as being white. The experience also represents point A as having a property in relation to its context, such as that of being white in illumination condition i, and point B as having a distinct property in relation to its context, such as that of being white in illumination condition j. We can roughly depict the content of this experience like this:

Perspectival contents:
A is white in bright illumination
B is white in the shade

Stable contents:
A is white
B is white

The representationalist can appeal to the Relational Properties View to account for the phenomenal character of perspectival experience by claiming that the phenomenal character of the perspectival aspect of the experience is captured by such perspectival contents and the phenomenal character of the stable aspect of the experience is captured by such stable contents.

In Two Trees, the stable aspect of the experience represents both trees A and B as having a particular size. The experience also represents trees A and B as bearing distinct relations to contextual factors: the experience might represent the trees as having distinct viewpoint-relative sizes, with A having a viewpoint-relative size twice that of B—roughly, we might say, tree A is represented as being "big from

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[19] An advocate of the Relational Properties View might instead want to take the content of the perspectival experiences to be a single proposition of the form

o is F and G,

where F and G are, respectively, stable and perspectival proprietal contents. When it is correct to say that a subject represents a content of this form rather than two distinct propositional contents of the form presented in the main text is a tricky question. Since we can readily translate between the two options and our choice between the two is inconsequential given our purposes, I will set this issue aside.

here" and tree B is represented as "small from here".[20] For the representationalist appealing to the Relational Properties View, both the stable and the perspectival aspects of the experience's contents contribute to its phenomenal character.

There are different ways of cashing out the notion of viewpoint-relative size. One common way is in terms of the angle made by opposite points of a represented object (such as the top of a tree and the bottom of a tree) and the viewpoint occupied by the subject. In the case of tree A, this angle is larger than in the case of tree B. On this cashing out of the notion of viewpoint-relative size, then, the perspectival aspect of the experience represents the two trees as subtending angles of different sizes from the subject's viewpoint. Thus, the perspectival and stable contents of the experience might be something like this:

Perspectival contents:
A subtends a large angle from my viewpoint
B subtends a small angle from my viewpoint

Stable contents:
A is big
B is big

In Tilted Coin, coins A and B are both represented as circular but as bearing different relations to contextual factors, such as the subject's viewpoint. For instance, it might be that coin A is represented as having a circular viewpoint-relative shape, while coin B is represented as having an elliptical viewpoint-relative shape—roughly, we might say, coin A is represented as "circular from here", while coin B is represented as "elliptical from here". For the representationalist appealing to the Relational Properties View, the representation of these stable and viewpoint-relative contents capture the stable and perspectival phenomenal characters of the experience, respectively. As in the case of the notion of viewpoint-relative sizes, the notion of viewpoint-relative shapes can be cashed out in various ways. One way is in terms of the shape an object would project onto a two-dimensional plane in front of a subject. Coin A would project a circular pattern onto such a plane, while coin A would project an elliptical pattern.[21]

In Two Honks, honks A and B are both represented as having a particular objective loudness, l, but as bearing distinct relations to certain contextual factors, such as the representing subject's location. Roughly, we might say that honk A is "loud from here", whereas honk B is "quiet from here". For the representationalist appealing to the Relational Properties View, these two sets of contents capture the stable and perspectival phenomenal characters of the experience, respectively. Again, there are different ways of cashing out the relevant relations to contextual factors, such as in terms of the relations between the sound waves emanating from a source and the location of the hearer.

We saw that a potential worry with the Layered View is that it commits perspectival experience to systematic error. The Relational Properties View avoids this worry, since, presumably, objects do often

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[20] See, e.g., Harman (1990) and Tye (1996, 2000) for such locutions.
[21] See, e.g., Tye (2000, p. 79) and Nöe (2005, p. 83).

bear the relevant relations to contextual factors. However, as we saw, it is unclear that there is good reason to think our perspectival experiences do not systematically and reliably misrepresent, so it is not clear that this is a good reason to favor the Relational Properties View.

Relatedly, the view is arguably compatible with tracking theories of intentionality. To the extent to which we think a tracking theory is true, this gives us reason to prefer the Relational Properties View to the Layered View. Lycan himself is a proponent of tracking theories, so this consideration might be motivating to him. But tracking theories face independent worries and other alternatives do exist.[22]

In the previous subsection, we saw that the Layered View might appear to offer a partial vindication of the Comparability Claim, the claim that the perspectival and stable aspects of experience can agree or disagree. The Layered View takes the perspectival and the stable aspects of experience to involve the same stock of proprietal content, properties that can conflict or entail one another. But the view does not allow for genuine agreement or disagreement between the stable and the perspectival, since the properties stable and perspectival aspects of experience ascribe are ascribed to distinct objects.

The Relational Properties View faces the opposite problem. It allows that the perspectival and the stable aspects of an experience represent the same objects, but it takes them to represent different kinds of properties. So, it can make sense of how perspectival and stable aspects of experience pertain to the same represented objects, but it cannot make sense of how they can represent those objects as being the same or different ways. For example, in Two Trees, the stable aspect of the experience of tree A represents tree A as being big and the perspectival aspect of the experience of tree A represents tree A as subtending a large angle from the subject's viewpoint. This content attribution does not make sense of the agreement between the perspectival and the stable. Intuitively, Tree A is visually represented, in some sense, as really being as it perspectivally appears. But on the Relational Properties View, tree A is merely represented as being two distinct ways: as being big and as subtending a large angle from the subject's viewpoint, neither of which entail the other (though there might be entailment relations when combined with additional contents). Likewise, on the Relational Properties View, the experience of tree B represents tree B as being big and as subtending a small angle from the subject's viewpoint. These two properties do not conflict—indeed, presumably, in most cases of viewing a tree in the distance, the tree in fact will have both of the relevant properties. So, we cannot make sense of how the perspectival and the stable aspects of the experience disagree.

The case of White Wall is slightly different, since what is arguably the most plausible treatment of the case on the Relational Properties View takes both the perspectival and the stable aspects of the experience of point A to include the representation of whiteness. The stable aspect represents point A as being white and the perspectival aspect represents point A as being white under particular illumination conditions; the two contents agree. But the treatment of the experience of point B is not compatible with the Comparability Claim: On the Relational Properties View, the stable aspect of the experience represents point B as being white, while the perspectival aspect represents point B as being white under a particular illumination condition. But, intuitively, we want to say that in this case the perspectival and the

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[22] For alternative views, see Kriegel (2013), Pitt (2004, 2009), Siewert (1998), Strawson (1994), Farkas (2013), Pautz (2009, 2021), Bourget (2010), Mendelovici (2018b), Bourget and Mendelovici (2016), and Mendelovici and Bourget (2014, 2020).

stable disagree: the perspectival aspect of experience represents the wall as in some sense gray, while the stable represents it as white. On the Relational Properties View, there is no conflict between the properties ascribed to the stable and the perspectival aspects of the experience, so the view cannot capture how the stable and the perspectival aspects of the experience of point B disagree.

The Relational Properties View also faces independent phenomenological worries: it does not introspectively seem that the perspectival aspect of our experiences represents the relevant complex relational properties. Of course, contextual factors play a causal role in generating perspectival experiences, and we do often represent some of them. For example, we represent objects as being particular distances away from us and we represent particular illumination conditions. But it does not seem phenomenologically accurate to say that perspectival contents involve relations to such contextual factors. For example, it seems implausible that in White Wall the perspectival aspect of experience is captured by our representing point A as white under bright illumination and point B as white in shade. This fails to capture the "grayness" of our representation of point B (as we already noted in the discussion of the Comparability Claim). As a result, the representationalist appealing to the Relational Properties View fails to capture the grayish phenomenal character involved in the perspectival aspect of the experience. The Relational Properties View's content ascription fails to deliver a phenomenologically plausible account of the intentional contents of perspectival experience, and representationalism combined with the Relational Properties View fails to deliver a plausible account of the phenomenal characters of perspectival experience.

Schellenberg (2008), who offers a well worked out version of the Relational Properties View, suggests that the perspectival aspect of experience need not represent the relevant relational properties *as* relational and might instead represent them as monadic.[23] If so, this might address the above-mentioned phenomenological worry. This is an intriguing suggestion, but I think it ultimately fails. What we are after is an account of how subjects represent the world as being in having an experience with a perspectival aspect, how a subject perceptually takes the world to be in representing a perspectival content. On Schellenberg's proposal, arguably, the perspectival aspect of experience represents relational properties.[24] But these relational properties do not characterize how subjects perceptually take the world to be in perspectival experience. Instead, what characterizes how the subject perceptually takes the world to be is something else. But we are not given a positive characterization of this something else. Note that it will

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[23] Schellenberg writes: "Although situation-dependent properties are relational properties insofar as they are a function of intrinsic properties [of represented objects] and situational features, they need not be represented as relational properties. Moreover the fact that they are relational properties need not reveal itself in the phenomenology of perception." (2008, p. 68)

[24] It is unclear whether on Schellenberg's view the proprietal contents of perspectival experiences are in fact relational. She takes the perspectival aspect of experience represents *situation-dependent properties*, which are "(nonconstant) functions of the intrinsic properties of the [represented] object and the situational features" (2008, p. 60), where the *situational features* are "features of the environment that determine the way an object is presented" (p. 56). Situational features include lighting conditions, the distance of various objects to a subject's location, and other features of the environment that affect how particular objects are represented. For example, in Two Trees, the situational features include the distances of tree A and tree B from the representing subject. The proprietal contents of the perspectival aspects of the experiences, then, are functions of the intrinsic properties of the trees and these situational features. But it is unclear what exactly the value of the function *is*. In particular, it is unclear whether it is a relational property that includes the situational features or whether it is some new property.

See also Jagnow (2012) for discussion of Schellenberg's view.

not do to say that what characterizes how the subject represents the world to be are the relational properties themselves together with their being represented as monadic, since the point of saying that these properties are represented as monadic is to *occlude* their complexity and relationality from the subject. Taking subjects to represent the phenomenologically implausible contents with a further content to the effect that the represented properties are monadic does not occlude the problematic contents but merely appends a further content to them. Note also that it will not do to say that the subject merely takes objects to have monadic properties without taking them to have specific monadic properties, since this would fail to distinguish an experience of one perspectival property from another. In short, if the relevant relational properties do not characterize how subjects take the world to be in representing perspectival contents, then they are not really represented and it is not clear *what* perspectival proprietal contents are supposed to be.

3.3. The Naive View

In the preceding discussion, we saw that a virtue of the Layered View is that it takes the proprietal contents ascribed by perspectival and stable aspects of experience to come from the same stock of represented properties. But a problem with the Layered View is that it takes perspectival and stable contents to involve the representation of distinct objects. This is why the view is incompatible with the Comparability Claim.

We saw that a virtue of the Relational Properties View is that, unlike the Layered View, it takes the perspectival and stable aspects of experience to ascribe properties to the same represented objects. But a problem with the view is that it takes the perspectival and stable aspects of experience to represent distinct kinds of properties, making it incompatible with the Comparability Claim.

Let us consider a third view, the Naive View, which combines the virtues of these two views, effectively taking the appearances at face value. As a first pass, we can take the Naive View to state that the perspectival and stable aspects of an experience represent the same objects as having the same or incompatible properties, like color properties, size properties, and shape properties. For example, in White Wall, the subject represents point B as being white (capturing the stable aspect of the experience) and as being gray (capturing the perspectival aspect of the experience). In Two Trees, the subject represents the two trees as having a single size (capturing the stable aspect of the experience) and as having two distinct sizes (capturing the perspectival aspect of the experience). In Tilted Coin, the subject represents the face of coin B as both round (capturing the stable aspect of the experience) and as elliptical (capturing the perspectival aspect). In Two Honks, the subject represents the two honks as being of a particular loudness (capturing the stable aspect of the experience) and as being of two distinct loudnesses (capturing the perspectival aspect of the experience).

This first pass rendition of the Naive View can accommodate the Comparability Claim, since the perspectival and the stable aspects of experience can ascribe the same or conflicting proprietal contents to the same represented objects. But the view is ultimately inadequate, since it fails to make sense of the *difference* between the perspectival and stable aspects of experience. For example, the contents ascribed to the experience in White Wall are these:

Perspectival contents:
A is white
B is gray

Stable contents:
A is white
B is white

This content attribution fails to capture how the perspectival representation of point A as being white differs from the stable representation of point B as being white. One difference is that the perspectival representation of point A as white is supposed to capture how, as far as the subject is concerned, point A (perhaps merely) seems, while the stable representation of point B as white is supposed to capture how the subject takes point B as really being. Another difference is phenomenal: the stable representation of point B as white is more subdued than, less vivid than, or impoverished compared to the perspectival representation of point A as white. It is unclear how the representationalist who adopts the Naive View can account for this phenomenal difference. (As we saw earlier, the Layered View also faces this worry.) A slightly less naive version of the Naive View would make sense of these differences between the perspectival and stable aspects of experience. (Indeed, the Layered View might be able to use some of the same strategies to respond to its version of the worry.)

An improvement to the Naive View would involve acknowledging that stable contents somehow trump or are prioritized over any conflicting perspectival contents. In Two Trees, for instance, tree B is represented as both small and big, but we prioritize our representation of it as big—at the end of the day, we accept that it is in fact big, not small. This prioritizing is reflected in the way we think about the perspectival and the stable aspects of experience, which is reflected in our language. We might say, for instance, "Tree B looks small but is actually big."

There are different views of what this prioritizing of stable contents might amount to. One view is that it is a matter of our being disposed to believe that the world is as our stable contents, and not any conflicting perspectival contents, represent. Another view, which can be combined with the first, is that our stable contents themselves represent their own priority. For example, the stable content of the experience of tree B might be something like *tree B is big and this takes priority over any conflicting experiences*. We might express such a content more colloquially by saying that tree B is "actually", "really", or "in fact" big. So, the slightly less naive version of the Naive View might take the experiences in White Wall to represent something like this:

Perspectival contents:
A is white
B is gray

Stable contents:
A is white and this takes priority over any conflicting experiences
B is white and this takes priority over any conflicting experiences

In sum, this slightly more sophisticated version of the Naive View can make sense of how perspectival contents capture how things in some sense seem while stable contents capture how things are represented as really being: stable contents have priority over perspectival contents, which might be a matter of our dispositions to form beliefs or a matter of the content of the stable aspects of experience.

We remain in need of an account of the phenomenal difference between the stable and the perspectival. Of course, if we accept the view that the priority of the stable aspects of experience is a matter of the specific contents they represent, then, strictly speaking, perspectival contents and stable contents will differ, so we do not have a straightforward counterexample to representationalism, a case of two experiences that are representationally alike but phenomenally different. In White Wall, for instance, the stable aspect of the experience of point B does not merely represent that point B is white but rather something like that point B is white and that this takes priority over any conflicting experiences. Still, while this version of the Naive View allows us to say that stable and perspectival aspects of experience have different contents, the difference in content does not plausibly seem to capture the difference in phenomenal characters. The problem is that, for all we've said so far, stable contents include perspectival contents as constituent parts. So, it seems their phenomenal characters should include the phenomenal characters corresponding to perspectival contents. But they do not: the phenomenal characters of the stable aspects of experience are less vivid than, more subdued than, or impoverished relative to the phenomenal characters of perspectival experiences. How can we make sense of this?

One approach is to say that stable proprietal contents are more coarse-grained, abstract, generic, or imprecise than perspectival proprietal contents or that stable proprietal contents are determinables of which perspectival proprietal contents are determinants. Bourget (2015) argues for a representationalist treatment of perspectival experiences like this from the observation that perceptual distortions (e.g., as when a circular coin appears elliptical or a large tree appears small) always involve a loss of information.

On such views, perspectival contents are more informative than stable contents, which might account for their richer and more vivid phenomenal characters. For example, in White Wall, the perspectival aspect of the experience of point A might represent a specific shade of white while the stable aspect of the experience of point B represents generic whiteness or a range of shades of white. In Tilted Coin, the perspectival aspect of the experience of coin A might represent it as being a specific circular shape while the stable aspect of the experience of coin B represents a slightly imprecise range of circular and approximately circular shapes.

One way of further developing this approach is to say that stable contents are high-level or conceptually-laden contents, perhaps because they involve concepts or concept-like representations.[25] Perhaps, for instance, in White Wall, the stable content to the effect that point B is white involves a "conceptual" content of whiteness, a content that can figure in thoughts about white things, while the perspectival aspect of point A represents the wall as white by employing a non-conceptual content. Conceptual contents might differ from non-conceptual contents, perhaps in their representing more general, abstract, or imprecise contents, which might offer a principled explanation of why the stable aspects of experience are less informative than the perspectival aspects, as on Bourget's proposal.

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[25] See Siegel (2010) and the papers in Siegel and Byrne (2017), as well as Bourget's (2017) related account of the contents of imagery experiences as determinables.

Another way in which we might enrich the Naive View so that it can account for the phenomenal impoverishment of the stable aspect of experience compared to the perspectival aspect, which can be endorsed in combination with or independently of the above suggestions, is by taking the stable and perspectival aspects to represent the same contents but in different ways. Perhaps stable contents are represented by vehicles of representation playing particular functional roles, perhaps their contents are wholly or partially represented derivatively,[26] or perhaps they are represented in the same way as the contents of imagination, which also have a less vivid phenomenal character than the contents of perceptual experience.

I have canvassed several representationalist-friendly ways of supplementing the Naive View so that it can account for the phenomenal difference between the representation of stable and perspectival contents. These views differ in the precise contents they ascribe to the stable and perspectival aspects of experience. On one such way, which I think is attractive, the contents of the experience in White Wall are something like this:

Perspectival contents:
A is white$_{426}$
B is gray$_{837}$

Stable contents:
A is white$_{390}$-white$_{543}$ and this takes priority over any conflicting experiences
B is white$_{390}$-white$_{543}$ and this takes priority over any conflicting experiences

Similarly, on this way of supplementing the Naive View, the experience in Two Trees represents something like this:

Perspectival contents:
A is size b
B is size s

Stable contents:
A is size b$_{368}$–b$_{387}$ and this takes priority over any conflicting experiences
B is size s$_{206}$–s$_{255}$ and this takes priority over any conflicting experiences

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[26] In Mendelovici (2018b, Appendix D), I suggest that high-level perceptual contents are largely or entirely derivatively represented, rather than originally represented, where *derived representation* is representation that is constitutively dependent on other instances of representation and *original representation* is representation that does not constitutively depend on other instances of representation. Derivatively representing a high-level content might amount to our being disposed to accept that various low-level contents cash out into the high-level contents. For example, when one perceptually experiences a pine tree, one might originally represent particular colors and shapes and perhaps even a "gisty" pine-tree-ish content. But one is disposed to accept that this originally represented content cashes out into a fuller, more complete content, like *an evergreen coniferous tree with needle-shaped leaves* or simply *the kind of tree that experts call "pine"*. When appropriately fleshed out, this picture of high-level contents might provide one way for the Naive View to understand the representational and phenomenal difference between the perspectival and the stable aspects of experience.

In sum, as a first pass, the Naive View takes the perspectival and the stable aspect of experience to represent the same stock of properties and to ascribe them to the same objects, making sense of the Comparability Claim. An appropriately enriched version of the Naive View takes the contents of the stable aspects of experience to trump the contents of the perspectival aspects, either in one of the ways suggested or in some other way, and takes the stable aspects of experience to have high-level or conceptually-laden contents, perhaps in one of the ways suggested, or to represent their contents in different ways, perhaps derivatively or in the same way as imagination.

4. Conclusion

One of Lycan's most important contributions to the philosophy of mind is his development and defense of representationalism, which he combines with the Layered View of perspectival experience. Although most representationalists have moved on to versions of the Relational Properties View—Lycan himself included—the Layered View has important virtues over it. In particular, it offers a plausible view of the proprietal contents of stable and perspectival experiences. But it also faces various worries, such as that it inappropriately multiplies represented objects, making it unable to make sense of how the perspectival and the stable aspect of experience can agree or disagree. In this paper, I have suggested that we can retain the virtues of the Layered View while taking stable and perspectival contents to represent the very same objects, as the Relational Properties View maintains. The result is the Naive View, which can be enriched in various ways to make sense of how stable contents are generally prioritized over perspectival contents and to capture the phenomenal difference between stable and perspectival aspects of experience.

Like the Layered View, the Naive View takes perspectival contents to reliably misrepresent the world around us—and to do so in plain sight: we often do not believe our perspectival contents, deferring instead to our stable contents. What's more, in many cases, the Naive View ascribes inconsistent contents to perspectival experiences, taking perspectival and stable contents to contradict each other, as in the cases of the experiences of tree B, coin B, point B, and honk B. One might find these consequences unattractive, but they make good sense of how perspectival and stable contents are capable of agreeing and disagreeing. Lycan himself was unbothered by his view's commitment to widespread reliable misrepresentation, though he wanted to deny that there was any inconsistency between stable and perspectival contents.[27] This, I think, is a step in the right direction, but, if my suggestions are correct, arriving at a fully adequate view requires embracing both widespread error and widespread inconsistency.[28] This is the best way to make sense of how things can sometimes seem to be other than as we take them to really be.[29]

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[27] See, e.g., his response to Tye (1996) in Lycan (1996a, Chapter 7, Section 3).

[28] See also Mendelovici (forthcoming).

[29] This paper was presented at Lycanfest at the University of Connecticut. Many thanks to Bill Lycan for his incisive response and very helpful subsequent discussion. Many thanks also to David Bourget for reading drafts of this paper and offering helpful comments and discussion.

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