

Chapter Four

Direct Perception, Experience and Surfaces

Over the last two chapters I have offered a reconstruction of the traditional debate about perception in terms of a concern with the nature of sensory consciousness and in doing so highlighted the connections with debates about phenomenal consciousness. Absent from this reconstruction has been any discussion of the contrast between direct and indirect perception, or that between immediate and mediate objects of perception. Indeed, the moral stressed at the end of the last chapter is precisely that our primary concern should be with the nature of sensory episodes rather than the objects of those episodes.

This line of interpretation may justifiably raise two concerns. The first worry is just that since so much of the traditional debate has been couched in terms of the contrast between direct and indirect perception, one may wonder whether something significant in the original debate has been lost. Such a concern can really only be addressed by indicating how the traditional contrast between direct and indirect, and that between immediate and mediate, can be equally well expressed in the terms of the account offered here.

The second concern takes the form of a direct objection. Frank Jackson, in his reconstruction of a sense-datum theory of perception in *Perception*, takes as the basic building block of his theory of perception the relation ‘ x sees y ’ and the notions of immediate and mediate seeing. In the course of his account, Jackson offers to explain appearance talk in terms of the immediate perception of certain objects, and in the final chapter argues that talk of object perception is more basic than fact perception. In the account offered here, perception of objects is not taken to be more basic than sensory experience and how things appear to a subject: theories of object perception and of appearances are taken to be mutually dependent. If Jackson is right in his reconstruction of sense-datum theories, then the interpretation of the debate offered here must be wrong.

In this chapter I shall argue that Jackson’s conception of his account of the immediate/mediate distinction is misguided, and that we cannot have a proper understanding of how to use the terms as he introduces them without having some

independent grasp on the idea of visual experience, pretty much as discussed in the terms used here. So we have a reason to reject Jackson's priority thesis. Moreover, we shall see that pursuing the debates about perception in terms of the immediate/mediate distinction requires us to make certain controversial and narrowing assumptions which can otherwise be avoided and would indeed be best for us to avoid.

1. 'INDIRECTLY'

One starting point for a philosophical account would be to draw on a more general understanding of the contrasts between 'directly' and 'indirectly', or 'immediately' and 'mediately', at least as modifiers of psychological verbs. But a moment's reflection should indicate that such an approach would be fruitless. If one wants to find both a determinate and interesting semantic content to these pairs of adverbs, one might look to the connection in the one case to space and the other to temporal or causal process. But that would be to ignore the far wider application of the contrasts in play. So, for example, one might consider the example of flying directly from London to Sydney. On one construal this might be true because one has flown to Sydney as the crow flies with as short a route of travel as is possible for the aeroplane. On another, it might simply mean that flies without any change of plane – notoriously a non-stop flight need not mean that the plane does not stop, but merely that the passenger does not have to disembark. Again, it might be said of one where no stops at all were involved. Nothing about the constant meaning of 'directly' independent of a given context in which some salient case of not doing the thing or merely doing it indirectly will specify what is required for the action in question to be direct.

Likewise, when someone pays over a ransom immediately or directly, one interpretation of this is that they do within as minimum a temporal interval as relevant. But it could be appropriate to say that the ransom was paid directly to mean that the blackmailer received the demand in person. Hence where the ransom is paid only indirectly or mediate, one might infer that some intermediary had been involved in the exchange. On the other hand, it might be appropriate to say in another context that the ransom had only intermediately been paid, if the exchange involved some currency or some goods of equivalent value which were not fungible.

This is Austin's initial point when he observes that, "directly" takes whatever sense

it has from the contrast with its opposite: while “indirectly” itself (*a*) has a use only in special cases, and also (*b*) has *different* uses in different cases—though that doesn’t mean, of course, that there is not a good reason why we should use the same word.’ ((Austin 1962), p.15.) But there is one additional point worth observing about use here, however exactly it may be taken to bear on the meanings, either in general, or relative to particular interpretations of the pairs. For certainly one motivation for introducing talk of having done something only indirectly or for something to occur only indirectly or not immediately is to resist the challenge that something of that kind has not occurred at all. In general, for something to be *F* indirectly is still for it to be *F*. Suppose that someone challenges whether the thing in question was *F* or whether an agent really did φ . One might insist in response that the challenge is ill-founded, that despite the observations of the challenger, the thing in question is definitely *F* or the agent really did φ . There may yet, though, be circumstances in which one admits some force to the challenge, that there is a way of construing what it is for something to be *F* or what it is for someone to φ , on which the case in question couldn’t so count. A partial acknowledgement of the force of the challenge, while still insisting that the case is a genuine one of *F*-ness or φ -ing, is to retreat to the case being one at least of indirect *F*-ness or indirectly φ -ing.

Now the adverb has application both in the simplest or most literal use and in the more extended use in relation to verbs of perception. For in relation to various modes of perception we can apply assessments of these mental acts or episodes by reference to spatial and temporal dimensions. This is most obvious in the case of vision. One’s direct line of sight is just the spatial field determined by projective lines along which light could travel from the subject’s eyes. So if something is seen but does not fall within one’s direct line of sight, then in certain contexts it is perfectly proper to say that the subject saw it only indirectly: hence, as Austin, notes one might say of someone viewing an object through a periscope or through a prism that they see it indirectly. Although we do hear the direction of sounds, where that is the source from which a sound emanates, we tend not to be sensitive to a spatial dimension here. In my street it is common to hear the bands playing in the pub as if from the houses opposite, since the echo off those houses is not blocked by intervening buildings. It would not be usual in this case to say that one hears the band indirectly because of the spatial displacement. (Particularly within a philosophical context, though, I can imagine

Uncovering Appearances

philosophers insisting that one hears the band only indirectly, because one only hears the sound they produce, or their echo, rather than them. But this would not be a use of the term on spatial grounds.) However, one might just here an application in terms of temporal dimension. Suppose someone cries out a name at the end of a long and empty hall. Eventually, some time later one hears the call. In certain contexts it might be right to say that one only heard him call indirectly and certainly that one didn't hear him call immediately.

However it is clear that for philosophical purposes, the extended use of the adverb is of more concern. One will not have seen the players directly if there is a screen intervening between them and viewer, so that she sees the shadows thrown on the screen. Here one can imagine a challenge that one was not really seeing the players, but only the images that they cast upon the screen. Someone somewhat moved by the thought but resistant to the claim that one hadn't seen the players might yet say that they had at least seen them indirectly. Arguably, in this case of seeing the players' shadows, one is in a position to demonstrate the players whose shadows they are. Again, the relevant contrast drawn here is context sensitive. For if one was more interested in line of sight then one might insist that one was seeing them directly here, in contrast to a case of shadow play where the actors stood in the wings and cast shadows on to the screen, so that in such a case unlike this one there would be no direct line of sight.

Having been bumped by one car, one may then feel the bump of another car hitting the first. But again this can be described as indirect. For one can re-describe this as feeling the first car bump one, and through that one comes to feel the second car. Hearing the echo of a voice may in a certain context count as indirect, for one is not appropriately placed to the original source; on the other hand it can count as direct in contrast to hearing a synthesised reproduction of the sound, even when that is simultaneous with the original sound's production.¹

So if one is interested in the variety of ways in which 'directly' and 'indirectly' can be applied in the special case of verbs of perception, the answer is simply that there are multifarious ways. We cannot hope to delimit, or necessarily to regiment in a useful or illuminating way the various contrasts that can be brought out in particular contexts

1. Cf. (Austin 1962), pp.16-17.

by explicitly using ‘directly’, ‘indirectly’ or refraining from modifying at all one’s use of ‘see’, ‘hear’, ‘touch’.

Austin’s reaction to this variety is to dismiss the philosophers’ use of ‘directly perceive’ as not the ordinary or familiar use, and that we are given no explanation or definition of the new use.² But this overstates the case. That there are many contrasts that can be introduced by using ‘direct’ in conjunction with a perception verb is consistent with the thought that one of those contrasts is the one that philosophers have had in mind. Of course, given the possibility that one may be drawing different contrasts in different contexts, it is possible that philosophers become confused and conflate different distinctions that we can draw. Equally, it may be that they have remained fixed on only one, and so wish us to use ‘directly see’ as indicating just that contrast in any of their work.³

But certainly the ambivalence in admitting that a case is only one of indirectly or mediately perceiving that can be present in ordinary usage is retained in philosophical discussion. Moore is clear that judging, ‘That is an inkstand’ can be to make a perceptual judgement: one can see an inkstand and thereby be prompted and warranted in judging of it that it is an inkstand. Yet, at the very same time, he wishes to insist that in so making a perceptual judgement, one does not also really perceive the inkstand in a way in which one does perceive something else, something clearly not an inkstand. So, for Moore one does perceive the inkstand, and yet one doesn’t directly, because there is something else which one also counts as perceiving and relative to that comparison one does not count as perceiving the inkstand, although again how one does stand to the inkstand has the proper consequences of the compared case—both are available for ostension and demonstrative judgement.⁴ So in saying that one merely indirectly perceives the inkstand we get to express this ambivalence.

Again in Moore’s and Broad’s writing it is made clear why one doesn’t count as directly perceiving the physical object. For reflection is supposed to show that such apprehension is *mediated*. Both take it to be obvious that physical object perception is mediated at least by awareness of the surface of things, and argument may show in

2. (Austin 1962), p.19.

3. Cf. here (Snowdon 1992), p.50.

4. (Moore 1922b), pp.**-**.

addition that it is mediated by non-physical sense-data. So it is through only mediately perceiving objects that one comes to count in the relevant contrast case as indirectly perceiving them. What is it for one's perception of an object to be mediated?

2. PRIMARY OBJECTS OF DIFFERENT SENSES

Before turning to Jackson's reconstruction of the distinction, an account which focuses on a general conception of what it is for one thing to hold in virtue of another, I want briefly to look at two other sources of concern for talking about different statuses for the objects of perception. For looking in a different direction, we might note some striking contrasts among the sense modalities in relation to the objects of sense. For one might say of the sense of smell that its primary object, what one can come to be aware of through this sense, are smells or, generically, smell. Likewise one may say of audition that one comes to be aware of sounds, or more generically sound. In neither case need one deny that one is aware of, for example, the somewhat worse for wear character next to one on the metro when one smells the smell, or the delicate movements of the people in the apartment above when one hears the sounds they make. But in both cases something independently identifiable – a smell or a sound – is an object of awareness through which one comes to be aware of these other things.

If one used these as a model for talk of the objects of sense in general, then one might suppose that in the case of sight and touch too we should try to isolate some appropriate such primary object of apprehension: be it light, colour, texture or whatever. Certainly Berkeley notoriously uses the example of sound to justify a more general conclusion about how objects of sense can be given:

For instance, when I hear a coach drive along the streets, immediately I perceive only the sound; but, from the experience I have had that such a sound is connected with a coach, I am said to hear the coach. It is nevertheless evident that, in truth and strictness, nothing can be *heard* but *sound*; and the coach is not then properly perceived by sense, but suggested from experience. (*First Dialogue*, 468)

But what is as striking as the appropriateness of talking of sound and sounds as the primary object of audition is the lack of any such appropriate candidate in the case of vision or touch.

While we do, it is true, talk of the look, the visual appearances, or even just the appearance, of something as visually perceptible, and in this way have something in

Draft Chapter Three

common with a smell or sound, we don't treat appearances as having an independent status as object of sense in the way we are liable so to talk of the smells and sounds that we encounter. In the case of sounds, we treat them, I would suggest as genuine individuals. We can make perfect sense of the idea that there can be two distinct sounds which are entirely qualitatively identical, as well as allowing for the very same sound to be reproduced on different occasions. (I never heard Martin Luther King but I have heard his voice many times, for there are accurate recordings and adequate reproductions which acquaint me with his voice. Likewise I have heard the sound of the Hindenburg dissolving in flames, though I did not witness and so thereby did not hear the event itself.) Smells, on the other hand, seem not properly to be individuals in this way. The smell of Chanel No. 5 is not distinct from a cleverly made copy, even if it can easily be told apart from the smells of substances sold under that name on the barrows of Oxford Street. In both the case of smell and audition we can make some sense of there being a sensible world containing just the various objects proper to that sense – smell or sound as the case may be. But when it comes to the visible world (and for that matter the tangible one) we are inclined to suppose it filled with the objects that we find around us, and not some mere surrogates of them, appearances or looks.

Of course, we can make *some* sense of this idea. And it may be hypothesised that at times philosophers have been moved to distinguish among the objects of sight partly through being moved by a model of how vision could work in that way. After all, there are among the public objects of the world around us some merely phenomenal objects. So, for example, despite what some claim about the identity of rainbows with raindrops, it is as plausible to suppose that rainbows like the vault of the sky and the horizon are properly visual phenomena. They take up portions of the visual world, but need not have determinate locations within the physical world. In this way, one might suppose, if someone does not have an understanding of how something can be an occupant of the visible world (whether or not it is merely such an occupant) then they can have no real conception of how rainbows or the horizon fit into the world, even if they have a perfectly good understanding of the physical phenomena which underpin our perception of these things. Now certainly one way of thinking about colours and visible phenomena in general is that what we are presented with is something entirely distinct from, although interestingly related to underlying physical reality. As if the colours stretched over the surfaces of objects are more local and more humble (if more

prevalent) examples of rainbows. To think of the visible world in this kind of way really is to think of visible appearances, now made specific in the case of the coloured expanses belonging to objects, as somehow existing independent of the objects to which we attach them.

However, if we can make some sense of this story, and see some parallels between it and how we think of sounds or perhaps more properly of smells, it is at least as notable that we do not commonly think in quite these terms about what we see or how things look to us. We do not conceive of the visual appearance of an object as something that we can pick out independently of seeing the object, or that through which we see the object. So if there is a relatively uncontentious way of understanding the direct/indirect or immediate/mediate distinction, we need to be able to do so independently of the creative parallel with the case of smell or sound, or the metaphysical motivations that might come from questioning the status of colour within the physical world.

One of the great virtues of Frank Jackson's discussion is precisely that it offers us a clear framework seemingly independent of any substantive commitments in which to understand what may be meant here.

3. JACKSON AND IMMEDIATELY SEEING

This, as so much in the philosophy of perception, has been a matter of contention. While it was not a focus of concern for any of the original sense-datum theorists, later discussion particularly in response to criticisms like those of Austin's set out to give a specification of the relevant contrast and to read this back into earlier writers. Frank Jackson's discussion of the immediate/mediate distinction identifies a number of different threads in other writers: one invoking the presence or absence of inference;⁵ that what is immediately perceived is that which is entirely known through the perception;⁶ or that which is entirely perceived at a time.⁷ In place of these Jackson

5. This he draws from Armstrong in (Armstrong 1961), attempting to elucidate Berkeley. Cf. also Pitcher's interpretation of Berkeley on vision in (Pitcher 1977), pp.9-13.

6. This he attaches to Price's discussion of the tomato. See the last two chapters for an alternative treatment of this passage. He also finds this in Don Locke's thought that immediate perception 'does not go beyond what is perceived at the particular moment', (Locke 1967), p.171.

7. This he draws from Broad, (Broad 1965) and Moore.

offers a clear account of the contrast which is directly applicable to relations of perceiving to objects, in contrast to cases in which inference is appealed to, and which does not presuppose the existence of sense-data:

...*x* is a *mediate object of (visual) perception* (for *S* at *t*) iff *S* sees *x* at *t*, and there is a *y* such that (*x* ≠ *y* and) *S* sees *x* in virtue of seeing *y*. An *immediate object of perception* is one that is not mediate; and we can define the relation of *immediately perceiving* thus: *S* immediately perceives *x* at *t* iff *x* is an immediate object of perception for *S* at *t*...⁸

Jackson explains that the connective ‘in virtue of’ here is not to be treated as a paraphrase of a causal connective, as when one says ‘He is angry in virtue of the lack of service in this restaurant’. It is, rather, used in the sense of showing some analytic definitional relation between the two facts introduced by antecedent and consequent. The appeal to definition here could be loosened, perhaps by taking on Thomas Baldwin’s suggestion that, “‘*p* in virtue of *q*’ is true where the fact that *q* explains why *p* obtains’⁹ We need to restrict this, though, in line with Jackson, to those uses of ‘explains’ in non-causal contexts.¹⁰

Moore and Broad assume that visual perception of physical objects is at least mediated by visual perception of their surfaces. Further argument or reflection may then show that such perception is mediated by non-physical sense-data or *sensa* as well. Jackson, in common with this tradition, supposes that our seeing the surfaces of objects mediates our seeing the objects themselves:

We commonly see things in virtue of seeing *other* things: I see the aircraft flying overhead in virtue of seeing its underside (and the aircraft is not identical with its underside); I see the table I am writing on in virtue of seeing its top; I first see England on the cross-channel ferry in virtue of seeing the white cliffs of Dover...¹¹

Jackson gives us a brief piece of reasoning to this conclusion in the next paragraph. We cannot define perception of a part of an object in terms of perception of the whole object, because one could have seen the part without seeing the object (had the part

8. (Jackson 1977), pp.19-20.

9. (Baldwin 1990), p.240.

10. So one might think that explanation is not really more basic here than our grip on ‘in virtue of’. For one can as easily explain to someone that there are non-causal explanations by giving them cases in which they recognise that one thing holds in virtue of another but in which there can be no causal connection.

11. (Jackson 1977), p.19.

Uncovering Appearances

been part of another object, for example), and one could have seen the object without seeing this part of it. So seeing the object can be neither necessary nor sufficient for seeing the part, and hence cannot be that in virtue of which one sees the part. This, of course, does not establish Jackson's point for even if we grant that one does not see the table top in virtue of seeing the table, it does not follow that one sees the table in virtue of seeing the top. One might just see both the table and the top, and neither seeing need be in virtue of the other.

Jackson presents the problem about immediate perception as parallel to certain other cases in which one fact holds in virtue of another. For example that one object touches another through one part of it touching a part of the other; that one is located in a country in virtue of being located in a city in that country; that an object is coloured in virtue of some part being coloured. In each example we have one fact involving a relation holding in virtue of another fact containing the same relation. Hence, it is interesting to ask how one would respond in one of these cases to a sceptic who denied that the one fact held in virtue of the other. For example, what could one say to someone who accepted that someone, Fred, is located in the USA and also accepts that Fred is located in Carson City but denies that Fred is located in the USA in virtue of being located in Carson City? If one accepts Jackson's thought that the one fact holds in virtue of the other, and indeed that it is part of our semantic competence in talk of the location of such mobile objects as people, then the sceptic here is revealing some kind of misunderstanding of what is said, or at least of how things can come to be the case. Is there any way we can highlight what has gone wrong on the sceptic's part? As in the case of seeing, it is not appropriate to assume that one is located in one place in virtue of being located in another, and then determining that one of these facts must obtain in virtue of the other. For someone sceptical about the idea that one occupies some locations in virtue of occupying others may just deny that facts about an individual's location in one place need hold in virtue of the individual's location in any other place.

Here there do seem to be additional things for us to add to the story. There is not simply one way of occupying a region of space. In general, we have a conception of the ways in which objects such as tables or chairs, or human beings can occupy particular regions of space. So, for example, a human being will generally displace other solid objects from a region of space occupied by them. We can, thereby, make sense of the

Draft Chapter Three

minimum region of space which such an object occupies through its excluding from that region any solid entity entirely distinct from it. This information intersects with our understanding of topology and the ways in which sub-regions of a space can be entirely enclosed within that space; and our understanding of geography and politics which allows certain regions of land thereby to be included as parts of other regions.

In terms of these further claims, we can have some sense of truths which obtain independently of ascertaining the truth of Fred's being in the USA which seem to suffice, given our normal understanding, for Fred so being located once we grant that the region in which he completely excludes other physical bodies is in a certain space within Carson City. The sceptic's lack of competence would then seem to be revealed in an ability to make the move from this set of uncontested truths to the claim that Fred is located in the USA. Or, alternatively, given that the sceptic does not deny that Fred is in the USA, the lack of competence may be revealed in a failure to grasp how one thing can be so in virtue of another.

Now it may be that, particularly when we state the connections this loosely, we cannot entirely rule out the possibility of a kind of location sceptic for whom we cannot indicate some area of lack of understanding. But still the observation remains that we are not stuck right at the starting point in this debate when faced with someone who questions why we should suppose location in one place can hold in virtue of location in a sub-region of that place. However, in the case of seeing, Jackson's general approach would seem to deprive us of any such additional explanation of the disagreement, and hence room to posit such incompetence. For Jackson's general approach to the problem of perception is to take as foundational the notions of x seeing y and x seeing y in virtue of x seeing z . In his final chapter, Jackson argues that we can explain perceiving that p in terms of perceiving o and facts about the relation between one's perception of the object and how the world and one's perception varies. In his discussion of the role of sense-data in illusion, Jackson argues that we can analyse all talk of how things look to us in terms of the immediate perception of visual sense-data which belong to the objects seen and which have the properties those objects appear to have. So all of the other notions that we are inclined to use in describing perception and perceptual experience, Jackson takes to be definable in terms of his basic distinctions between the immediate and mediate perception of objects. He cannot then appeal to any of these notions in turn to explain why we

should accept the contrast. So it is unclear how Jackson can supplement the story in order to show the sceptic's resistance misplaced. Rather we have to see straight off that seeing is the kind of thing for which one sees one thing in virtue of seeing another.

This is not yet to criticise Jackson's initial proposal of how we are to understand the talk of immediate versus mediate seeing, but it is to demand supplementation of what he says, to try to find a broader range of facts in virtue of which people's intuitions in favour of supposing that one sees an object only through seeing its surface can be explained, and debate with a sceptic engaged in. It is at this point, I suggest, that we see that Jackson's approach is after all not independent of the kinds of concern with how things can appear to one, and questions about the nature of visual experience.

4. BEHIND THE SURFACES

Suppose we remove Jackson's self-denying ordinance and appeal to claims about how things look or appear or how we can perceive that things are the case. Do these give us the extra materials needed to explain why someone should think that we see an opaque physical through seeing its surface?

When one sees something, that thing looks some way to one. In the terms of the discussion of the last two chapters, that will be to claim that in seeing things, those things are among the presented elements or aspects of one's visual experience. So if one sees the surfaces of various opaque, physical objects, then the surfaces in question are among the presented elements of one's experience. So, if we can establish a claim about one's visual experience and how things look in relation to the objects of perception, then we may be able to explain the required contrast.

It would be a hopeless task to seek to define or explain what it is to see something in terms of how things look to one. To take a familiar problem: suppose one sees a continuous red wall. The wall itself may be composed of bricks, although the discontinuities between the bricks may not be visible. In this case how things look to one as one stares at the wall depends on how (parts) of each of the bricks are. Had the middle brick been green, for example, and still part of the wall, then the wall would not have been a uniform red expanse. Nonetheless, it is questionable whether one can be said to see any of the individual bricks. After all, none of the individual bricks is segmented out for you in the visual array as a possible object of visual attention. Now

take a case in which one suddenly sees through a slit a vivid flash of turquoise. Behind the slit someone has walked past wearing a turquoise scarf. So how that person was, in wearing such a scarf, and how that scarf was, being turquoise, were responsible for how things looked to one. Nonetheless, we can't simply determine from that whether one has seen the person, or indeed the scarf.¹² So there is no simple rule for moving from facts about how things look to a subject to claims about what things they see. But the point to be made here is not that the notions of things looking a certain way to *s* or *o* looks *F* to *s* are prior or more fundamental than *s* sees *o*. Rather the claim is that we need to explain the application of the concepts of these all together, and that an appeal to the first two will help explain the contrast intended between immediate and mediate perception.

Now consider the kind of case often appealed to in discussion of why one could only be seeing an object through seeing its surface. We compare two situations: in situation (1) you see the orange on the table in its full glory; in counterfactual situation (2) you are similarly placed and the surface of the orange directed towards you is as in situation (1), but the rest of the orange has been eaten away. For reasons to which we shall return, we should seek to compare two variations on seeing exactly the same objects and exactly the same scene. The first thought, then, is that however things look in situation (1), it is possible for them to look exactly the same way in situation (2). But in situation (2), the only things which one could be seeing are the surface of the orange and the various aspects of that surface, for all other elements of scene (1) are missing. So, it seems true to say of situation (2) that how things are visually experienced in that circumstance depends on just the things one sees in that situation and how they appear to be. But now, one might think, how one experiences things as being is the same in situation (1) as in situation (2), even if one sees more things in situation (1) than one does in situation (2). So if in (2) how things look is constituted by how what one sees in (2) looks to one to be in (2), then how things look in (1) would also seem to be constituted by how those same things look to one to be in (1), as they looked in (2).

12. There is, of course, not one definite answer. Whether one counts as having seen the scarf or the person is a context-sensitive matter. In the right context, it can make perfect sense to say: 'So it was you I saw walking past the window. I thought no one else in this town wore such loud colours'; but also to say, 'I didn't see anything at all, just a flash of turquoise. I couldn't tell what was happening.'

This seems to offer us a parallel to the case of exclusion of other objects from a spatial region. Our primitive idea of what it is for something to be seen, and for it to look a certain way, is for it to fix the way one then experiences, the phenomenal nature of one's experience. Since we do say of other things that we see them too – we are prepared to say this of the whole orange in situation (1), for example – we might surmise that, just as topological relations and political concerns can spread out the appropriate location of an object, so too some salient relations of belonging to, being a part of, or being a salient cause of, might play just such a role in the case of perception. There is, it must be said, a notable contrast here with the example of location in as much as the ways of specifying what belonging to should amount to between immediate and mediate objects of perception is not at all clear, as Moore was very sensitive to. Rather, the principal focus will be on the idea of what it takes for an object to be immediately visually perceived. That objects will be the immediate objects of perception where one has that very experience with its phenomenal nature only in virtue of being aware of these objects as such.

5. OBSERVATIONAL QUALITIES

This explanation of the contrast between immediate and mediate seeing echoes Christopher Peacocke's reconstruction of the theory/observation distinction. Peacocke sets out to explain why some concepts are observational, such as visually-applicable concept of being a cube, while other concepts are not observational even if they are applicable on the basis of perception. As one might think of a visually-grounded concept of being a tomato.

It is notable that Peacocke, unlike some theorists, allows that we can have a concept of tomato which can figure in a specification of how things look to us. When I go to the greengrocers it may be correct to say that it looks to me as if there is a pile of tomatoes in front of me. Nonetheless, Peacocke claims that our concept of a tomato, which can be applied on the basis of visual experience, is not as closely tied to how we experience things to be as a properly observational concept would have to be. He brings that out by use of a thought experiment. Tomatoes have a distinctive look, but the look that they have is not sufficient for something to be a tomato, it must be of the right botanical family to be a tomato. A kind of tomato synthesised in the laboratory and not

grown from tomatoes would not be a tomato, even if it possessed exactly the visual appearance of a tomato. There are a range of visual appearances which real and synthesised tomatoes share on the basis of which we judge that objects are tomatoes. In the case of the things that actually look that way to us, namely tomatoes, we come correctly to judge that they are tomatoes. Were we to be faced with synthetic tomatoes, they would look to us to be tomatoes, and to that extent appearances would be misleading. But we can conceive of people who form and apply a concept on the same range of visual appearances but which concept is not a concept for the kind tomato, but rather for things with that kind of look. Their concept is roughly that of ‘tomato-looking thing’. This concept applies correctly to the case of the synthesised tomato. So, Peacocke concludes, there is a gap between our experientially grounded application of concepts and concepts needed to fix the way things look to us, since distinct concepts could be grounded in the same way of looking.

Peacocke extracts from this what he calls ‘the Inseparability Criterion’:

It characterizes experience as in a certain way essential to possession of a concept, and possession of the concept as essential to the capacity to have the experience.¹³

He argues that concepts such as concept of being a square passes this Criterion and hence is observational. There is no look which square things have, but which non-squares could also have had, on the basis of which we judge that things are square. In explaining why we should think of such concepts as being observational in this sense, Peacocke introduces the conditions under which the representational content of an experience should be correct:

The suggestion is, then, that the visual concept of a square is a concept of a property whose presence in an object can in normal circumstances be established in precisely that way, of looking from different angles and seeing the object as square. If circumstances are known to be normal, experience from different angles as of an object as square provide canonical but nonconclusive evidence that it *is* square.¹⁴

Peacocke’s further explanation of this then brings it into contact with our current concerns:

13. (Peacocke 1983), pp. 94-5.

14. (Peacocke 1983), p.100. Note that in a later work, (Peacocke 1986), Ch.2, Peacocke refines this approach to exclude talk of normal circumstances and instead a more circumscribed notion in addition of those in which one is a ‘minimally functioning perceiver’. For the reasons for this restriction and the account of it see pp.18-21.

...perception and observational concepts have to be characterized simultaneously, and one requires for perception matching only in respect of observational contents. Circularity could then be avoided by this further constraint: that when a perceived object is experienced as falling under a nonobservational concept, there must be some level of representational content at which that experience could be perceptual even though the object does not fall under that nonobservational concept. This classifies 'streak produced by the creation of a particle-pair' as nonobservational. It classifies ordinary shape concepts of physical objects as observational. For if components of an experience's representational content containing them are false, there is no more primitive level of representational content which could be true.¹⁵

Now Peacocke's hierarchy of the representational contents of experience here matches the hierarchy we have proposed for the immediate/mediate distinction as applied to objects of perception; and the two sets of distinctions are complementary. In the case where all that remains are the hollowed shells of surface, one's visual experience will be illusory with respect to the scene before one. It may well look as if there are tables present with tomatoes on top of them, but in fact no such objects are there. The objects are lacking and the things which are present do not fall under these concepts. On the other hand, one's experience is veridical with respect to the objects which one is seeing. One sees the surfaces and they do have the properties of shape and colour that our observational concepts of these things would ascribe to them. The observational concepts characterise the minimal or immediate objects of perception to the extent that the experience would have to be entirely veridical not to count as some form of illusion.

6. EXTENDING THE CHAIN

In turn, I want to suggest that we can understand a potential hierarchy of mediated cases through considering a suitable range of potential cases of viewing the scene in question. That we can do this, in part explains how philosophers have been happy to grant the idea that there is an ordering of immediate to mediated, to mediatedly mediated objects of perception while the relevant relations between different orders of object of perception remain a matter of controversy. For whatever the exact relation must hold between, say a surface, or a piece of clothing, and an object which is thereby

15. (Peacocke 1983), pp.101-2.

seen in virtue of it, we can determine the relevant dependencies by varying the cases in appropriate ways.

So, for example, consider a case in which you see the curtain move in such a way as to suggest the presence of a burglar. In a case in which there really is someone behind the curtain moving in that way, we can say that you see them. But this may also be a case in which one would be happy to claim that one only saw the individual indirectly in virtue of seeing the curtain: the curtain mediates one's perception of the intruder. Now, if the story we have been telling is the correct one about the intuitions for mediated perception, we can justify this claim by focusing on the case in which the curtain moves in just the same way, but there is no intruder just a gust of wind. One would still be seeing the curtain and things would look the same way, but there would be no intruder to see. So, one might claim it is because of the way that the curtain looks that one can thereby come to see the intruder.

In turn, we can extend the comparison class to include those situations in which the curtain too has been removed from the scene, leaving only its surface. Here too we can repeat the reasoning. In the situation in which one sees only the surface, things still look the same way. So in the original situation it is only because of the way the surface of the curtain looks that one thereby sees the curtain itself. Hence seeing the curtain's surface mediates one's seeing of the curtain and indeed the intruder, just as seeing the curtain mediates seeing the intruder.

Finally, we can make explicit the further assumptions that a sense-datum theorist would need to endorse in order to make the claim that mere mental entities, sense-data, should count as the immediate objects of vision. First, we broaden the range of cases we are to consider. So far, following Peacocke's assumptions, none of the cases that we have looked at need count as examples where the circumstances for minimally functioning visual perception will fail to have been met. However, the sense-datum theorist, for reasons we broached in chapter three, will equally be concerned with cases in which the public objects of perception are absent but in which, according to the sense-datum theorist, there will nonetheless be the same range of objects available for one to be viewing and which objects will look the way that they do even when the physical objects are present, thereby fixing entirely the ways in which things can look to one.

Once we have extended our comparisons out as far as the range of cases the sense-

datum theorist wishes to consider, then we have additional reason to restrict the range of observational qualities. For the relevant qualities will have to be those that sense-data can exemplify even when there is nothing else for one to be perceiving apart from the sense-data and the ways that they are. But in other ways, the model will remain the same: sense-data will be the immediate objects of visual awareness because it is through awareness of them and how they are presented as being that the way things look to the subject as such is determined.

Hence, we can see how a sense-datum theorist's position expressed in terms of immediate and mediate objects of perception can be mapped into the terms in which we have been discussing things up until this point. Moreover, we can see how Jackson makes an additional move beyond those common in earlier sense-datum theorists, which is inessential to the contrast he wishes to draw. Jackson is concerned to analyse what it is for something to look a certain way in terms of what it is for a sense-datum to be a certain way. Within the terms we have been using here, that is to suggest that how things look is exhausted just by the properties which sense-data have in virtue of being presented as they are – i.e. that the phenomenal character of experience is entirely subjective.

Note that this is not required of the sense-datum theorist who wishes to claim that the external objects of perception are mediately perceived. For such a theorist could accept that there are aspects of how things are experienced as being by us which are not exemplified by the sense-data themselves but whose presence is determined, for this given perceiver, by the presence of the given sense-data in question. Such a sense-datum theorist would agree with Peacocke that the properties apparent experientially to a subject need not be restricted to the observational, and, with a qualification we will come to below, they could accept that there are ways of objects being seemingly present in experience other than through actually being perceived.

7. RESISTING THE DISTINCTION

The purpose of discussion to this point has been on the whole irenic: to demonstrate how familiar claims and intuitions about direct versus indirect objects of perception can be interpreted within the context of focusing on perceptual experience and ways one's experience can be. But in this final section I turn to reasons why one might wish

to avoid pressing matters in terms of the contrast between direct and indirect (or immediate and mediate) while still raising the more fundamental questions about the nature of perception with which are here concerned.

The first concerns here are rather obvious and relatively superficial. On the account offered of the issues constructed here, it is not required that a subjectivist claim that one literally see the presented elements which correspond to subjective phenomenal properties of experience. According to this view, one is aware of such presented elements and able to attend to them and reflect on what it is like so to experience. Consistent with that, one might insist that this is still not to perceive such things. One might claim that one can only perceive that which is independent of one, something that one can observe from different perspectives, or something which can interact with one's sensory capacities to bring one to have knowledge of it. Hence someone moved by such considerations may claim that there are things which are aspects of our experience without thereby supposing them to be things perceived by us.¹⁶

On one way of interpreting this, the theorist might well recognise that they have here a disagreement with the naïve realist. The naïve realist supposes that there is a close connection between what we perceive and how we experience things: the presented elements of our experience are among the objects of perception, so an account of experiential presence will draw on general conditions for perceiving an object. For this theorist, such a view, if intelligible is nonetheless mistaken. When we reflect on what it takes to have the experience we do, we see that we could be aware of nothing which was genuinely independent of the mind in having perceptual experience and hence that such experience cannot be the presentation of what we perceive. Such a theorist would therefore agree wholeheartedly with various criticisms of the sense-datum tradition about the striking contrast between what perception of the physical world involves and what awareness of mind-dependent entities would have to involve. They would agree with them and not find any challenge in the complaints.

Indeed, on another way of interpreting the position here, the approach might even be liable to promote itself as a form of direct realism about perception. If we do not see such entities then they cannot be the immediate objects of sense, and hence they

16. Cf. here Baldwin, (Baldwin 1990), pp.241-2 who also questions whether a sense-datum theorist need say that sense-data are perceived in the same sense as physical objects.

cannot mediate our perception of objects in the world around us. Relying on our the conception of the direct/indirect distinction as articulated here, such a theorist might proudly claim that they endorse a form of direct realism about perception since they can affirm that we do directly perceive objects in the world around us.

Of course, at this point I think it is easy to see that such a view would have missed part of the point of claiming that one is a direct realist. For, in as much as Transparency is a claim that we are commonly committed to in our conception of what it is for us to perceive the world, then this view will come into conflict with that view no less than do the sense-datum theorists who wish to affirm that the immediate objects of perception are non-physical sense-data. For such a theorist may both deny that we see or otherwise perceive the presented elements of a purely subjective experience, while still denying that anything mind-independent is present to the mind in having experience. The theorist may just insist that a sharp distinction needs to be drawn between the objects of perception and attention to them, and the aspects of experience open to reflection.¹⁷ In as much as Transparency is the expression of a common sense thought, this direct realism clashes with the views of the vulgar.

This suggests that putting the matter of debate in terms of questions about the direct or indirect objects of perception, or the immediate and mediate ones, is to miss what the underlying issues really are. And hence, even if one is inclined to state a position first in these terms, then we need to look to the further commitments of the theorist in order to determine the extent that it does provide for an appropriate account of perception.

The second concern is more radical and raises concerns which a wider bearing than just on framing our discussion in terms of the objects of perception. For the intuition that the objects of perception can be divided among the immediate and the mediated, if it is spelled out as we have suggested requires that there is at least a partial ordering of the objects of perception down to the set of those which fix the ways things look to us. So we do need to pick out a range of objects among those we see such that we can hold them fixed as the ones which fix how things look across the various cases that we are comparing. While it is tempting to think in these terms, it is not quite clear what would

17. Such a view would echo the kind of adverbialism attacked in the second chapter, although unlike that view it recognises the distinction between presented elements and phenomenal properties.

justify this assumption.

First, note that the conclusion to be drawn concerns some of the very objects which one currently perceives. So if the comparison cases are to show of these very objects that they play the relevant role in fixing appearances, then in those comparison cases the same objects (i.e. the immediately perceived ones) must be present and the way in which things look to the subject must also be the same – otherwise one has no illustration that the way that *these* objects now appear fix all appearances.

To this extent there is a narrower test to be employed to determine the comparisons for the immediate objects of perception than to determine the allegedly observable properties of things. For in relation to the observable properties, we consider distinct objects which nonetheless cannot be told apart. At least when we are considering the range of cases that interest Peacocke (i.e. before we make the assumption with the sense-datum theorist that various cases of illusion and hallucination should also properly count as immediately perceiving some states of affairs for how it is), scenes involving genuine tomatoes and those involving Kraft-produced fakes could not be told apart through vision. So we are inclined to talk of them involving something in common, the same look or appearance that the visually indiscriminable samples have in common. That would seem to guarantee that for any of these comparison cases there is going to be the same observable property, such and such visible appearance, which can be assumed to be the same across samples, without having to make any assumption about whether the same object is there.

That matters are more complicated with objects of perception, though, is already evident in our simple example of the burglar and the curtain. For in the initial case, we are to suppose that we see the burglar when he moves behind the curtain. And indeed, in this situation we can well imagine that one could pick out the burglar, and direct thoughts and other things at him. ‘That’s an intruder! He appears to have the bulk of Winston Churchill. Where’s the ashtray to lob at him?’ and so on. Initially, then, we might surmise not only that the burglar is perceived, but also that the burglar is an element of the perceived scene which figures in how things appear to one. In the terms we introduced in the last two chapters, the burglar, no less than the curtain, is among the presented elements of this given experience.

When we shift to the comparison cases, however, it is part of our hypothesis that the burglar is absent, but nonetheless that things look the same to the subject. There is no

Uncovering Appearances

difficulty in conceiving how that should be so – clearly we can misperceive what is there. However there are two different ways we could try to spell out how looking the same could be determined. On one way of conceiving it, in both circumstances the curtain is perceived and has the same appearance: it appears as if there is something, rather Winston-Churchill-like, behind it. Thinking in this way gives us the very same object in the two cases, and also a common look. But it does so through denying what so far has not been a controversial supposition, that the burglar was an element of the presented scene in the first situation. For if how things are presented to the subject is entirely exhausted by the curtain and how it looks, then the burglar seems to be playing no role within the presented aspects of the experience even when he is actually present in the scene which is perceived. This is a conclusion to be established and not merely assumed in the story.

On the other way of construing matters, once we posit the burglar in the presented scene in the first situation, then we have to suppose there is a corresponding aspect to the phenomenal character of the experience in the comparison cases. So we should say of the case where the curtain moves, but no one is behind it, that here there is a seeming burglar presented. It is appropriate to express the character of the experience by talking of that burglar, gesturing behind the arras, even though there is nothing there to be picked out. But this seems to be treating the comparison cases as if they were examples of hallucination: that seemingly there is an object present and experienced where none is to be perceived. And that really is not our inclination in this case, for we are inclined to capture how things appear in the comparison cases just by describing the ways that the objects actually present there do look to us. So now, once we admit that the objects of perception seem to make up part of the perceived scene, then we seem to have to admit that there is a difference in how things look between the initial case and the comparison cases, namely that in the first but not the others, one has the experiential presence of the burglar.

That is to say, we seem to be faced with three options here. First, we insist that the burglar is not among the presented elements on the first experience, and then we do not illustrate the claim that it is mediately perceived through the curtain, but rather build that assumption into our description of the situation. Or, second, we grant that possibly the burglar is present in the experience, but then we must suppose that there is some echo of this in the comparison examples, and so treat them as if there are cases of

hallucinating a burglar, and not merely perceiving other things which look as if there is an extra element to the scene. Or, third, we grant that, after all, there is a way that things look in the first case which is not the same in the comparison cases, and hence strictly speaking, there is no set of immediate objects of perception which fix exactly how things look to one.

What is the force of this problem? Certainly the first option would not show that there was any inconsistency in the position of someone who held to the idea that there are immediate objects of perception – it would simply deprive them of any resources to show that their opponent is missing something obvious about our experiences. For to establish the case, they would seem to have to deny that there is an evident aspect of our experience (the presence of the burglar in the first situation), and it just doesn't seem obvious that they are either right or wrong about this. Correlatively, the second option is not obviously so bad either – for the sense in which the comparison cases would have to be treated as like hallucinations is perhaps no different from the sense in which we have to treat visual illusions with virtual surfaces in them, such as the Kanisza illusions of modal completion, or the Ruben vase, as involving the seeming presence of an object where in fact there is none. At best, the second option puts pressure on placing too much weight on the contrast between illusion and hallucination, or at least as glossing that contrast in terms of whether there is an actual object of awareness or not. So even if the third option is inconsistent with the commitments of the approach, it can be avoided.

However, the problem also indicates, I suggest, something more questionable about the approach. For, of course, it is both true that we are inclined to describe the comparison cases and the initial case as one in which things look just the same, and it is at least true that in the comparison cases that we are not inclined to describe more than the curtain (or the curtain's surface) as looking a certain way, once we know that that is all that is present. So, if those two commitments together require of us that we describe the initial situation in the same manner, then we should indeed omit all mention of the burglar in a description of how things were strictly speaking presented initially. But one may as easily suppose that what this shows is that there is, in fact, no one strict way in which one has to describe the initial scene as being presented: considered in one way, it is perfectly legitimate to describe it as one in which the burglar is experientially present, and hence is different from how we are inclined to describe the second case;

considered in another way, when we fix on what we want to say of the second case, we omit mention of the burglar as being present in this first case. Both are legitimate characterisations of the experience (though inconsistent with each other). On one characterisation, the burglar is among the things experienced, and so among the things seen; on the other characterisation, only the curtain and what it intimates need make an appearance, and so the burglar is not seen. Rather than having a contrast fixed between the immediate and mediate objects of perception, we might rather have a contextual shift between what counts as what is seen and what does not.

Just such an interpretation of the debate is suggested by Thompson Clarke's suggestive and elusive discussion of these matters. In 'Seeing Surfaces and Physical Objects', Clarke claims that recognising the possibility of the situation in which one just sees a part of the object does not show that in other cases one is seeing only seeing those parts, or indeed that one is seeing those parts at all. As Clarke summarises his position:

The 'HM fact' [the fact that normally we can see no more of a physical object than part of its surface] is not a fact. 'Noting' this 'fact' alters the original situation... producing one in which it *is* true that all that can be seen of the physical object is a portion of its surface.¹⁸

Clarke agrees with the kind of reasoning rehearsed above that when we reflect on a situation of looking at an object and ask ourselves the question 'How much of it can I see?', we are compelled to come to the answer that we only see its surface. But Clarke denies that this shows that we only ever see the surfaces of objects. Rather, he claims that this indicates something about the meaning of 'see' and the ways in which its use is highly context sensitive.

Clarke introduces the notion of a 'unit concept', which he defines by reference to the phrase 'nibbled at' so:

(a) The expression 'nibbled at' is true of *A* only when *A* is a unit. But it is an essential part of *A*'s being a unit that no amounts of *A* are fixed as relevant units. Hence when 'nibbled at' is true of *A* there is no such thing as *an amount* of *A* nibbled at.

There is *an amount* of *A* nibbled at only when sub-portions of *A* are units. What amount has been nibbled at depends not only on physical conditions but also on which sub-portions are units. Thus in circumstances in which there is such a thing as an amount of

18. (Clarke 1965), p.112.

A nibbled at, *A* is not a unit but a compound of units, and hence ‘nibbled at’ is neither true nor false of *A* itself.¹⁹

Clarke’s example is a piece of cheese. With the whole piece as a unit, it is proper to answer the question that the piece has been nibbled (as opposed to not having been nibbled at all). But when we consider the piece sub-divided into parts, such that one can ask how much of the cheese, the front half or three quarters has been nibbled, we seem compelled to say that only the front half has been nibbled and not to talk of the whole cheese at all.

Now one can question whether Clarke describes the semantic or pragmatic mechanisms of this kind of case exactly right, but there does seem to be something plausible about the thought that it is true in the one context to say of the cheese that it has been nibbled, even though in the other context where we are comparing the cheese as a whole to parts of it, we are inclined to insist that only one half of the cheese has been nibbled, and so on. So the shift in our interests and hence in what we count as the relevantly the same or different to the current case will shift what we count as having to be the case for something to have been nibbled.

In turn, Clarke claims that ‘sees’ is a unit concept. The context of enquiry fixes the relevant units with reference to which we are asking whether they are seen. If we treat the object as a unit, then it is seen, but in that context it is not true that we see its surface. On the other hand, when reflection on examples like those above leads us to ask whether some amount of the object is seen, then the relevant units become parts of the object like its surface. In this case it becomes true to say that we see the surface of the object, but no longer true to say that we see the object.

Again, one can ask whether Clarke is exactly right about the semantics and pragmatics here. Many may balk at his implicit suggestion that either one sees the parts of an entity or one sees the entity as such but never both. For example, one might think that one can see both a tree itself and two (but not the third) of its branches when one looks out a window; or that one might see a football team and see all of its members (and contrast that with seeing a football team and most of its members). It might also be distracting to consider Clarke’s emphasis on whether one does or does not see the object (but only its surface), since those who claim that objects are seen

19. (Clarke 1965), pp.109-110.

Uncovering Appearances

only mediately through perceiving their surfaces do not deny that one sees those objects.

But Clarke's underlying point is independent of this. For the cases he is focusing on are ones where, apparently, the surfaces of objects (or other parts) are potential competitors for the object of perception (or, given our current concerns, the presented element of the experience) with the object as such. Here the thought is just that one can generate a context in which it is true that one merely counts as seeing the surface of the object. In this context one does not count as seeing the object itself. In as much as one treats this as a case of merely seeing the surface, then what is seen is just the same as a case in which the object is gone, and only a surface remains – for in both the surface is all that is seen. But, shifting context, one counts as seeing the object, not just the surface – and relative to this context, the comparison case involves a perceptual difference, one sees something other than one does in the actual circumstances. Since the same circumstances are available for description now as seeing the object and now as merely seeing the surface of the object, there is no one way which these circumstances must be.

That this thought is independent of the claim about unit concepts and whether one ever perceives the surface of an object is even clearer when we apply the thought to the case of discovering the burglar. There is no question but that across the two initial comparisons one counts as seeing the curtain. What is variable is whether one should count as seeing the burglar. Focusing on the first case with the possible absence of the burglar, as indicated in the second case, in mind one might construe this as a case of just not being presented with the burglar. Rather, the appropriate description of this case is one in which the curtain looks as if there is someone behind it, but not that the person behind the curtain looks some way to one. Clarke's point would be that, recognising this fact about the perceptual situation is quite consistent with the fact that there is an equally appropriate description of this case in terms of seeing the person swaying behind the curtain.

The additional hypothesis, implicit in Clarke's way of framing the problem, is this. Where philosophers are tempted to appeal to the contrast between the immediate, or direct, and mediate, or indirect, objects of perception they are so induced by being sensitive to this context-sensitivity but mistaking what its import is. In the case in which we construe the first circumstance as one in which one sees the curtain and it

looks as if someone is behind it, then one does not so described see the burglar. It is not that one thereby sees the burglar, but only indirectly, but rather that one just doesn't see the burglar; if one knows of his presence it is through drawing a conclusion from the evidence the curtain and its movement offer. On the other hand, in the case where we construe this circumstance as one in which the burglar is on view – one manages to single him out and in thought in least make a suitable response – then in that case one does see the burglar, but it is simply the case that one sees him, there is no need for any restriction to talk of mediated rather than immediate perception.

Clarke would establish this strong conclusion through insisting that in some cases it is just not true of us that we perceive the surfaces of objects. One may be inclined to question that assertion. Certainly in the case of the burglar and the curtain, it seems implausible to deny that one does see the curtain even in the case in which one sees the burglar. So for examples such as this, it would be open for a defender of the direct/indirect distinction to claim that in contexts in which we count the burglar as being seen, we still count him as only indirectly seen. Nothing we have said shows the position to be inconsistent. Rather, we have already seen, that the proponent of the view cannot illustrate the truth of the proposition: there is no way of making good the intuition that it is only because of seeing the curtain and how it looks that one thereby sees the burglar.

In Clarke's favour is the observation we noted at the outset, that what the philosophical discussion of direct/indirect takes over from more common uses of the contrast is an ambivalence about the status of cases which are to be labelled only indirectly *F* or φ -ing. As we saw, Moore is inclined to treat the inkstand as not quite having the status of a proper given element in visual perception in the way the sense-datum which belongs to it does. Such ambivalence is better captured in recognizing the context-sensitivity of our description of something as being part of the perceived scene than it is in having to insist that there is a determinate order in which things are given in experience.

Either way, our final moral is just to note that the questions that we have so far raised about the nature of perceptual experience and the claims of naïve realism are independent of the question whether we suppose that there are immediate objects of perception with observable qualities. The more fundamental problems of perception, the ones posed in worrying about hallucination and what it takes to experience one

Uncovering Appearances

way rather than another are not dissolved simply by recognizing the context-sensitivity of what counts as being part of the perceived scene. It is true that that will vary answers to the question, what phenomenal properties does this given experience exemplify. But it settles neither positively nor negatively our fundamental puzzle about whether there can be naïve phenomenal properties, and whether thereby perceptual experience can be as we are inclined to suppose it to be.