

The phenomenology of face-to-face mindreading

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***Abstract:** I defend a perceptual account of face-to-face mindreading. I begin by proposing a phenomenological constraint on our visual awareness of others' emotional expressions. I argue that to meet this constraint we require a distinction between the basic and non-basic ways people, and other things, look. I offer and defend just such an account.*

1. Perceptual accounts of face-to-face mindreading

Mindreading is the attribution of psychological states to subjects. I will be concerned only with the mindreading of those other than oneself. Face-to-face mindreading is the making of such a psychological attribution in the context of a perceptual encounter with the other in which nobody need report that they are in that state. A paradigm of face-to-face mindreading, one that will provide my central example, is the attribution of joy to a subject upon seeing their smile. When I speak simply of mindreading, in what follows, I mean face-to-face mindreading.

Perceptual accounts of mindreading claim that at least some of our judgements attributing psychological states to others (ψ -attributions) are grounded in perception. Here, 'grounded' can be read psychologically or epistemically. On the psychological reading, perceptual accounts claim that some ψ -attributions are non-inferential responses to the deliverances of perceptual experience. On the epistemic reading, perceptual accounts claim that some ψ -

attributions constitute knowledge warranted by those deliverances.

Psychological perceptual accounts stand in contrast to those views claiming that all ψ -attributions result from processes of theory application or simulation, conceived as inferential in a broad sense. Epistemic perceptual accounts stand in contrast to those views claiming that ψ -attributions only ever count as knowledge in virtue of standing in certain inferential relations to other contentful states.

If perception itself involves inference, then perceptual accounts will be a type of inferential account. There are, of course, views according to which perception is inferential (for classic statements, see (Gregory 1974; Rock 1977)). It is not clear, however, whether the 'inferences' proposed by such accounts are inferential in the same sense as are the inferences with which we are familiar from ordinary conscious reasoning. Throughout, when I speak of inference, I mean to indicate such familiar transitions between propositional contents, and will simply assume that perceptual experience, at least, does not involve inference in this sense.

It is unsurprising that perceptual accounts of face-to-face mindreading quickly turn to the nature of perceptual experience and its relation to perceptual judgement and knowledge.¹ It is also common to focus primarily or exclusively on visual perception.² The present discussion is no exception in this regard.

¹ See, for example, (Dretske 1973; McDowell 1982; Cassam 2007, ch.5; Green 2007; Green 2010; Stout 2010; McNeill 2010; J. Smith 2010).

² One notable exception is (McDowell 1981) who offers a (non-visual) perceptual account of our knowledge of what people are saying.

There a number of distinct claims that one might make in order to support a perceptual account of mindreading, in either its psychological or epistemic forms. For example, one might argue that one can, on occasion, see that another person is happy. Alternatively, one might argue that one can, on occasion, see someone else's happiness. To say a little more about this distinction, it is commonplace to distinguish between the non-epistemic visual perception of objects, events and property instances and the epistemic visual perception of facts. In ordinary English this distinction is usually marked by the fact that the seeing of facts takes a that-clause as complement.³ So, 'Fatima sees that the kettle is boiling' involves seeing-that, whereas 'Fatima sees the boiling kettle' involves seeing.⁴ As suggested by the terminology, this distinction between seeing and seeing-that has an epistemic significance. Arguably, when Fatima sees that the kettle is boiling, she thereby knows that the kettle is boiling (see (Williamson 2002, Ch.1). The claim is, of course, controversial (see, for example, (A. D. Smith 2010, 398), but nothing I say will hang on it. I will assume, however, that when Fatima sees that the kettle is boiling, it follows that Fatima has (had) some visual experience. I am, then, putting aside entirely non-visual uses of 'sees', as in, 'Ivy saw that Fatima was right'. Whether or not seeing-that

³ This is not to claim that the two represent distinct senses of the English verb 'see'. Whilst it is clear that 'see' is polysemous, we may remain neutral on exactly how to distinguish its distinct senses

⁴ It is also arguable that something akin to seeing-that is employed in cases of passive 'see' with a to-infinitive clause, as in 'The kettle was seen to boil (by Fatima)'. See (Gisborne 2010, 122–3).

amounts to knowledge, it seems clear that seeing does not. If Fatima merely sees the boiling kettle, she does not thereby know anything about the kettle, for she may not realise that it is a kettle or that it is boiling. Indeed, she may not possess the concepts necessary to grasp the relevant proposition. I will assume that when *S* sees *o*, *S* need have no knowledge or beliefs about *o*.⁵

Another claim that might be made to motivate a perceptual account of face-to-face mindreading is that one can, on occasion, see another as happy. Seeing-as is altogether less easy to get a fix on than is either seeing or seeing-that. However, a simple thought is that seeing-as is a non-factive form of seeing-that. From the fact that *S* sees that *o* is *F* it follows that *o* is *F*. This entailment evidently does not hold with respect to the fact that *S* sees *o* as *F*. Nevertheless, seeing-as seems to possess something of the epistemic significance of seeing-that, since if *S* sees *o* as *F* then it she seems thereby to be put in the position to judge that *o* is *F*. Whilst this thought is a natural one, I will not defend it here and nothing I say in the following depends upon it.

Finally, another claim that might be used to argue for a perceptual account of face-to-face mindreading is that, on occasion, a person may look happy. There are a number of ways of understanding the notion of a look, and the semantics of 'look'. On one of them, claims about the ways things look are claims about the ways they (can) appear in visual experience. On this claim, then, someone's happiness can be manifest in visual experience.

We have, then, the *seeing*, the *seeing-that*, the *seeing-as*, and the *looks* elucidations of perceptual accounts of face-to-face mindreading. The present

⁵ Heil (1991) disputes this.

paper offers a *looks* based perceptual account of face-to-face mindreading, with some comments about seeing-as towards the end. I prescind from making any epistemological claim so, in this paper will not address the distinction between epistemic and merely psychological accounts. However, I would hope that the account that I sketch in what follows will form part of a plausible epistemic account.

In §2 I outline a phenomenological desideratum on accounts of face-to-face mindreading. In particular, I claim that a phenomenologically accurate account must be able to distinguish between three cases. In §3 I argue that views relying solely on the notions of seeing are not in a position to account for the relevant phenomenological distinctions. In §4 I do the same for accounts in terms of seeing-that. In §5 I outline the looks account and respond to an argument, due to Martin (2011), against the claim that, in the relevant sense, people can look happy. In §6 I extend the account to seeing-as by drawing on a distinction, from Brewer (2011), between thin and thick ways things look.

2. Three degrees of visual presence

There are, I suggest, a number of phenomenological claims that can be made about face-to-face mindreading. Consider the following quotation from Peacocke,

To describe when seeing the face of a person the experience in which they look sad in non-emotional terms is not to capture its distinctive representational content. There is no kind described without reference to the emotions of which one can say that the facial expression appears to be

of that kind and it is merely an additional judgement on the part of the person that people looking that way are sad. (Peacocke 2006, 66)

The claim here is that one cannot give a complete description of the content of one's visual experience in a case of face-to-face mindreading, without reference to the emotion that the other person seems to be in. In other words, on occasion, other people look sad, or happy, or whatever. Further than this, I claim, one can make a number of phenomenological claims about the following three cases:

Red Tomato: Fatima sees, in ordinary circumstances, a red tomato on the table before her. It looks red and if it were not red it would not look red. Fatima, believing this to be so, takes it to be red.

Happy Sylvia: Ivy sees happy Sylvia who is beaming. Sylvia looks happy and, were she not happy, she would not look happy. Ivy, believing this to be so, takes her to be happy.

Poker Tell: Aarohi and Shreshta are playing poker. Aarohi sees Shreshta who is visibly scratching her chin in a distinctive way. Shreshta scratches her chin this way when and only when she is excited during a poker game. Aarohi, aware of this fact, takes Shreshta to be excited.

The first claim, echoing Peacocke above, is that in *Red Tomato* and *Happy Sylvia* the tomato and Sylvia look the way they are taken to be, that is red and happy respectively. This, I claim, is not so with *Poker Tell*. Whilst we might say that

Shreshta looks as though she is excited, it seems less appropriate to say that she looks excited. So, there is a distinction, regarding the ways things look, between *Red Tomato* and *Happy Sylvia* on the one hand, and *Poker Tell* on the other.

The second claim is that whilst it seems right to say that Sylvia looks happy, it is implausible to claim that her happiness is manifest to the same degree as is the tomato's redness. That is, Sylvia's happiness, whilst somehow characterising Ivy's visual experience, is *in some sense* less than fully available to vision. To see this, compare Sylvia's happiness with the upturn of her mouth. Only the latter, I suggest, is visually present in the fullest and most intuitive sense, the former only being visually present *in virtue of* the visual presence of the latter. Indeed, if this were not the case it is difficult to see how there ever could have arisen an epistemological problem of other minds. The thought that other people's psychological states are hidden from view would never have gained a grip. Thus, at least, a good number of philosophers seem to have seen a phenomenological difference between these two sorts of case.

These three cases, I claim, represent three degrees of visual presence. That is, the way in which redness, happiness and excitement are visually present in each, differs. More specifically, I claim, the cases exhibit three different degrees of visual presence: *Red Tomato* is a case of visual presence in the first degree, the redness of the tomato is fully visually present; *Happy Sylvia* possesses the second degree of visual presence, the visual presence of Sylvia's happiness is less than full; *Poker Tell* possesses the third degree of visual presence or, if it is preferred, Shreshta's excitement lacks visual presence entirely. Alternatively put, there is a sense in which *Happy Sylvia* is similar to *Red Tomato* and a sense in which it is similar to *Poker Tell*. The former, since the

relevant property—redness and happiness respectively—is visually present. The latter, since the relevant property—happiness and excitement respectively—are not visually present to the full extent.⁶

Accounts of face-to-face mindreading ought to be sensitive to this pattern of phenomenological similarities and differences. At the very least, they ought to accommodate the fact that these cases are different with respect to visual presence. Accounting for these facts is a phenomenological constraint on theories of our visual awareness of others' emotional expressions, our paradigm case of face-to-face mindreading.⁷

⁶ The visual presence of property instances is akin to what phenomenologists sometimes refer to an object's being 'bodily-there'. For example, "the entity which presents itself as perceived has the feature of being *bodily-there*" (Heidegger 1992, 40). Whilst I speak here of the visual presence of property instances, I also allow that properties themselves can be visually present.

⁷ One may, of course, deny the phenomenological claims. I will not respond to that sceptical position here. My motivation of them has been entirely intuitive. For an extended attempt to offer an argument for a number of related claims, see (Siegel 2011). Nor will I address the question of the relationship between this claim and the view that (low level) vision is cognitively impenetrable. Whilst the issues discussed in the following are sometimes pursued via the notion of cognitive penetration, in the absence of an account of the relation between the degrees of visual presence and the subject's beliefs and other background cognitive states, it is far from clear exactly how the issues relate. As one of the leading proponents of the cognitive impenetrability of early vision puts it,

3. Ivy Sees Sylvia's Happiness

It is sometimes said that it is possible to see another person's psychological property instances.⁸ It should be obvious, however, that even if there is an available notion of seeing property instances, and allowing that psychological property instances can be seen, it cannot do more than partially explain the phenomenological constraint.⁹ For, if Ivy sees Sylvia's happiness, it is surely the case that Fatima sees the tomato's redness. So, even if we also agree that Aarohi cannot see Shreshta's excitement, at most, the claim allows us to explain only *Happy Sylvia's* similarity to *Red Tomato* and difference to *Poker Tell*. What it cannot explain is the fact that there is a sense in which *Happy Sylvia* is similar to

"phenomenology turns out to be an egregiously unreliable witness in this case. Our subjective experience of the world fails to distinguish between the various sources of this experience, whether they arise from the visual system or from our beliefs." (Pylyshyn 1999, 362).

⁸ For example, the claim is made, or at least seems to be, and more or less tentatively, in (Cassam 2007, ch.5; Gallagher 2008; McNeill 2012; Stout 2010; Green 2010; Zamuner 2011). The claim that it is possible to see another's psychological property instances is not always very clearly distinguished from the analogous claim concerning seeing-that.

⁹ I should point out that this is not the usual motivation for such a claim, or at least not explicitly. The motivation is, at least very often, epistemic (e.g. McNeill 2012). So, the present discussion is not a criticism of those views.

Poker Tell and different to *Red Tomato*. We have, at best, the materials to explain two, not three, degrees of visual presence.

In response, one might propose a distinction between direct and indirect property instance perception. As has often been suggested with respect to the perception of objects (e.g. Jackson 1977, ch.1; Snowdon 1992), one might claim that some of an object's property instances are seen only *in virtue of* the seeing of others. It might then be claimed that Fatima sees the tomato's redness directly (i.e. without seeing it in virtue of seeing some other property instance(s)), but Ivy sees Sylvia's happiness indirectly.

Whether or not this is acceptable, however, there is a fundamental worry that applies to the idea that any version of the property instance view can account for the intuitive phenomenological differences between *Red Tomato*, *Happy Sylvia* and *Poker Tell*. This is that neither direct nor indirect property instance perception can account for *any* degree of visual presence.

Claims about what a subject sees, whether they concern objects or property instances, are extensional. If Ivy sees Sylvia, and Sylvia is the youngest person in the room, then Ivy sees the youngest person in the room. It does not follow that she sees her *as*, or otherwise takes her to be, the youngest person in the room. If Ivy sees Sylvia's happiness, and Sylvia's happiness is identical to activation of the inferior temporal gyrus, then Ivy sees Sylvia's activation of the inferior temporal gyrus. Now consider the following case,

(Happy Sylvia) Brain Scientist: Ivy is a neuroscientist looking at Sylvia's brain and seeing activation of the inferior temporal gyrus. Assuming token-identity theory and the extensionality of property instance

perception, Ivy sees Sylvia's happiness. She also sees Sylvia (and her brain). Sylvia/her brain wouldn't look the way she/it does were she not happy, and Ivy, accepting that this is so, takes Sylvia to be happy.

Brain Scientist gives us all the conditions that hold in *Happy Sylvia* plus, explicitly, property instance perception. However, we lack the degree of visual presence that is there in *Happy Sylvia*. The point, of course, is that whilst seeing is extensional, visual presence is not. Therefore, property instance perception cannot account for either the first or second degrees of visual presence.

One might have the worry, regarding this case, of an over-reliance on the highly contentious token-identity premise. But it really is inessential, for an analogous example can be generated for *Red Tomato*:

(Red Tomato) Tinted Specs: Fatima sees, through tinted specs, a red tomato on the table in front of her. It looks brown and if it were not red it would not look brown. Fatima, aware of the effects of her glasses, believes this to be so, and so takes it to be red.

Tinted Specs, I claim, counts as a case in which Fatima sees the tomato's redness. Of course, the tomato does not look red to Fatima on this occasion, but that is no reason to deny that Fatima sees the property instance. For the visual perception of *o*'s *F*ness does not entail that *o* look *F* to the perceiving subject on every occasion of her seeing it. *Brain Scientist* shows us that. If one is tempted to deny this, consider seeing a two-dimensional red square situated at egocentric location EL_1 . Due to distorting lenses, the square looks neither red, square nor at

*EL*₁.¹⁰ Question: do you see any of the square's property instances? If one is tempted to reply in the negative, one seems dangerously close to the claim that it is possible to see an object without seeing any of its property instances and this, I suggest, is a very uncomfortable position indeed. If, on the other hand, one replies in the affirmative, then one will be forced to admit that property instance perception does not, in and of itself, entail either the first or second levels of visual presence.

For all I have said, it may be true that Ivy sees Sylvia's happiness. My point is simply that, in order to account for the phenomenology of face-to-face mindreading, we need to say more than just that.

4. Ivy Sees that Sylvia is Happy

Perhaps we do better if we consider views according to which Ivy sees that Sylvia is happy? Dretske, for example, writes that, "We can see that he is afraid, she is depressed, and they hate each other. We can see that the speaker is nervous, that the strange creature is watching us, and that the poor thing is suffering" (1969, 179). In a similar vein, Cassam argues that, "there is such a thing as, say, seeing-that someone else is angry and thereby knowing that he is angry" (2007, 158). Underlying these claims is Dretske's (1969) account of what he calls, 'primary epistemic seeing'. This is one species of seeing-that which is distinguished from secondary epistemic seeing by the fact that one (primarily) sees that *o* is *F* something about *o* by seeing *o*, whereas one (secondarily) sees that *o* is *F* by seeing some other object *o'*. For example, Ivy can (primarily) see

¹⁰ This argument is based on that given in (A. D. Smith 2010, 404).

that the grass is green by seeing the grass, or she can (secondarily) see the same thing by seeing a painting of the grass.

According to Dretske's account, *S* (primarily) sees that *o* is *F* if and only if (i) *o* is *F*, (ii) *S* sees *o*, (iii) The background conditions (lighting, viewing angle, etc.) under which *S* sees *o* are such that *o* would not look the way, *L*, it now looks to *S* unless it were *F*, (iv) *S*, believing the conditions are as described in (iii), takes *o* to be *F*.¹¹

It seems clear that Dretske's account cannot account for the pattern of phenomenological similarities and differences displayed by the three cases introduced in §2. *Red Tomato*, *Happy Sylvia* and *Poker Tell* will, according to Dretske's account, all qualify as cases of non-inferential, perceptual knowledge. They are all cases of (primary) seeing-that. That is, alone, the view cannot account for the differing degrees of visual presence possessed by the three cases. As far as Dretske's account is concerned, it is possible that all cases of face-to-face mindreading possess only the degree of visual presence exhibited by *Poker Tell*. However, this possibility is, I have suggested, untrue to the phenomenological facts. It is inconsistent with Peacocke's claim concerning the emotions and the representational content of visual experience.

The same is true of the account of perceptual knowledge presented by Millar (2000; 2010). Millar's account of perceptual knowledge employs two key

¹¹ These conditions paraphrase, with minor modifications, those set out in (F Dretske 1969, 79–88). Cassam (2007, 163) accepts that these conditions are necessary and sufficient for (primary) seeing-that. I leave aside Dretske's (1969, 116) further qualifications on the satisfaction of (iv).

notions, that of a capacity to discriminate objects that have a certain look, and that of a distinctive look. Millar offers the following general statement of the view,

to tell perceptually that something is an *F* *from the way it looks* involves judging that it is an *F* by way of exercising a capacity for discriminating things having the look of *F*s. (Millar 2000, 86)

The idea is that perceptual knowledge is the result of the disposition to judge that a seen object is *F* when it has a look distinctive of *F*s. Discrimination thus relies on the notion of a distinctive look. As characterised by Millar, a look is distinctive of *F*s when, "most things which have that appearance are *F*s" (Millar 2000, 87).¹² Now, consider *Red Tomato*. Since most things that are red look red then, given the appropriate discriminatory capacities, Fatima can come to non-inferentially, perceptually know that the tomato is red. We can, arguably, reach a similar verdict for *Happy Sylvia*, albeit via a different route. Plausibly enough, there is some range of looks such that most people that possess one of them are happy. Given this, and given that Sylvia possesses one such look then, again given the appropriate discriminatory capacities, Ivy can come to non-inferentially,

¹² Cf. "When an appearance of something is distinctive of *F*s, not easily could something have this appearance and not be an *F*." (Pritchard, Millar, and Haddock 2010, 163). In that later work, Millar explicitly relativises distinctive looks to locales, so something is a distinctive look of *F*s if *round here* most *F*s look that way. I think this a sensible move, but won't dwell on it.

perceptually know that Sylvia is happy. But note that this does not require it to be the case that Sylvia looks happy, only that she looks some way that is distinctive of happiness. Finally, consider *Poker Tell*. It is highly implausible to suppose that most people that scratch their chins in the particular way that Shreshta does are excited. Thus, Shreshta does not possess a look that is distinctive of excitement. As a result, Aarohi cannot, in these circumstances, come to non-inferentially, perceptually know that Shreshta is excited.

This account of perceptual knowledge cannot, by itself, account for the phenomenology of face-to-face mindreading. For it is consistent with this account that, to paraphrase Peacocke, there is a kind described without reference to happiness, of which we can say that Sylvia's facial expression appears to be of that kind and it is merely an additional judgement on the part of Ivy that people looking that way are happy. And this, I have claimed, is wrong.

The accounts offered by both Dretske and Millar fail to capture the phenomenology of face-to-face mindreading for essentially the same reason. Both accounts divorce epistemological from phenomenological questions. Whilst both Dretske and Millar do require that if S (primarily) sees that o is F , then there is some way that o looks (to S), they place no restrictions on what that way must be. So, as with seeing, whilst it may well be true that Ivy sees that Sylvia is happy, it seems that in order to account for the phenomenology of face-to-face mindreading, we need to say more.

5. Sylvia Looks Happy

The considerations of the previous section suggest that we need to put some flesh on the bones of the idea that Sylvia looks happy. Philosophical discussions

of looks have tended to focus on the semantics of 'looks' reports (Chisholm 1957, Ch.4; Jackson 1977, Ch.1; Breckenridge 2007; Byrne 2009; Martin 2010; Brogaard Manuscript). Whilst the details are controversial, it is widely accepted that the right account will involve quantification over *ways things look*. Given this, I will simply assume that there are such things as ways things look.¹³

The first question to answer is what such things might be. Broadly speaking, two accounts of looks suggest themselves. First, looks might be thought of as properties of visual experiences, either representational properties (Siegel 2011), or non-representational (Block 1990). Alternatively, looks can be thought of as properties of perceived objects, either intrinsic (Martin 2010), or relational (Brewer 2011). I shall refer to these respectively as the experiential and objectual views of looks.

Consider first the objectual view. We can ask, are any of the tomato's redness, Sylvia's happiness and Shreshtha's excitement, looks? To begin to answer this, consider the following argument, slightly adapted from (Martin 2010, p.199), the conclusion of which is that looks must be properties for which (visual) doppelganger properties are impossible.

Consider any property F ness for which there is some distinct, possible, visually indiscriminable (from all viewpoints and in all contexts) property F_{dop} ness. Now consider a world in which many things are F_{dop} but none are F .

¹³ Whilst I am happy to allow that both properties and property instances can be visually present (see fn.6), it seems clear that looks themselves must be properties, since two things can share a look.

Subject *S* has seen F_{dop} things in ordinary circumstances and is, therefore, visually acquainted with, F_{dop} ness. So,

1. *S* is visually acquainted with the look of F_{dop} ness
2. As they are visually indiscriminable, the look of F_{dop} ness is identical to the look of F ness
3. Thus, *S* is visually acquainted with the look of F ness
4. *S* is not visually acquainted with F ness
5. Thus, F ness can't be identical to the look of F ness
6. If F ness is identical to a look, it is identical to the look of F ness
7. Thus, F ness is not identical to a look

As presented, the argument relies on three assumptions concerning the notion of visual acquaintance. First, that for some *F*s seeing *F*s can visually acquaint one with the look of F ness. Second, that 'S is visually acquainted with *x*' is an extensional context (Martin 2010, 199). Third, that one can only be visually acquainted with properties that are *actually* instantiated.¹⁴ Given these, what the argument apparently shows is that objectual looks can only be properties for which doppelgangers are impossible, properties that are visually unique. Martin (2010, 203–6) argues that colours and three-dimensional shapes pass the test. However, it seems clear that neither happiness nor excitement will. The notion of a property that, whilst distinct from happiness/excitement, is visually

¹⁴ This last assumption is denied by (Johnston 2004).

indiscriminable from it (from all viewpoints and in all contexts) seems perfectly coherent and so is, I will assume, possible.

What about experiential looks? The representational view of looks is arguably committed to 1-6. If one has a perceptual experience that represents F_{ness} , one is acquainted with a representation of F_{ness} , so 1. By hypothesis, F_{ness} and $F_{dop}ness$ share a look, so 2. It seems that 3 follows from 1 and 2. We can stipulate 4 to be the case. On the face of it, 5 follows from 3 and 4. And, 6 is just highly plausible.

But, it will be replied, the representationalist does not deny 7. Of course they don't think that happiness is identical to any look, that's the objectual view! Of course, if we were to insist that a perceptual state can only represent something as F if F_{ness} is visually unique, then the experiential view would, in this respect, be on a par with the objectual view. But this is just what the argument is supposed to show and so such a constraint, without independent motivation, would seem to beg the question against a representationalist who believes that looks can be identical to visual representations of visually non-unique properties. Something like this move seems to be made by Lyons (2005) in his discussion of 'high level' theories of content, when he insists that "PK2: Some of S 's perceptual states at t represent things as being K only if K is a perceptual kind for S at t " (2005, 195), where " K is a perceptual kind just in case the members of K are perceptually similar to each other in some respects and perceptually different from other things in those same respects" (2005, 191). However, Lyons does little to motivate PK2.

This does not mean, however, that the experientialist about looks can simply ignore the doppelganger argument. Appropriately enough, there are two doppelganger arguments. Consider,

8. o looks F to S if and only if S has a visual state that represents o as F
9. o looks F_{dop} to S if and only if S has a visual state that represents o as F_{dop}
10. Since they are visually indiscriminable, o looks F to S if and only if o looks F_{dop} to S
11. So, S visually represents o as F if and only if she visually represents o as F_{dop}

So, whenever S sees an F that looks F to her, her perceptual state also, non-veridically, represents it as F_{dop} . Whilst this is not the contradiction that the doppelganger argument generates in the case of the objectual view, it is clearly an unwelcome result, condemning us to an inescapable world of permanent visual illusion. I assume that the experientialist will wish to avoid it.

To conclude, it seems that we have good reason, in the doppelganger argument, to distinguish between *Red Tomato* and *Happy Sylvia*. That is, on the assumption that redness is visually unique, redness is a look (or, the visual representation of redness is a look), whilst happiness is not (or, the visual representation of happiness is not). This, quite plausibly, allows us to distinguish between the first and second degrees of visual presence. But we now find

ourselves in the familiar predicament of having no obvious way of distinguishing *Happy Sylvia* from *Poker Tell*. In fact, we seem to have shown that the idea that Sylvia looks happy is, in an important way, unacceptable.

We should not be so quick, however, to draw this conclusion. I suggest that we can, in fact, make good on the thought that happiness is a way that Sylvia looks, and in such a way as to allow us to distinguish between the second and third degrees of visual presence.

In §3 I suggested drawing a distinction between those properties that you directly see and those properties that you indirectly see *in virtue of* seeing the former. I want to propose a similar distinction between the *basic* ways things look and the *non-basic* ways things look *in virtue of* the former. Recall Millar's account of perceptual knowledge as the result of the disposition to judge that a seen object is *F* when it has a look *distinctive of Fs*. As characterised by Millar, *L* is a distinctive look of *Fs* just in case, "most things which have that appearance [*L*] are *Fs*" (Millar 2000, 87). In the present context, however, this is inadequate. Suppose that all *Fs* are *G* and that *Fness* has a distinctive look, *L*. It follows that *L* is also a distinctive look of *Gness*. According to the above proposal, then, *Gness* should be at least capable of the second degree of visual presence. But taking *Fness* as being cubic and *Gness* as being either a shark or not a shark, we can see that this is implausible. It is true, I take it, that all cubes are either sharks or not sharks. And, so we have been assuming, cubes have a distinctive look. More than this, being cubic *is* a look. But surely we should reject the suggestion that being a shark or not a shark has a distinctive look.

This problem is not too serious, however. What is needed is some causal, or otherwise explanatory, connection between *Fness* and *L*. As a patch, then, I

suggest the following: L is a distinctive look of F s if and only if most actual things that look L do so because they are F .¹⁵ Since cubes do not look cubic because they are either sharks or not sharks, the latter property does not have a distinctive look. Which is as it should be.

With the notion of a distinctive look in hand we can make a distinction between basic and non-basic looks. In this spirit I offer the following partial account of non-basic looks,

o has the non-basic look F if o has the basic look L , and L is a distinctive look of F ness

This account is partial for the reason that it presents only a sufficient condition on being a non-basic look. L can be any look that passes the doppelganger test. To say that L is a distinctive look of F ness is to say that most actual things that look L , do so because they are F . This is, of course, consistent with there being another look L' , distinct from L , that is also a distinctive look of F ness.

The idea to capture is that o looks F *in virtue of* its looking L . This gets us, I want to say, the difference between the first and second degrees of visual presence, the difference between *Red Tomato* and *Happy Sylvia*. The tomato

¹⁵ I leave open the question of whether any specific limitations should be placed on the interpretation of 'because', in particular whether we should limit the principle to those connections between being F and looking L that are, in some sense to be elaborated, natural as opposed to artificial. Also, recall the 'round here' condition mentioned above.

basically looks red, its redness has the first degree of visual presence. Sylvia non-basically looks happy (since she looks *L* and most actual things that look *L* do so because they are happy), her happiness has the second degree of visual presence.¹⁶ We can also distinguish between the second and third degrees of visual presence, between *Happy Sylvia* and *Poker Tell*. Since there is no *L* such that Shreshta looks *L* and most things that look *L* do so because they are excited, Shreshta's excitement has only the third degree of visual presence.¹⁷ We also have a hint at why cognitive states are rarely thought to provide compelling cases of second degree visual presence. For, arguably, there is no *L* such that most things that look *L* do so because they believe that *P*. On the other hand, if one were to generalise the account to appearances in other sensory modalities, one may well suppose that there is some auditory appearance, *A*, such that most things that sound *A* do so because they believe that *P* (for example, an audible utterance of "P"). Moving away from the psychological realm, the account offers a way of determining whether such natural kind properties as *being an elm* are

¹⁶ Whilst it is highly intuitive to claim that there is some *L* such that Sylvia looks *L* and most actual things that look *L* do so because they are happy, it is open to empirical refutation. In fact, a number of psychologists are skeptical of the related claim that facial expressions are typically caused by the emotions usually associated with them. See, for example, (Fridlund 1994; Barrett 2011). I will not discuss this issue here.

¹⁷ In fact, since I only offer a sufficient condition of non-basic looks, this inference relies on the assumption Shreshta does not qualify, in some other way, as non-basically looking excited. This seems a reasonable assumption.

ever visually present to the second degree (cf. Siegel 2006), that is, whether there is some L such that most things that look L do because they are elms.

Does the idea of a non-basic look fall foul of the doppelganger argument? I don't think so. Suppose that there is a distinct, possible property, F_{dop} ness, that is visually indiscriminable from F ness. Imagine a world in which many things are F_{dop} , but nothing F .

Premise 2 of the initial doppelganger argument states that, since they are visually indiscriminable, the look of F_{dop} ness is identical to the look of F ness. But notice that with the introduction of the basic/non-basic looks distinction, this is ambiguous between 2' and 2'',

2'. As they are visually indiscriminable, the range of basic looks, L_1-L_n , of F_{dop} ness is identical to the range of basic looks, L_1-L_n , of F ness

2''. As they are visually indiscriminable, the non-basic look of F_{dop} ness is identical to the non-basic look of F ness

2' is true, given the definition of F_{dop} ness as visually indiscriminable from F ness. However, 2'' is false, since it is not true that L is a distinctive look of F_{dop} ness (i.e. Most actual things that look L do so because they are F) if and only if L is a distinctive look of F ness (i.e. most actual things that look L do so because they are F_{dop}). For we can assume that, whilst plenty of actual things that look L do so because they are F , no actual thing that looks L does so because it is F_{dop} since, by hypothesis, no actual thing is F_{dop} .

It follows that the non-basic look of F_{dop} ness is not identical to the non-basic look of F ness. Whilst I have outlined this thought in terms of objectual looks, a similar point applies to experiential looks. The experientialist will, on such a view, reject premise 10 of the second doppelganger argument. Indeed, at one point Siegel (2011, 155–8) suggests that this is an option with which she would be happy, apparently accepting the possibility that phenomenally identical experiences could present different properties, with experiences possessing two levels of content, one that co-varies with phenomenal character and one that co-varies with properties presented. This picture generates something like the distinction between wide and narrow content, familiar from the philosophy of thought.

The conclusion might be put by saying that there is a sense in which F ness is visually unique. But it must also be insisted that there is also a sense in which it is not. It is visually unique in that nothing shares its non-basic look. It is not visually unique in that distinct, possible properties share its range of basic-looks.

It will, perhaps, be objected that there something implausible about the claim that there is a sense in which F ness is visually unique. To make this vivid, consider the case of an evil demon that deposits me in a world that I know to contain either F ness or F_{dop} ness, but where I do not know which. Given this ignorance, I do not know whether things (non-basically) look F or F_{dop} , at least, not until I do some empirical investigation. But surely how things look is something that I can tell simply by reflecting on my visual experience? This, it might be thought, raises a serious doubt over the very idea of a non-basic look.

But notice that the situation here is a special case of the much discussed relation between the various forms of content externalism, on the one hand, and

privileged self-knowledge, on the other (Ludlow & Martin 1998; Nuccetelli 2003). The above account of non-basic looks determines how things look partly in terms of large-scale empirical facts (whether most actual things that look *L* do so because they are *F*) and these, so the objection has it, are knowable only on the basis of empirical investigation.¹⁸ Nevertheless, we want to say that one can know, without such investigation, how things look. Evidently, this issue is not going to be settled here. I just note that the defender of the present account of non-basic looks must endorse either some variety of compatibilism about the two phenomena, or scepticism about privileged self-knowledge.

6. Ivy Sees Sylvia as Happy

It might be objected that non-basic looks, as defined, really have anything to do with visual presence. How, one might wonder, could anything as utterly external to the subjective perspective as whether most things that look *L* do so because they are *F* or *F*_{dop} have significance for a subject's visual phenomenology? The short way with this worry is to deny the assumption that the facts in question are external to the subjective perspective in any meaningful sense since they, precisely, determine how things (non-basically) look. But this seems unlikely to

¹⁸ The account of non-basic looks thus denies a supervenience claim that O'Shaughnessey takes to be obvious, "we would all I think agree that...appearances necessarily *supervene* upon the physical properties of the bearer, so that if the look of a painting changes in any respect whatsoever, something absolutely must have happened to the paint." (2000, 571). It is, however, consistent with a global supervenience claim.

convince an opponent. A longer way might be to draw on Brewer's (2011) distinction between 'thin' and 'thick' looks. Brewer writes,

o looks *F* iff *o* is the direct object of a visual experience from a point of view and in circumstances relative to which *o* has visually relevant similarities with paradigm exemplars of *F*. I will say in such cases that *o* *thinly* looks *F*. *O* *thickly* looks *F* iff *o* *thinly* looks *F* and the subject recognizes it as an *F*, or registers its visually relevant similarities with paradigm exemplars of *F* in an active application of that very concept. (2011, 121–2)

Brewer's thin/thick distinction is made within the context of a relational objectual account of looks. But, it need not be. One might, for example, hold an intrinsic property view of looks, and yet make an analogous distinction between the way an object (thinly) looks to all and sundry, and the way it (thickly) looks to a subject who registers it as an *F*. This distinction is also orthogonal to the basic/non-basic distinction. If *F*ness is a basic look, then an object can both thinly and thickly look *F*. And the same is true of non-basic looks, if there are such things. One might, then, argue that non-basic looks are certainly not external to the subjective perspective when they are thick. That is, when *S* sees *o* and *o* (thinly and non-basically) looks *L* to *S*, and *S* registers, in virtue of its visual appearance, it as an *F*, then *o* thickly looks *F* to *S*.

Furthermore, perhaps this is what is going on in *Happy Sylvia*. Thick looks, according to Brewer, are associated with a conceptual phenomenology, and "[c]onceptual phenomenology of this latter kind is not simply a matter of

being caused to make a judgement employing the concept in question...in cases of seeing *o* as *F*, in which it thickly looks *F*, the concept is evidently appropriate—to us—to that particular in virtue of the de facto existence and attentional salience of such visually relevant similarities” (2011, 122). Brewer thus thinks of thick looks as closely associated with seeing-as, as involving visual phenomenology and as requiring more than mere perceptually grounded judgement. This, it might be insisted against the current objection, is sufficient to generate the second degree of visual presence. On this view, we have an account of what it takes for Ivy to see Sylvia as happy. It is for Sylvia to thickly look happy to Ivy.

This strategy also has the potential to defang an objection to the account of non-basic looks that I have so far ignored. Consider a world in which there is only one object, *o*. In that world, every way that *o* is that determines some way that it looks, will be a non-basic way that *o* looks. This, it will be maintained, is implausible. More realistically, and in relation to *Poker Tell*, suppose that the only person that ever looks the way Shreshta does is Shreshta and, as it turns out, she only ever looks that way when she is excited. It will then be true that Shreshta non-basically looks excited. But, this is inconsistent with the initial judgement that Shreshta does not look excited and, so, *Poker Tell* possesses only the third degree of visual presence.¹⁹

¹⁹ Another way of raising essentially this objection is to suppose that Shreshta's chin-scratches are distinctive of a property we might call Shreshta-excitement. Further, we might suppose that Aarohi is sufficiently attuned to Shreshta's idiosyncratic behaviour that, for her, Shreshta non-basically looks excited. The

If we endorse the view that the second degree of visual presence is generated by thick non-basic looks, then we have a way of ameliorating the implausibility of this suggestion. For we can allow that, in the envisaged situation, Shreshta does indeed thinly look excited. However, we can point out the implausibility of the thought that someone might visually register Shreshta as being excited, not just believe it, on the basis of her looking the way she does. Our interpersonal interactions, and capacity to visually pick up on the psychological states of others, lack that sort of specificity. Of course, if it turned out that, in this special case, Aarohi's visual experiences, not just her beliefs, did indeed involve a registration of Shreshta's excitement, then the second degree of visual presence would be generated. But this is sufficiently far from the norm, I take it, that it does not impugn the initial judgement concerning *Poker Tell*.

There is, however, at least some reason to doubt that Brewer's conceptualist account of thick looks could in general account for the second degree of perceptual presence. For, very young infants, who appear to lack emotion concepts, are highly receptive to emotional faces (Legerstee 2005; Reddy 2008). Of course, this alone is insufficient to show that their visual experiences of emotional faces exhibit the second degree of visual presence, but it is certainly suggestive. We might wonder whether there is a non-conceptual alternative. An account of thick looks, and so seeing-as, that does not require the application of concepts within perceptual experience.

comments below answer this worry about the initial verdict concerning *Poker Tell*.

On the view that I prefer (J. Smith 2010), the non-conceptual contents of visual experiences can 'lock on' to the functional roles of psychological properties. On such a view, one's perceptual states have a conditional, 'if...then', content that can represent the structure of input-output relations individuated of a functional property. That is, Ivy's visual states represent Sylvia as happy in virtue of their possessing content that matches the causal profile of that psychological property. This can be thought of as a non-conceptual elaboration of the notion of something's thickly, subjectively and non-basically looking *F*; of a subject's seeing it *as F*.²⁰ This, if correct, explains how non-basic looks can impinge upon the subjective perspective in such a way as to generate the second degree of visual presence.²¹

7. Conclusion

I have not offered a robust defence of the phenomenological claims set out in §2, motivating them rather on intuitive grounds. Nevertheless, insofar as one is moved by those claims, one must meet the phenomenological constraint on our visual awareness of others' emotional expressions. To do this, I have argued, we need to face up to the doppelganger argument. The account of non-basic looks outlined above is an attempt to do just that. Adopting the language of the

²⁰ There is some discussion of the possibility of non-conceptual models of seeing-as in (Mulligan 1999; Orlandi 2011).

²¹ My (2010) fails to see the need for the account of seeing-as to rest on an account of non-basic looks so, as it stands, has no answer to the doppelganger argument.

objectual view, the tomato's redness is a basic look, Sylvia's happiness is a non-basic look, Shreshta's excitement is neither. We thus have our three degrees of visual presence.²²

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