15
Responses to Mendelovici, Pautz, and Byrne

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I am grateful to my commentators for their thoughtful discussions of my book. I have learned much from reading them and am pleased to have the opportunity to respond.

1. Mendelovici

It will be convenient to discuss Angela Mendelovici's comments first. Mendelovici agrees with much of the story I tell. Her only complaint is that I do not develop it far enough. As she sees it, I am much closer to her own positive views than I think. If only I would follow my argument a bit further, she urges, I would be able to join her in endorsing them.

I would be very happy to accept this invitation, if only I could understand it better. I get the general idea of what Mendelovici is after. But when I try to make it precise I am afraid it seems to dissolve away.

Let me begin with our points of agreement. Mendelovici shares my view that sensory experience is purely qualitative. Conscious sensory properties, such as having a visual experience "as of" a yellow ball, are intrinsic to subjects, and have no necessary connections to any objects or properties in the world beyond the mind ("wordly" objects and properties henceforth). In particular, sensory experiences do not, in virtue of their nature, determine truth conditions involving such worldly items. To the extent that such external truth conditions can be associated with types of experience, this is only due to the way experiences are contingently associated with conditions in the environments of specific subjects.

This does not mean, Mendelovici and I further agree, that sensory experience is not richly structured internally. The realm of sensory experience

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displays a range of "quasi-objects" and "quasi-properties", elements of experiences that display a continuity over time as clusters of sensory features. Invoking a useful analogy—though one that needs to be treated with care—Mendelovici likens sensory experience to an internal movie playing in our heads. But the quasi-objects and quasi-properties in the movie have no constitutive connection with the world beyond.

Still, while Mendelovici agrees with me about all this, she urges that there is a further species of representation that I ignore, and that this underpins a different sense of truth, one which owes nothing to contingent associations with environmental conditions. It is this suggestion that I find difficult to make good sense of.

Mendelovici first introduces her alternative idea by quoting Brentano:

> Every mental phenomenon is characterized by what the Scholastics of the Middle Ages called the intentional (or mental) inexistence of an object, and what we might call, though not wholly unambiguously, reference to a content, direction toward an object (which is not to be understood here as meaning a thing), or immanent objectivity.

I must say I do not find this idea of "intentional inexistence of an object" helpful. What object? If it is just what I call a "quasi-object", then that is straightforward enough. It's an element of experience, the element that (contingently) represents, let us say, an external yellow ball. But why does it have "inexistence"? It's perfect real. There's no question of its not existing. Of course there is also the further possibility of an external yellow ball—and relative to the experience such a worldly ball might or might not exist. But this possible real ball is not at all the same thing as the mental quasi-ball. There should be no question of identifying them. In the book I spend some time on this, and point out that it must be a confusion to identify the quasi-ball, which definitely exists in the experience, with some possible real ball whose existence isn't guaranteed by the experience. And on this point too I take it that Mendelovici agrees. Quasi-objects have no constitutive connection with anything beyond the mind. So all we are left with are the internal mental items with their phenomenological structure. If we want to refer to this structure as "intentionality", then I am prepared to let the terminology pass. But we have so far been given nothing that looks representational, nothing that involves mental items laying claim to something beyond themselves.

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Mendelovici then introduces the idea of "intentional contents", items that are thought, or perceptually experienced, such as that *2 + 2 = 4* or the apparent *presence of a yellow ball*. Mendelovici is prepared to take the ontology of such "contents" at face value, but from my perspective an ambiguity threatens. In chapter 4 of the book, I distinguish two sorts of properties involved in the possession of mental states: *vehicle* properties and *content* properties. When I have a visual experience as of a yellow ball, say, I instantiate both properties. In the first instance, I house a certain vehicle of representation, an intrinsic state that in itself is representationally dumb. But along with that, in virtue of that state's (contingent) representational power, I also instantiate the property of representing the presence of a yellow ball.

As far as I can see, Mendelovici's initial introduction of "intentional contents" only gives us vehicle properties. She points us to the intrinsic items we think and experience *with*, to our internal vehicles of representation. But nothing so far has been said to explain why these items should be other than representationally dumb. They have a phenomenology, sure, purely in virtue of their nature as vehicles. But the challenge we are facing is to explain why such phenomenological entities should by their nature lay claim to matters beyond themselves, and this challenge still seems to remain unanswered.

Perhaps Mendelovici is still agreeing with me. Towards the end of her comments she says: "I don't think it has been adequately appreciated . . . [how we] are trapped in a phenomenally-constituted quasi-world, wanting to make cognitive contact with the noumenal world beyond, but unable to claw our way out of our phenomenal prison."

Even so, Mendelovici clearly has faith that it is *somehow* possible for intentional contents to point beyond themselves. She gives the example of a brain in a vat hooked up to computer. As far as contingent representational contents go, she observes, the thoughts of this being will generally be true. When it visually experiences a yellow ball, the computer's registers will generally be in their "yellow ball" state. When it thinks *I am not a brain in a vat*, it will again be right, given that that the computer's registers won't "locate it in" any computer "vat". But even so, insists Mendelovici, this brain in the vat is clearly mistaken about something. As she puts it, the real world does not *conform* to its phenomenological understanding of its situation. So we need some more basic notion of representation, in terms of phenomenal intentionality, and not just contingent environmental truth conditions, in order to accommodate the poor envatted brain's misapprehension.

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I share the intuition, but I doubt Mendelovici is pointing to the right kind of explanation. I just don't see how this basic idea of "conformity" to the phenomenology can be made good. I can understand representation in terms of contingent environmental truth conditions, but I can't make any good sense of Mendelovici's more basic phenomenological representation.

The most immediate way of understanding "conformity" would be in terms of some primitive notion of *resemblance*. But I presume that Mendelovici would not want to go this way. She distinguishes clearly between the phenomenal world of experience and the noumenal world beyond. I would have thought there is no question of items from the noumenal world primitively resembling elements of the noumenal world. (It would be different if we embraced an idealist metaphysics, and arguably this has been one of the main motivations for idealism. But I take it that this is not what Mendelovici has in mind.)

Towards the end of her comments, Mendelovici suggests a different line. Perhaps we can directly refer to our own experiences, and somehow parlay this into a specification of worldly conditions that would render our experiences true. Presumably the idea would be that our experiences answer to those powers in the world that typically cause *these* experiences in us. I must say I don't find this programme particularly attractive. Note that it would require a *dispositional* account of all worldly referents. Mendelovici wouldn't want us to end up referring to whichever items in our environment (contingently) cause our experiences, because then the referents would once more depend on environments and not just our intrinsic phenomenology. So we would need to make all worldly referents response-dependent, dispositional properties to produce experiential results in us. As I observe at the end of chapter 2, while this isn't a crazy account of colours and other secondary qualities, it seems a very odd view of primary qualities.

In any case, it's not clear that this line will fit Mendelovici's bill. Go back to the brain in the vat that she used to motivate the idea that we need some other notion of representation than that deriving from environmental correlations. Her thought was that the world did not conform to the envatted brain's phenomenological picture, and that we need a notion of basic representation that will account for this. But the response-dependent option just broached is not going to deliver this. If the brain in the vat's experience as of a yellow ball answers to the presence of *a power that typically produces these experiences*, then the experience will come out veridical (since the computer does embody just such a power)—which is not the answer that Mendelovici wants.

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The hankering for a primitive mode of phenomenological representation seems to have got us nowhere. I say that we should recognize that naturalist representation is the only kind of representation there is. (And if we are still worried about the intuition that the brain in the vat is mistaken, the literature on naturalist representation offers various ways of accommodating it.)

2. Pautz

I turn now to Adam Pautz's comments. Central to these is what he calls the *spatial claim*. He imagines a visual experience of a round orange moving to the right, and urges that spatial categories will have to play some role in any metaphysical analysis ("real definition") of this experience.

> *Spatial claim.* Spatial terms such as *round* and *moving to the right* will show up in a correct definition of what it is to have the orange-experience. That is, there is a correct identification of the following form: for person *x* to have the orange-experience is for *x* to . . . *round* . . . *moving to the right*.

By way of analogy, he gives the example of the Japanese flag. As he observes, any satisfactory account of the nature of the Japanese flag will need to specify that it contains a *round* circle on a white background.

As Pautz observes, I do not accept the spatial claim for visual experiences of oranges and other similar examples. I deny that the elements of experience themselves instantiate the spatial properties and relations in question. Pautz notes that, as a physicalist, I am likely to identify elements of experience with neural activations in the brain, which will themselves have spatial properties. But of course, he further observes, while these neural processes might have spatial properties, they won't have the right ones. The neural processes that constitute my seeing something round are not themselves round. (For what it is worth, I do not commit myself to physicalism in the book. But that does not matter here. In my view, even if sensory experiences were made of some distinctive mind-stuff, they still wouldn't involve the relevant spatial properties and relations.)

How bad is it to deny the spatial claim? That certainly runs counter to initial common sense. To switch examples slightly, suppose I see a round orange to the left of a white box. Now consider the elements of my experience corresponding respectively to the orange and the box. It will strike most people as pretty obvious that the former element of experience is itself

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to the left of the latter. Or suppose I see the orange above the box. Again it seems clear that the orange element of my experience of the orange is itself above the white-box element.

However, attributing spatial properties to elements of experience is by no means as straightforward as it seems. After all, our visual experience also involves a dimension of depth, along with the left-right and up-down dimensions. Should we then think that depth relations also apply to elements of experience? Suppose I now see the box to be some distance further away from me than the orange. Does this mean that the box element of my experience is itself further away from me than the orange element? I take it that this does not strike us as nearly so obvious.

Similar points arise in connection with the way vision represents absolute size and shape and the associated phenomena of size and shape constancy. Consider the familiar "moon illusion" which makes the moon look much bigger when viewed near the horizon than when directly overhead. One might initially think that this results from the element of visual experience that corresponds to the moon itself being bigger when the moon is viewed near the horizon. But not too fast. A coin that exactly occludes the overhead moon when held at arm's length will do the same for the horizon moon, even though the coin itself seems the same size in both cases. No easy equation of apparent size with experiential size can accommodate this. (Cases involving shape perception can be used to make similar points.)

Examples like these put pressure on the idea that the elements of visual experience themselves have spatial properties. As it happens, I would not expect Pautz to object to my line of argument so far. This is because his *Spatial Claim* is not committed to the thesis that spatial properties and relations like *round* and *left of* (and *further away* and *bigger than*) are themselves *instantiated* in visual experience. This thesis is upheld, it is true, by naïve realist and sense datum accounts of experience. But Pautz intends his *Spatial Claim* to cover the idea that experiences essentially involve spatial properties and relations, not by instantiating them, but by *representing* them.

What is more, Pautz's representationalism is significantly less ontologically committed to spatial elements in experience than is mainstream representationalism. The mainstream, but not Pautz, holds that worldly properties, including spatial ones, are in some sense literally "present" in experiences, even when nothing actually bears them. Such versions of representationalism typically appeal to the "transparency" of experience, pointing to the way that, even in illusions and hallucinations, introspection apparently reveals no properties in experience other than normal worldly colours, shapes, textures, and so on.

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It is arguable that such transparency-based versions of representationalism will also have difficulty accommodating some of the spatial aspects of experience. Is it plausible that such spatial relations as *further away* or *bigger than* are literally present in our visual experiences, even as possibly uninstantiated relations, given the oddities I pointed to above? It is not obvious to me how transparency-inspired representationalists can happily explain these.

Still, I shall not press this point here, given that Pautz takes care to distance his own representationalism from the idea that uninstantiated worldly properties can literally be present in experience. As we shall see, he opts for a primitivist version of experiential representationalism which does not explain representation as deriving from the presence of represented properties in experience—and indeed does not explain experiential representation at all.

So the ellipses in Pautz's *Spatial Claim* are doing a lot of work. His insistence that an analysis of his orange experience must include "*…round… moving to the right*" does not require that these spatial properties are in any sense contained in the experience, but only that the experience primitively represents them.

Pautz says that my own view implies a "radical error theory" about visual phenomenal character, adding that "it flies in the face of what is obvious." Maybe so. I am happy to grant that it strikes many people as obvious that elements of experience *possess* spatial properties, or at least that spatial properties are *present in* experience, albeit as possibly uninstantiated universals. And my account certainly denies these claims. But so does Pautz's. By his own account, spatial properties are not possessed by or even present in experience. Rather they are related to experiences via some further unexplained primitively representational mode. It is not clear to me why Pautz's account isn't itself a radical error theory.

Still, I don't rest anything much on this. As I see things, divergences from common sense are in themselves neither here nor there. If philosophical analysis requires us to reject assumptions that have been baked into common sense, then so be it. What matters in a philosophical theory is whether it explains all empirical data and makes good metaphysical sense, not that it respects untested ideas that have been handed down to us by tradition.

In the book, I offer an argument against all representationalist theories of sensory experience, Pautz's primitivist version included. Pautz maintains that his version of representationalism evades this argument. But in my view he has to work hard to get round it, and I would say that he manages to

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maintain metaphysical coherence in response to my argument only by abandoning all explanatory ambitions.

The argument is simple enough. As I put it in the book, it goes:

1. Instantiations of conscious sensory properties constitute concrete facts with causes and effects.
2. Instantiations of representational properties constitute abstract facts that cannot feature as causes and effects.
3. Conscious sensory properties are not representational properties.

Pautz has two objections to premise 2. He denies that representational properties are abstract, and adds that, even if they were, that wouldn't stop them featuring in causes and effects.

It will be convenient to take the second point first. Pautz here appeals to the rich tradition of recent work on supervenient causation. As he points out, it is widely agreed that mental properties can be causally efficacious even if they cannot be identified with physical brain properties, as long as they are supervenient on or metaphysically grounded in the physical realm. Moreover, he observes, many essentialist representational theories, including his own, will take mental representational properties to be so physically grounded. So he urges that there is no barrier to representational properties featuring as causes. He cites the availability of counterfactual or proportionality criteria that will secure such causal claims.

I do not think that this serves. I have no objection to the general idea of supervenient causation being vindicated by appeal to criteria of counterfactual dependence or proportionality. Still, as will be familiar from work connecting causation to such criteria, we need to be careful about what kinds of properties we apply the criteria to. If we allow properties that are metaphysically intertwined with one another, or otherwise metaphysically inappropriate, we will end up with causal nonsense.

I take the same view about applying counterfactual or proportionality criteria to abstract representational properties. The idea that some non-instantiation relation to an abstract entity might feature in a causal relationship should be off the agenda from the start. It's just not the kind of thing that enters into causal relationships.

Pautz asks about my basis for this claim. I certainly don't base it on *a priori* intuition. Rather I infer it from the fact that none of the other causes and effects uncovered by science feature non-instantiation relations to abstract entities. In particular, none of the mental properties upheld as efficacious in

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the debate about supervenient causation need to be viewed in this way. Nor do causes and effects in the precise physical sciences. It is a familiar point that, even though physical causes and effects are often picked out via their relations to abstract mathematical objects, we need to switch to non-abstract nominalist versions in order to find items capable of entering into causal relations. (I shall return to this point when discussing Alex Byrne's comments below.)

I turn now to Pautz's other objection to my argument. He is not ready to accept that representational properties involve non-instantiation relations to abstract entities, and says he would prefer a nominalist approach to representation. I am not sure I understand this. It is hard to see what it would be for something to *represent* anything, if it doesn't do so by determining a truth condition, or a proposition, or a property, or a value of some higher order variable, or some such. Pautz says that he is going to stipulate that *representing that something is round* does not involve any such entities, but I am not sure that he can—at least not without stipulating away representation itself. (After all, how do constructions like "that something is round" work? The compositional structure of representational attributions would seem to demand some account of what such phrases refer to.)

Having said this, I am old enough to remember Donald Davidson's heroic attempts to give an account of meaning that was free of any reference to propositions, or properties, or so on. This austerely nominalist project unsurprisingly foundered on a range of technical problems, but even if it hadn't, there are further reasons for thinking it would be no help in our current content. Suppose that Davidson has succeeded in devising some way of conveying the significance of sentences, or mental states, without referring to any abstract entities. He still faced the meta-semantic challenge of explaining what made it the case that those sentences, or mental states, bore the meanings they did. Davidson would have answered that those meanings were the ones that best allowed us to understand the utterances and behaviour of the subjects in question, or something along those lines. Perhaps some other meta-semantic account could serve the nominalist project better. But any such account will make the property of representing something to be thus-and-so a very messy property, even if it doesn't involve any relations to abstracta. And then I will argue, as before, that such messy properties just don't look like things with causes and effects, or at least not the causes and effects that we take conscious sensory states to have.

I suspect that Pautz would be unmoved by these objections to his nominalist evasion of my causal argument. I have been challenging him to explain

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what it is for one thing to represent another, and why such relationships should obtain. But Pautz's eventual position explicitly precludes any such explanations. At the end of his comments Pautz commits himself to a *primitivist* view of experiential representational relations. Certain conscious subjects stand in an irreducible non-physical experiential representational relationship to certain contents. Perhaps we can systematically specify which neural states ground these relationships, but beyond that no explanation of experiential representation is possible.

Pautz defends this position by appeal to brain-in-vat considerations. He takes it that a cosmic brain-in-vat would have the same experiences as its normal counterpart, and hence (via his spatial claim) would be related to properties like *round* and *moving to the right*. But at a physical level the brain-in-vat bears no identifiable relationship to those properties. So the experiential representational relationship must transcend anything physical. As it happens, certain neural states ground certain conscious feelings, and these conscious feelings by their nature represent the physical properties *round* and *moving to the right*, even though grounding neural states are quite unconnected with those properties.

I grant that this position is coherent. But at the same time it is explanatorily empty. Its experiential representation is a kind of magic, and it evades my causal argument only by refusing to explain the nature of this experiential representation. If this is where the spatial claim drives us, so much the worse for the claim. By rejecting it, I think I am able to develop a theory that delivers detailed explanations for everything that needs explaining. If the price I must pay is to reject some small part of common sense, that seems well worth it.

3. Byrne

Alex Byrne is also unpersuaded by my arguments. In particular, he is unpersuaded by my arguments (1) that the presence of uninstantiated properties in sensory experience is inconsistent with the causal role of experience; (2) that introspection reveals only the presence of intrinsic properties of subjects; and (3) that considerations of colour similarity argue against both naïve realism and representationalism. I shall take these in turn.

First, then, is my causal argument against the presence of uninstantiated properties in sensory experience. But, before I discuss the argument, I would like to clarify one point. When he explains my view, Byrne says that I

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deny that sensory experiences necessarily incline subjects towards beliefs. But I do not deny this. In section 2.2.2 ("Conscious Character Fixes Belief"), I explicitly allow that there might well be "essential links between experiences and the vehicles of belief". I deny only that this is enough to make experiences essentially representational. In support of his reading of me, Byrne cites a passage in which I say that the sensory states of a cosmic brain-in-vat would represent nothing. I do say this, but that is not because the brain-in-vat would lack beliefs. By its nature, the brain-in-vat will have physical states matching its normal counterpart's beliefs, and moreover in my view those states will share the phenomenology, if any, of those normal beliefs. Moreover, those brain-in-vat belief-like states could well have constitutive functional connections to brain-in-vat experiences. Of course, given its lack of any systematic links to any environment, I will say that none of the cosmic brain-in-vat's states, neither sensory experiences nor belief-like states, would have representational contents. But, to repeat, that's not because the experiences wouldn't be linked to the belief-like states.

To return to the issue at hand, Byrne takes me to offer two different arguments against the presence of uninstantiated properties in sensory experience, one appealing to the local "here-and-now" nature of sensory experience, and the other appealing to causal considerations. But in fact I only have one argument. As I take care to explain, I don't view the rhetorical appeals to "here-and-now" as having any dialectal substance independent of the causal argument. ("I have expressed my puzzlement . . . that uninstantiated properties can be *present* in sensory experience. As I have said, this strikes me as inconsistent with the here-and-now nature of conscious experience . . . Still, puzzlement is not an argument . . . So, in this section and the next two, I shall develop my puzzlement into an argument"; p. 65.)

As to the argument itself, Byrne sees no reason why mental relations to abstract entities should not enter into causal relations. In support, he draws an analogy with causal explanations involving numbers. Can't we causally explain a series of three noises by the fact that the preceding explosions were enumerated by the natural number 3?

Perhaps I should have said more about this in the book, but I take it to be obvious that we cannot so explain the noises, precisely because abstract facts can't be causes. A relation to a natural number outside space and time can't figure in a causal explanation. To get a cause for the series of noises, we have to switch to the concrete "nominalist" fact that $(E_3!x)(x$ *was an explosion*$)$—that is, there was an explosion, and another, and another, and

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they were all different, and anything that was an explosion was one of them—a fact that does not itself incorporate the abstract object 3.

I take this to be a familiar point from the philosophy of mathematics. As Hartry Field argues in *Science without Numbers*, extrinsic physical explanations citing relations between objects and abstract numbers (the length-in-metres relation, the mass-in-grams relation, and so on) ought always to be replaceable by explanations in terms of intrinsic lengths, masses, and other nominalist quantities. After all, how could a relation to an abstract object make a causal difference in the spatiotemporal world? Surely we ought to be able to understand the concrete realm without bringing in numbers from outside space and time. Such numbers might provide useful models for the structure of the concrete world, but they can't be an essential part of it.

One can accept these points without endorsing Field's fictionalist scepticism about numbers. The present issue is the exclusion of abstract objects from the concrete world, not whether or not they exist in some further realm. (Correspondingly, I am happy to accept the existence of abstract representational facts, as I make clear in section 2.11, contrary to Byrne's suggestion that in my view "there is no reason to believe in such a thing".)

Sometimes it is not obvious how to articulate nominalist descriptions of scientific facts that we normally refer to via their relationships to abstract objects. But few take this to discredit the principle that only concrete facts can enter into causal relations. Rather the consensus among philosophers of mathematics and physics is that such cases pose an interesting challenge. What exactly is the intrinsic physical structure that we are pointing to via our use of abstract mathematical models? The development of representation theorems for different branches of science can be seen precisely as answers to such challenges.

I now turn to the second of Byrne's issues, my argument that introspection reveals only intrinsic properties of subjects. Byrne notes that, on my view, this intrinsic realm is itself richly structured, in a way that encourages us to think that it points to a world beyond itself. But he doubts that I have the resources to explain certain kinds of experience, for example an experience of a yellow banana next to a yellow lemon.

Before addressing this example, let me quickly respond to one issue Byrne raises. He asks in passing why I think that the intrinsic structure of experience should make us think it points to "a world beyond", and observes that the mere coherence of certain elements of experience is itself no explanation of this.

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I intended the second half of chapter 3, from sections 3.5 to 3.10, to be an answer to this query of Byrne's. An initial point, drawn from Kati Farkas's work, is that the coherence to be found within experience is not just any coherence, but involves a contrast between those elements within experience that move as I do and those "quasi-objects" that don't. This gives us an initial sense in which the latter elements can appear to be independent of us. I then discussed the temptation to identify these "quasi-objects" with the possibly existing "intentional objects" of experience—an identification which then has the consequence that, in the good cases of veridical perception, the "quasi-objects" do genuinely exist outside the mind, and moreover, even in the bad cases, incorporate the kind of worldly properties that external objects possess. Of course, I argued throughout that this mind-independence is all an illusion induced by bad thinking. But it is not as if I do not address the issue.

Now for Byrne's example of seeing a yellow banana next to a yellow lemon. As Byrne says, I regard the properties found in experience as properties of subjects, and thus not the kinds of properties possessed by physical objects. Somebody seeing a yellow lemon will thus instantiate *yellow** rather than ordinary *yellow*. Byrne's worry is then that this apparatus will be inadequate to account for someone seeing two yellow objects, given that there will be only one subject to singly instantiate yellow*.

This is reminiscent of Frank Jackson's well-known objection to adverbialism, and my response will draw on my discussion of that objection in chapter 4 of the book. In line with the complexity of sensory experience, I will have complex starred properties* of subjects. Thus the subject in Byrne's example will have a complex property along the lines of yellow*-banana*-next*-to*-yellow*-lemon*.

In the literature on adverbialism, the introduction of such "fused" properties is met with the worry that we will now lose the inference from "X is seeing something yellow and lemon-shaped" to "X is seeing something yellow". In the book, I respond that such inferences are not to be taken for granted. Whether they are acceptable will depend on the "syntax" of sensory vehicles. "Seeing something yellow" will follow from "seeing something yellow and lemon-shaped" only to the extent that the vehicle for the latter state is composed of repeatable elements corresponding to "yellow" and "lemon-shaped". While this seems likely in this example, it is not to be taken for granted for all sensory representations of conjunctive facts. (Incidentally, as I observe in footnote 16 of chapter 4, representationalists like Byrne are ill-placed to object to these moves, since they too have "fused" properties of

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subjects—*representing*-a-yellow-banana-next-to-a-yellow-lemon—and so face just the same questions about their implications.)

Byrne's third and final objection was to my argument from colour similarity against naïve realism and representationalism. I am not sure I understand this objection. Byrne takes me to be arguing "against the identification of colours with physical properties of objects (say reflectances)" and points out that this identification is not undermined by a divergence between subjective colour similarities and objective physical similarities. Quite so. However, I wasn't arguing against the identification of colours with physical properties at all. I'm all for that. My target was rather the claim that the conscious character of sensory experiences derives from their literal incorporation of physical properties. And this claim does still seem to me to be undermined by a divergence between subjective and objective similarities.

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