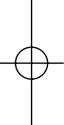


Introduction: Varieties of Disjunctivism

Adrian Haddock and Fiona Macpherson

Inspired by the writings of J. M. Hinton (1967a, 1967b, 1973), but ushered into the mainstream by Paul Snowdon (1980–1, 1990–1), John McDowell (1982, 1986), and M. G. F. Martin (2002, 2004, 2006), disjunctivism is currently discussed, advocated, and opposed in the philosophy of perception, the theory of knowledge, the theory of practical reason, and the philosophy of action. But what is disjunctivism?



A good way to answer this question is to consider the conceptions of experience advanced by Hinton, Snowdon, Martin, and McDowell. Snowdon's contribution to this volume offers an excellent introduction to Hinton's work. So, in this introduction, we will concentrate on the more well-known, and more influential, views of Snowdon, McDowell, and Martin. As we will see, these views have a number of features in common. But, as we will also see, these commonalities must not be allowed to obscure the equally important differences. In fact, the views of Snowdon, McDowell, and Martin serve to exemplify three distinct varieties of disjunctivism.

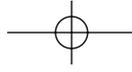


It is not unusual, and not always unjustified, to speak of a position called 'disjunctivism', and to refer to each of the philosophers mentioned above as its advocates. But doing so carries the danger of eliding important differences and engaging in unjust criticism. To mention only three possibilities: disjunctivism about the nature of experience may be taken to task for failing to establish its epistemological advantages over alternative positions, when in fact it was never intended to have any such advantages; disjunctivism about the epistemic warrant that experience can provide will be attacked on the grounds that it is compatible with a causal theory of perception, when in fact it was never intended to oppose such a theory; and disjunctivism about experience's phenomenal character may be criticized for failing to undermine Cartesian scepticism, when in fact it had no such aim.

It is because of the seriousness of these misunderstandings, and the apparent ease of falling into them, that this introduction takes the form that it does. Rather than offering a summary of each of the essays that appear in the volume, it presents in detail some key essays by Martin, McDowell, Snowdon, and others. In so doing it elucidates, compares, and provides a much-needed taxonomy of the ideas that are most often discussed under the disjunctivist heading, and makes clear which of the

Many thanks are due to Jennifer Hornsby, John McDowell, Alan Millar, and Susanna Siegel. We would like to thank Susanna in particular, for her numerous helpful suggestions and comments.





essays that appear in the volume discuss which of these ideas. We will discuss not only established disjunctive accounts in the theories of perception and knowledge, but also emerging disjunctive accounts in the theory of action. Summaries of the volume's essays, grouped thematically, and together providing an overview of the entire volume, can be found in the 'Analytical Table of Contents' that succeeds this introduction.

1 PERCEPTION: SNOWDON AND EXPERIENTIAL DISJUNCTIVISM

Snowdon is interested in the nature of visual perception, and the analysis of its concept, and wishes to argue against the causal theory of visual perception—advocated by H. P. Grice (1961), P. F. Strawson (1979), and many others—and *inter alia* makes use of (what he calls) a disjunctive theory in order to do so.

The causal theory comes in two versions. In the first, it concerns the nature of perception, and consists in two claims—(1) “the causal thesis” and (2) “the effect thesis”:

- (1) The causal thesis: If a subject *S* sees a public object *o* then *o* causally affects *S* (in the appropriate way).
- (2) The effect thesis: If a subject *S* sees a public object *o* then *o* produces in *S* an L-state—namely, “a state reportable in a sentence beginning ‘It looks to *S* as if . . .’ where these words are interpreted phenomenologically (rather than ascribing, say, a tentative judgement by *S*)” (Snowdon 1980–1: 176).¹

The second version also concerns the concept of visual perception, and appends the following claim:

- (3) The causal thesis and the effect thesis are requirements of our ordinary concept of vision.

Grice and Strawson's main argument for both versions of the causal theory begins by pointing to cases in which the following conditions are satisfied: “(i) *S* is in an L-state appropriate to seeing *o*; (ii) *o* is in [*S*'s] environment; (iii) the L-state is not causally dependent on *o*; and (iv) *o* is not seen” (Snowdon 1980–1: 181). For example, it looks to *S* as if there is a pig in front of him; there is a pig in front of him; the pig is not causally responsible for its looking to *S* as if there is a pig in front of him; and *S* does not see the pig. The argument concludes that the causal theory is true.

¹ A further requirement, which Snowdon does not mention, is that the *o* and the L-state ‘suitably match’. What this requirement amounts to is a matter of some controversy, and will depend upon one's theory of perceptual experience. For example, if one believes that experiences are representational states one obvious way to spell out the relevant notion of matching is to say that it occurs when the L-state represents the *o* or a similar object. There is more on this conception of experience as a representational state in section 3 below.



However, Snowdon claims that the possibility of such cases does not entail the impossibility of a case in which (i) to (iii) are satisfied but *o* is seen (by S). It may be that it looks to S as if there is a pig in front of him; there is a pig in front of him; the pig is not causally responsible for its looking to S as if there is a pig in front of him; but S does see the pig—seeing objects does not depend on there being causality between L-states and the object seen. Part of the point of Snowdon’s disjunctive theory is to establish the possibility of this case.

According to the disjunctive theory, the explanation of S’s failure to see *o* is not that the L-state is not caused by the object seen but (simply) that S is in the *wrong kind* of L-state; and, in the same way, the explanation of S’s success in seeing *o* would be (simply) that S is in the right kind of L-state. The theory offers the following account of what it is to be in an L-state: it is *either* to be in an L-state that is “intrinsically independent of surrounding objects” *or* to be in an L-state that intrinsically “involves the surrounding objects” (Snowdon 1980–1: 186). If S is in an L-state of the latter kind then they do see objects (and the objects they see are the very objects the state ‘involves’), and if they are in an L-state of the former kind then they do not. Snowdon (1980–1: 185) expresses this theory by means of the following formula:

[D] It looks to S as if there is an F; (there is something which looks to S to be an F) \vee (it is to S as if there is something which looks to S to be an F).²

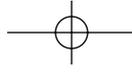
Here the sentence in front of the semicolon reports the L-state to be explained, and the sentences that form the disjunction report the more fundamental states in which they consist.

Snowdon (1980–1) does not attempt to establish the explanatory primacy of the disjunctive theory relative to the causal theory. Instead he makes two conditional claims. First, if the disjunctive theory is true, then both versions of the causal theory are false. Second, if the disjunctive theory is false, and the reasons why it is false appeal to data of a certain sort—namely, data that are not “relatively immediately acknowledgeable by any person, whatever their education, who can count as having the concept in question” (Snowdon 1980–1: 185)—then the second version of the causal theory is also false. The central burden of Snowdon’s (1980–1) essay is to show that the first claim is true. He does not attempt to establish its antecedent.³

The crucial difference between the causal theory and the disjunctive theory is their contrasting accounts of the *intrinsic nature* of L-states. According to the disjunctive theory, it is not possible to characterize the intrinsic nature of certain L-states without mentioning objects seen, because it is part of the intrinsic nature of these L-states to be states of seeing objects. By contrast, the causal theory assumes that it is always possible to characterize the intrinsic nature of L-states without mentioning the object seen, because it is no part of the intrinsic nature of any L-state to be a state of seeing an

² We might wonder why Snowdon says [D] and not [D*]: It looks to S as if there is an F; (S sees an F) \vee (it is to S as if there is something which looks to S to be an F). Snowdon’s objection to [D*] is that it is possible for S to see an F without it looking to S as if there is one. In his (1980–1) he took this to be an objection to Hinton; but some recanting occurs in his essay for this volume.

³ Attempts to do so can be found in both Snowdon (1990–1) and Martin (2002).



object. It is this assumption which ensures that, if the disjunctive theory is true, then the causal theory is false.

We will call disjunctivism, of the variety Snowdon advocates, ‘experiential disjunctivism’. Issues pertaining to experiential disjunctivism are taken up in the essays in this volume by E. J. Lowe, Alan Millar, and Snowdon himself. Lowe defends the causal theory of perception against experiential disjunctivism; Millar addresses some arguments for experiential disjunctivism; and Snowdon offers an extensive discussion, and assessment, of Hinton’s writings—widely regarded as disjunctivism’s founding texts.

In the next section, we will examine disjunctivism of a rather different variety.

2 KNOWLEDGE: McDOWELL AND EPISTEMOLOGICAL DISJUNCTIVISM

McDowell presents his disjunctive conception of appearances in two essays—‘Criteria, Defeasibility, and Knowledge’ (1982), and ‘Singular Thought and the Extent of Inner Space’ (1986). In both, his concerns are epistemological and transcendental: he is concerned with the nature of perceptual knowledge, and with the very possibility of states that are directed towards objects.⁴ In the first of these essays, McDowell advocates a position that, following Alex Byrne and Heather Logue (this volume), we will call ‘epistemological disjunctivism’. In the second essay, his position is somewhat different, and sometimes seems closer to experiential disjunctivism. The exegetical issues are complex here, and for this reason we will discuss both essays in detail.

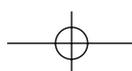
2.1 ‘Criteria, Defeasibility, and Knowledge’

In this essay, McDowell’s ambitions are threefold: to cast doubt on the adequacy of a certain response to the traditional problem of other minds; to question an interpretation of Wittgenstein that yields this response; and to deploy a disjunctive conception of appearances in order to combat an argument that stands in the way of his favoured epistemological outlook.⁵ It is the first and third of these ambitions that concern us here.

The response to the problem of other minds that McDowell targets takes the following points for granted: first, if S knows that p , then S has a reason to believe that p ; and, second, this reason is *defeasible*—it is consistent with S’s having the reason that p is not the case. McDowell describes the second of these points, in its application to the possibility of experientially acquired knowledge of other minds, as follows:

⁴ The latter is what McDowell (1998) calls a ‘transcendental’ concern. This is not the only thing philosophers have meant by this word.

⁵ This outlook is also relevant to other aspects of McDowell’s philosophy. Its relevance to his take on Michael Dummett’s anti-realism in general and the ‘manifestation requirement’ in particular is apparent in McDowell (1981) and (1984), and to scepticism about perceptual knowledge of the external world in McDowell (1995) and his essay for this volume.



[Even] on the occasions that seem most favourable for a claim [that] someone else is in some ‘inner’ state, the reach of one’s experience falls short of that circumstance itself—not just in the sense that the person’s ‘inner’ state is not itself embraced within the scope of one’s consciousness, but in the sense that what is available to one’s experience is something compatible with the person’s not being in the ‘inner’ state at all. (McDowell 1982: 371)⁶

This passage is supposed to capture the idea that when we acquire knowledge of other minds through experience, we do not literally *perceive* that the other is in an inner state (such as that of being in pain). This seems to be what McDowell is getting at when he says that, according to the targeted view, the other’s inner state is not “embraced within the scope of one’s consciousness”.

McDowell’s doubts attach to this idea of an experientially acquired defeasible reason. His target is what he (1995: 402) calls a “hybrid conception” of experientially acquired knowledge, according to which such knowledge comes in two parts: possession of an experientially acquired defeasible reason for believing *p*, and *p*’s being the case.

Consider a pair of cases, in both of which someone competent in the use of some claim [possesses an experientially acquired defeasible reason for the claim], but in only one of which the claim is true. [The] story is that the scope of experience is the same in each case; the fact itself is outside the reach of experience. And experience is the only mode of cognition—the only mode of acquisition of epistemic standing—that is operative . . . How can a difference in respect of something conceived as cognitively inaccessible to both subjects, as far as the relevant mode of cognition goes, make it the case that one of them knows how things are in the inaccessible region while another does not—rather than leaving them both, strictly speaking, ignorant on the matter? (McDowell 1982: 373–4)

These remarks point towards the alternative outlook that McDowell wants to recommend: in order to have experientially acquired knowledge (of other minds or anything else), the putatively known facts *must* be “cognitively accessible” to the subject via the “mode of cognition” by which she is supposed to acquire the relevant knowledge; in other words, and taking the visual case as our example, in order to have perceptual knowledge that *p*, S must *see that p*.

The idea of seeing that *p* is central to McDowell’s epistemological outlook; it is the idea of an *experiential*, *factive*, and *epistemic* state. The state is experiential in that if S sees that *p* then it looks to S as if *p*—where the consequent is interpreted phenomenologically, rather than ascribing a tentative judgement by S. It is factive in that if S sees that *p* then *p* is so. And it is epistemic in the following two respects: that S sees that *p* provides an indefeasible reason for S to believe that *p*; and, if S does see that *p*, then S is in a position to know that *p*—or, as McDowell (1982: 390) sometimes puts it, “knowledge of the fact” that *p* is “made available” to him.

Being in a position to know something is not the same as knowing it: if “someone has been misled into thinking his senses are out of order . . . we might then hesitate

⁶ We have elided some of McDowell’s words here. He speaks, not simply of a claim that someone else is in some inner state, but of a claim that one sees that someone else is in such a state. It might be thought that, even if it is granted that seeing that someone else is in such a state can give one a reason for the former, there is a question as to whether it can also give one a reason for the latter. In this exegesis, we will concentrate on the former, and discuss the latter *en passant*.

to say he possesses the knowledge that his senses (in fact functioning perfectly) make available to him” (McDowell 1982: 390 fn. 37). So, it seems that even if S sees that p , S will not know that p if he does not possess (at least) the appropriate beliefs.⁷ And yet, once S is in a position to know, he needs “no extra help from the world to count as knowing” (McDowell 1995: 406). In order to ensure that seeing that p can put one in a position to know, many of the conditions that “post-Gettier” epistemology considers central to knowing must be written in to the conditions for seeing that p . This ensures that cases we might be tempted—pre-theoretically—to count as ones in which we see that p will not count as such, as the following quotation illustrates.

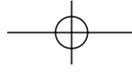
If one’s senses are actually out of order, though their operations are sometimes unaffected . . . an experience subjectively indistinguishable from that of being confronted with a tomato, even if it results from confrontation with a tomato, need not count as experiencing the presence of a tomato [that is, need not count as seeing that there is a tomato before one]. Another case in which it may not count as that is one in which there are lots of tomato façades about, indistinguishable from tomatoes when viewed from the front. (McDowell 1982: 390, fn. 37)

The justification provided by such seeing is supposed to be non-inferential as well as indefeasible. There *is* an excellent inference from “the fact that someone sees that things are thus and so to the fact that things are thus and so” (McDowell 1982: 416), and it is in part because there is that states of seeing that p have their epistemic importance. However, when the reason in virtue of which someone knows that p is provided by the fact that she sees that p , their knowledge is not the result of an inference that *she* makes, from this reason, to p . Exactly how we are to understand the idea of non-inferential justification is another matter; but one consequence is clear: that one sees that p is not “something . . . of which one can assure oneself independently of the claim” that p is so. This “flouts an idea we are prone to find natural, that a basis for a judgement must be something on which we have a firmer cognitive purchase than we do on the judgement itself; but although the idea can seem natural, it is”—McDowell thinks—“an illusion to suppose it is compulsory” (McDowell 1982: 385).

McDowell wants to ensure that the possibility of this epistemological outlook is not obscured by (a version of) the argument from illusion. The argument runs as follows. On any occasion on which we attempt to acquire knowledge by looking, deception is possible, in the following sense: for any fact p that concerns public objects, it can look to S as if p even though p is not the case. It follows that “any capacity to tell by looking how things are in the world independent of [S] is at best fallible” (McDowell 1982: 386). Non-deceptive cases are also possible, of course; it can look to S as if p when p is the case. But, according to this argument, the reason that S acquires through experience must be the same in the deceptive and non-deceptive cases alike.⁸

⁷ Having appropriate beliefs falls under the general head of what McDowell (1993: 429) calls “doxastic responsibility”. There is more on this in McDowell (1993).

⁸ McDowell’s exact words are: “since there can be deceptive cases experientially indistinguishable from non-deceptive cases, one’s experiential intake—what one embraces within the scope of one’s consciousness—must be the same in both kinds of case” (McDowell 1982: 386). And, according



It follows that S's experientially acquired reason can be no better than: that it looks to S as if p . It can be no better than it is in the deceptive case, and as a result can be no more than defeasible, and so cannot be that S sees that p . When McDowell speaks of the *highest common factor* conception of experience, he simply means this idea that the reason S's experience makes available to S can never be any better than the reason it makes available to S in deceptive cases.⁹

There are various ways of responding to this argument. We might attempt to deny its premise, by claiming that there is a class of facts concerning public objects about which we cannot be mistaken: for such p , if it looks to S as if p then p is the case. Another strategy would be to try to provide a safe haven for cases of seeing, by insisting that no non-factive position is present in such cases: if S sees that p then it does *not* look to S as if p . McDowell employs neither strategy. His disjunctive conception is designed to deny the move from fallibility (of perceptual knowledge) to defeasibility (of experientially acquired reasons); in other words, to deny the move from the fact that it can look to S as if p , when not p , to the fact that none of the experientially acquired reasons in virtue of which S knows that p can be any better than what is shared between deceptive and non-deceptive cases—namely, that it looks to S as if p . So, he suggests the following: a state in which it looks to S as if p is *either* a state of S's seeing that p , and thereby being put in a position to know that p , and so acquiring an indefeasible reason for believing that p , *or* a state in which it merely looks to S as if p , in which S acquires no such reason, and so is not put in any such position.¹⁰ *This* is the disjunctive conception of appearances of (McDowell 1982).¹¹ It denies the highest common factor conception, precisely because it refuses to understand the reason in (at least some) non-deceptive cases as defeasible.

When he introduces his disjunctive conception, McDowell invites us also to look at the discussion of a disjunctive account of 'looks statements' in Snowdon (1980–1). We are now in a position to see what these two accounts have in common, aside from the fact that they are expressible in disjunctive form.

to McDowell, the argument from illusion claims that what one can embrace in either case can be no better than that it looks to one as if p . So, because one's experientially acquired reason is what is constituted by what is so embraced, the argument ensures that in neither case can this reason be any better than it looks to one as if p .

⁹ This brings out how Wright's (2002) claim that S's justification consists in the whole disjunction (that is, in the fact that either S is seeing that p or it merely looks to S as if p) is itself a version of the highest common factor conception.

¹⁰ In both his (1994), and his essay for this volume, McDowell suggests we understand the second disjunct as reporting a case in which it looks to S as if p but p is not so. This may be harmless; but, if cases in which S sees that p , and cases in which it merely looks to S as if p , are supposed to exhaust the options, it will serve to occlude cases in which S does not see that p , but still it looks to S as if p , and p is so. It is clear that McDowell (1982) recognizes cases of this kind (in his example of the tomato and the tomato façades discussed above). And McDowell (1993) flags two other considerations each of which make for a case of this kind: (i) the fact that it looks to S as if p results from the fact that p , but not "in the way that is characteristic of seeing"; and (ii) the subject of the experience is 'doxastically irresponsible' (for which see footnote 8).

¹¹ There are various ways in which McDowell chooses to express this conception. We employ the present formulation so as to bring out its epistemological import.



Both accounts refuse to credit a certain kind of philosophical significance to the fact that a pair of states can each be truly described as a state of its looking to S as if things are some way (where the way is the same in both cases, and the looking is phenomenological). Snowdon refuses to let this fact ensure that the states have the same intrinsic nature, because he makes room for the possibility that, when S's being in the L-state is S's seeing o , the L-state is constituted, in part, by the object seen. McDowell refuses to let the fact ensure that the states have the same epistemological status, because he makes room for the possibility that at least one of the states puts the subject in a position to know a fact about public objects (by being a state of seeing that p).

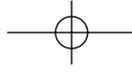
There is no reason to saddle Snowdon with McDowell's epistemological commitments. Is there reason to think that McDowell is committed to Snowdon's experiential disjunctivist conception of experience, but with seeing that p in place of seeing o ? That is to say, must McDowell insist that those states of its looking to S as if p that are states of S's seeing that p are constituted by the fact seen?

On the one hand, we might think so. If (as McDowell claims) some states of its looking to S as if p are states of S's seeing that p , we might suppose him to be making an identity claim with the following implication: just as it is part of the intrinsic nature of states of seeing that p to involve the fact that p , it must also be part of the intrinsic nature of those states of its seeming as if p that are identical to states of seeing that p to involve the fact seen. This would bring McDowell's view much closer to Snowdon's experiential disjunctivism.

On the other hand, we might think not. One might hold that a state of its looking to S as if p is a state of S's seeing that p just in case it is (appropriately) caused, but not constituted, by the fact that p . And there is some evidence that McDowell accepts this. He speaks of certain experiences as having the 'fact itself' as their 'object'—that is to say, as being cases of seeing that p —“when we have them as the upshot (in a suitable way) of the fact” (McDowell 1982: 388–9). And he also writes of “how things look to one” being the “result” of “how things are . . . in the way that is characteristic of seeing” (McDowell 1993: 430, fn. 25). This should not surprise us, for it is not clear that McDowell's purposes in this essay provide any reason to object to the idea that cases of its looking to S as if p are “intrinsically independent” of surrounding facts. And there is no problem with the idea that a looking is a seeing, not because of its intrinsic nature (which it shares with mere lookings), but because of its extrinsic nature—its relatedness to the facts. Consider the following analogy. We say of red marks on the skin that some are sunburns and others not; the red marks count as sunburns in virtue of their having an appropriate causal history; but their having such a history is compatible with the fact that their intrinsic nature is shared with red marks that do not count as sunburns. So, on the basis of what McDowell (1982) says, it seems there are grounds for thinking that there is considerable distance between his disjunctive conception of appearances and Snowdon's experiential disjunctivism.¹²

McDowell (1982) also introduces a transcendental concern that does not show up anywhere in Snowdon's thinking. He appears to consider (with a view to rejecting)

¹² It is worth noting that, in other papers, McDowell *does* appear to commit himself to the Snowdon-style view, as we will see in section 2.2 below.



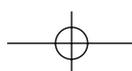
the following thought, which applies to all experiences: although we do not ever see that p , if we have an experience in which it looks to us as if p , and this experience is suitably caused by the fact that p , then we are in a position to know that p , even though the fact that p is not something we have actually perceived. This thought depends on the assumption that we can have experiences with representational content; the assumption, that is to say, that there can be cases in which it looks to us as if p , where p is capable of truth and falsity (or some appropriate analogue). McDowell appears to argue that there can be experiences with such content “only because when [our experiences] are the upshot (in a suitable way) of the fact” that p (McDowell 1982: 389), our experiences *are* states of seeing that p . In other words, he seems to think it a condition of the possibility of states of its looking to S as if p —that is, of experiences with representational content—that these states can, in the right circumstances, be ones of S’s seeing that p . If McDowell is right about this, then there is a problem at the heart of the present thought: in claiming that states of its looking to S as if p cannot be states of S’s seeing that p , it denies a condition of the possibility of experiences’ having content, and, as a result, its proponents are no longer entitled to assume that there can so much as be such states. It seems right to call this argument transcendental, in McDowell’s sense, because it is concerned with the very possibility of representational content. (It is interesting that it also seems to presuppose causation between experiences and the world.)¹³ McDowell returns to this transcendental concern in his essay for this volume.¹⁴

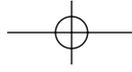
McDowell’s epistemological outlook raises a host of questions. States of seeing that p are supposed to yield indefeasible reason for believing that p ; but does S need to believe that p in order to know that p ? Is his a view on which knowledge is true justified belief? Or is it one on which factive states, such as seeings that p , are themselves states of knowing given appropriate beliefs (which may or may not include the belief that p)? Do we require an indefeasible reason to believe *every* fact we know?¹⁵ And what exactly *is* the reason in visually based cases? Is it the fact that S sees that p ? Or is

¹³ The text upon which this reading is based is as follows: “It seems unproblematic that if his experience is in a suitable way the upshot of the fact that it is raining, then the fact itself can make it the case that he knows that it is raining. But that seems unproblematic only because the content of the appearance is the content of the knowledge. And it is arguable that we find that match in content intelligible only because we do not conceive the objects of such experience as in general falling short of the meteorological facts [that is, on our reading, only because we do conceive some experiences as states of seeing that p]. That is: such experiences can present us with the appearance that it is raining only because when we have them as the upshot (in a suitable way) of the fact that it is raining, the fact itself is their object; so that its obtaining is not, after all, blankly external [that is, on our reading, only because when our experience is the suitable upshot of the fact it is a state of seeing that p]” (McDowell 1982: 389).

¹⁴ Is the transcendental argument he develops in this volume the transcendental argument of McDowell (1982)? According to the 1982 argument, it is intelligible that experiences have content only if it is also intelligible that, if the experiences are caused (in a suitable way) by environmental facts, then the experiences are cases of seeing that p . This might look like a different argument from the one he presents in his essay for this volume. But the 1982 argument surely implies at least the following: it is intelligible that experiences have content only if it is also intelligible that there can be experiences that are cases of seeing that p . And that is McDowell’s ‘new’ transcendental argument.

¹⁵ McDowell (1982) seems to endorse the possibility of scientific knowledge that requires mediation by theory. Must this knowledge be based on indefeasible reasons as well?





it the fact that p , which S only has as her reason when she takes it in by seeing? Different answers to these last two questions would give different ways for McDowell's epistemology to make sense of the requirement that S 's reason must be *accessible* to S , when S knows. If S 's reason is p , then we might think accessibility amounts simply to S 's seeing it. If S 's reason is that she sees that p , it seems accessibility must amount to something like second-order knowledge to the effect that she sees. McDowell's outlook makes clear sense of the first sort of accessibility, but a question remains as to how it is to make sense of the second.

There is a passage in McDowell's essay for this volume in which he speaks of the fact that S sees that p as S 's indefeasible reason, and that suggests that he needs to insist on the possibility of the relevant second-order knowledge, if he insists on an accessibility requirement. But the context of this passage suggests that he might intend this indefeasible reason to be, not (or perhaps not simply) the reason in virtue of which S knows that p , but (also) the reason in virtue of which S is entitled to *claim* that she sees, and so knows, that p . He says the following:

What does entitle one to claim that one is perceiving that things are thus and so, when one is so entitled? The fact that one is perceiving that things are thus and so. That is a kind of fact whose obtaining our self-consciously possessed perceptual capacities enable us to recognize on suitable occasions, just as they enable us to recognize such facts as that there are red cubes in front of us, and all the more complex types of environmental facts that our powers to perceive things put at our disposal. (this volume: section 5)

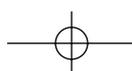
Later in the same section of his essay, McDowell says something about how we are to understand this second-order knowledge:

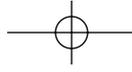
If the animal in front of me is a zebra, and conditions are suitable for exercising my ability to recognize zebras when I see them (for instance, the animal is in full view), then that ability, fallible though it is, enables me to see that it is a zebra, *and to know that I do.* (our italics)

So, in McDowell's account, the fact that I see that p , and the fact that I know that I see that p , are equally the upshots of the operation of my abilities to recognize F s when I see them.¹⁶ It is worth noting that this point connects up with two features of McDowell's earlier work: his (1982: 390) claim that we count as seeing that p "only in the exercise of an ability to tell that [p]", and his (1986) claim that, once the inner and the outer realms are pictured as "interpenetrating", so-called introspective knowledge to the effect that one sees that p must be understood as a "by-product" of the exercise of our *perceptual* capacities.

Epistemological disjunctivism is discussed further in the essays by Alex Byrne and Heather Logue, John McDowell, Alan Millar, Ram Neta, Duncan Pritchard, and Crispin Wright. These essays fall into two overlapping groups. The first group consists of the essays by McDowell, Pritchard, Neta, and Wright, and considers epistemological disjunctivism's prospects as a way of undermining skepticism about knowledge of the external world. The second consists of the essays by Byrne and

¹⁶ Alan Millar's essay for this volume offers an extensive treatment of the idea of a recognitional ability.





Logue, Millar, Neta, and Pritchard, and considers its prospects as an account of perceptual knowledge.

2.2 ‘Singular Thought and the Extent of Inner Space’

In this paper, McDowell’s ambition is to present a picture of the mind that has the potential to liberate us from (epistemological and transcendental) Cartesian problems. In order to do this, he introduces both a conception of object-dependent Fregean thoughts and a version of his disjunctive conception of appearances.

A thought is object-dependent only if its availability for thought, or expression, depends upon the existence of the object it concerns. As McDowell (1986: 228) puts it, following Russell: genuinely referring expressions “combine with predicates to express [thoughts] that would not be available to be expressed at all if the objects referred to did not exist”. A thought is Fregean in the present sense if and only if it conforms to the Intuitive Criterion of Difference, according to which “thoughts differ if a single subject can simultaneously take rationally conflicting attitudes towards them (say, any two of acceptance, rejection and neutrality) without thereby standing convicted of irrationality” (McDowell 1994: 180).

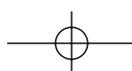
We get the idea of an object-dependent Fregean thought by putting these two ideas together.

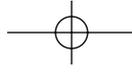
In its directly psychological application, the resulting idea ensures that the “configurations a mind can get itself into [are] partly determined by what objects there are in the world” (McDowell 1986: 230). And, according to McDowell, the resulting picture of the mind stands in opposition to Descartes’s fundamental contribution to philosophy: a picture of the mind (or “subjectivity”, or the “inner”) “as a region of reality that is transparent—accessible through and through—to [our] capacity for [infallible] knowledge” (McDowell 1986: 240). On this Cartesian picture, *every* fact about the mind’s layout is supposed to be knowable in this (infallible) way.

McDowell also opposes this picture with a version of his disjunctive conception of appearances, which he describes as follows: ‘of facts to the effect that things seem thus and so to one . . . some are cases of things being thus and so within the reach of one’s subjective access to the external world [in the visual case, cases of seeing that p], whereas others are mere appearances’ [that is, cases of its merely seeming as if p] (McDowell 1986: 241). Through its combination of the factivity of cases of seeing that p (for example), and the insistence that such cases obtain in the inner realm, this conception invites us to “picture the inner and outer realms as interpenetrating, not separated from one another by the characteristically Cartesian divide” (McDowell 1986: 241).

As before (in section 2.1), there is an interesting question as to whether McDowell’s disjunctivist conception is distinct from Snowdon’s disjunctive theory.

On the one hand, perhaps McDowell agrees with the causal theorist that we can explain what it is for S to see that p in terms of there being a causal relationship between a purely outer fact and a purely inner state (of its seeming to S as if p), for it is not clear why doing so should rule out an understanding of seeing as a state that occupies a region of the inner realm that interpenetrates with the outer. (In doing so, we are insisting that some inner states do not occupy the interpenetrating region; there remain





purely inner states (of its seeming to S as if p), whose intrinsic nature does not consist in anything from the outer realm.) If this is what McDowell is saying, then when he says that some cases of seeming are cases of seeing, we need to understand him—once again—as saying that cases of seeming count as such in virtue of their aetiology.

On the other hand, when McDowell returns to summarize the conception, he says the following:

Short of the fully Cartesian picture, the infallibly knowable fact—its seeming to one that things are thus and so—can be taken disjunctively, as *constituted* either by the fact that things are manifestly thus and so [for example, that one sees that p] or by the fact that that merely seems to be the case (our emphasis). (McDowell 1986: 242)

In the visual case, this passage is naturally interpreted as saying that what it is for it to look to S as if p is either for S to see that p (and so to be in a state that “intrinsically involves” a fact), or for it merely to look to S as if p (and so for S to be in a state that is ‘intrinsically independent’ of a fact). It turns McDowell’s disjunctive conception into a variant of Snowdon’s disjunctive theory (but with ‘seeing that p ’ in place of ‘seeing o ’). And it also offers a more complete rejection of the Cartesian divide between the inner and the outer, by making it impossible to characterize the intrinsic nature of certain paradigmatically inner states—namely, certain states of seeming—without mentioning facts from the outer realm.

McDowell (1994) clearly favours this more complete rejection in another essay:

Compare the psychological feature that is unsurprisingly shared between someone who sees that such-and-such is the case and someone to whom it merely looks as if such-and-such is the case It is not compulsory to conceive seeing that such-and-such is the case as constituted by the common feature together with favourable facts about embedding in the environment. We can understand things the other way round: the common feature—its being to all intents and purposes as if one sees that such and such-is the case—intelligibly supervenes on each of the divergent “wide” states. And it is better to understand things this way round.

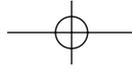
Here by “‘wide’ states” McDowell seems to have in mind states of S’s seeing that p , and states of its merely seemingly to S as if p , which—precisely because they are wide—are such that they can be had only if p is so (in the former case), and only if p is not so (in the latter).¹⁷

McDowell seems to go on the following journey: in McDowell (1983) he does not commit himself to this rejection of the causal theory’s picture of experiences as intrinsically independent of the world; but he moves towards it in McDowell (1986), and finally makes it explicit in McDowell (1992). However, he has not yet made clear if, and if so why, we need to reject this picture in order to secure the epistemological goals of McDowell (1982). And this is a significant omission, in light of the fact that it is far from obvious that we need to reject this picture of experiences in order to deal with these worries in the way he recommends.

At a very general level, the point of both this version of the disjunctive conception of appearances, and the conception of object-dependent Fregean thought, is to provide a non-Cartesian picture of the mind. But, at a less general level, we face the question

¹⁷ See footnote 11 for some of McDowell’s own reasons for being suspicious of this idea.





of whether the Cartesian picture under attack is simply the idea that mental items are not object-involving, or the idea that mental items are object-involving but only as a matter of their extrinsic, rather than their intrinsic, nature. If the first, McDowell does not need to reject the causal theory. If the second, he does.

The essays by Bill Brewer and Sonia Sedivy in this volume have more to say about McDowell's approach to perception, and its implications for our understanding of the mind. Brewer suggests that McDowell's disjunctivism (as he understands it) is best combined with a conception of experience as wholly lacking in representational content, whereas Sedivy, by contrast, argues that it should be seen as essential to a form of direct realism which understands experience as having a representational content that is conceptual through-and-through.

3 PERCEPTION AGAIN: MARTIN AND PHENOMENAL DISJUNCTIVISM

Up to this point, we have compared and contrasted experiential disjunctivism and epistemological disjunctivism. We will now turn our attention to what we will call 'phenomenal disjunctivism'. This form of disjunctivism is widely associated with the work of M. G. F. Martin. And as we will see, phenomenal disjunctivism is somewhat different from the disjunctive positions articulated by Snowdon and McDowell.

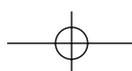
Martin is concerned predominantly, but not exclusively, with the phenomenology of experience. He is interested in defending (what he calls) *naïve realism*, the view that "mind-independent objects are present to the mind when one perceives, [and] that when one has such experience, its objects must actually exist" (Martin 2002: 393). Martin claims that naïve realism is the best theory of how our experiences strike us (Martin 2004: 42); namely, as phenomenally "transparent":

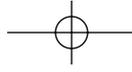
At heart, the concern is that introspection of one's perceptual experience reveals only the mind-independent objects, qualities and relations that one learns about through perception. The claim is that one's experience is, so to speak, diaphanous or transparent to the objects of perception at least as revealed to introspection. (Martin 2002: 378)

A good way to understand naïve realism is to set it against the background of some opposing views.

The *sense-datum* theory of perception and the *intentional* theory of perception are moved in the same way as each other by the consideration that it seems possible for there to be cases of hallucination in which the ways things seem to the subject are exactly as they would be in a case of veridical perception. Both theories assume that this consideration shows that the hallucinatory experience and the veridical perceptual experience have the same phenomenology.¹⁸ In what seems like a natural move,

¹⁸ By 'veridical perceptual experience' we mean to refer to the experiences involved in veridical perception, as opposed to those involved in hallucination. This usage contrasts with another in which 'veridical perceptual experience' refers to experiences that accurately reflect how things are and that may, or may not, be involved in cases of hallucination. In this latter usage, 'perceptual' is





they hold that the experiences in both cases are therefore identical *qua* experiences, and thus that we should give the very same account of the nature of each. In which case, the mind-independent objects that we perceive cannot explain their natures precisely because there are no such objects answering to how the world seems in the hallucinatory case.

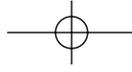
The sense-datum theory posits mind-dependent objects—*sense-data*—as the objects of both the hallucinatory and veridical perceptual experiences. It claims that in having these experiences sense-data are perceived—and, indeed, that such objects cannot be misperceived. The alleged common nature of hallucinatory and veridical perceptual experiences is thereby explained. This theory does some justice to the phenomenology of hallucination in which it seems to us as if we are perceiving objects, for it says that we are actually perceiving objects. The caveat is that these objects are mind-dependent. It is possible to think that the theory gets the phenomenology of hallucination wrong to some degree if one thinks that the phenomenology of hallucination involves the seeming presentation of mind-independent objects in public space. In the case of the phenomenology of veridical perceptual experiences, realist versions of the sense-datum theory hold that there are mind-independent objects, and that when we perceive such objects we indirectly perceive them in virtue of directly perceiving sense-data. To the extent that one thinks that experience is transparent, the sense-datum theory will have to claim that the phenomenology of experience is misleading. Of course it is possible for a sense-datum theorist to try to deny the transparency claim. This might be done by claiming that the apparent direct contact that we have with mind-independent objects is not part of experiences' phenomenology, but is instead part of some judgement or similar cognitive reaction that is made in response to our experience. Such judgement might be held to occur automatically, and rather quickly, and not on the basis of conscious inference, thus leading to the false, but understandable, claims about the phenomenology of experience. It is also worth noting that many philosophers have found the sense-datum theory unattractive in light of its seemingly metaphysically extravagant and non-naturalistic commitments.

'The intentional theory' labels many different views of experience. One such view holds that the common phenomenal character and nature of hallucinatory and veridical perceptual experiences are to be explained by holding that both have the same representational content—in other words, both represent the world to be a certain way, and the world may, or may not, be that way.

Propositional attitudes are the paradigm of states with content. It is instructive to compare experience with one type of propositional attitude—namely, belief. A subject who believes that *p* must be committed to the truth of its content. It is often thought that a subject of experience need not have quite the same commitment to the truth of the content of the experience. This is on account of cases where a subject believes themselves to be hallucinating or undergoing a perceptual illusion (whether or not they are) and at the same time believes that the world is not as it seems; or, where the subject suspends belief as to how the world is, perhaps on account of

taken to mark out such experiences from experiences of other types such as emotional experiences, or experiences involved in mere sensations.





believing that conditions for viewing are not good; or, where the testimony of others leads the subject to believe that things are not how they seem. Instead, the commitment of the subject of an experience might be, to use the terminology of Millar (1991), that *in the absence of countervailing considerations* they will be committed to the truth of the content; or, in the terminology of Armstrong (1961), that they *have a prima facie inclination to believe* the truth of the content. There are a number of other ways in which the content of experience is often thought to differ from that of belief, thereby further distinguishing the two states.

The core idea of the intentional theory is that a subject can bear the same relationship to the same content in introspectively indiscriminable perceptual and hallucinatory cases. And the subject's doing so explains the alleged common phenomenology and nature of hallucinatory and veridical perceptual experience. What is more, the phenomenology of experience is completely explained by its content.

The intentional theory accounts to some degree for the phenomenology of experience, and offers a particularly good account of veridical perceptual experience's apparent transparency because it claims that in such cases we do directly see mind-independent objects. There are no intermediaries of the kind that the sense-datum theory posits. Of course this theory must avoid saying that our being aware of the content of experience is our being aware of properties of the experience in virtue of which it represents, because according to the transparency claim, when experiencing we seem to be aware, not of properties of our experience, but of mind-independent objects in public space. Whether intentionalism can avoid saying this is a matter of some dispute.

Those who think that intentionalism cannot do so may hold something of a hybrid view that attempts to combine aspects of sense-datum theory with aspects of intentionalism of the kind we have been discussing. Such a view is also, unhelpfully, liable to be labelled an intentionalist view. We will call such a view a *weak intentionalist* view and distinguish it from the previous view, which we will hereafter call a *strong intentionalist* view. Weak intentionalist views hold that experience has intentional contents but that such contents do not alone explain its phenomenal character, although they may do so in part. Experience also has non-intentional properties that help to explain its phenomenal character. These properties are most often held to be intrinsic properties of experience. Different versions of the view will hold that such properties may or may not be the properties in virtue of which an experience represents. If such a view held that it is in virtue of being aware of such properties that the subject of the experience was aware of the phenomenology of the experience then the view would share some of the commitments of the sense-datum theory as it would have either to deny transparency or to hold that the phenomenology of experience is not a good guide to its nature. Such a view avoids the particular perceived metaphysical extravagances of sense-datum theory, but some will argue that it nonetheless is landed with others that are no less troubling. Weak intentionalism can garner the explanatory resources of strong intentionalism concerning those phenomenological aspects of experience, if any, that it takes to be explained by content in the manner of strong intentionalism.

Strong intentionalism must of course think that the phenomenology of experience is in error in some respects. In hallucination we appear to be directly aware of





mind-independent objects; but strong intentionalism must hold that we are not aware of any such objects. And yet, it offers an explanation of why we seem to be so aware: we are in a state that represents the world to be a certain way—it is just that on this occasion the state misrepresents the way things are.

We can now see that the sense-datum and intentional theories employ a ‘highest common factor’ conception of experience, according to which what explains visual phenomenology must be the same in the two cases. The sense-datum theory posits shared perceived objects as the highest common factor, the strong intentional theory posits shared contents, and the weak intentional theory posits shared contents and shared intrinsic properties of experience. (Of course, it is essential not to confuse *this* highest common factor conception with that advocated by McDowell, which is exclusively concerned with the justification that experience can provide.)

Naïve realism offers an alternative to sense-datum theory and to intentionalism in its strong and weak varieties. According to naïve realism, in the case of veridical visual experience:

we should explain the phenomenal transparency in terms of the [mind-independent] objects of perception, and not in terms of the experience’s representational content: the objects have actually to be there for one to have the experience, and indeed one may claim that they are constituents of the experiential situation. (Martin 2002: 393)

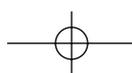
However, accounting for hallucinatory experiences and their nature provides a notorious stumbling block for naïve realism. Martin’s position is distinctive for the way that it tries to avoid it.

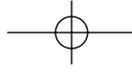
Martin does not deny the possibility of introspectively indiscriminable cases of perception and hallucination. His crucial move is to insist that the experiences involved in both cases belong to different “fundamental kinds” (Martin 2002: 404; 2004: 43, 54, 60), because this allows him to claim that what explains the phenomenal character of the experience in the perceptual case is different from what explains it in the hallucinatory. In the perceptual case, it is explained by the perceived mind-independent stuff. In the hallucinatory case, there is no perceived mind-independent stuff, and the phenomenal character is explained simply by the fact that the state is introspectively indiscriminable from a situation of perceiving such stuff. Martin says:

A common explanation is not offered of the three cases [hallucination, illusion, and veridical perception]—we explain the veridical perception by reference to the relational properties it alone possesses, and we explain the other two by reference to their indiscriminability from this. So, the particular situation of veridical perception is fundamental to the explanation of the character of all cases of perceptual experience. (2002: 402)

In his later work, Martin goes further and commits himself to the idea that the phenomenal character of experiences in the perceptual case need not be the same as the phenomenal character of the experience in the hallucinatory case (Martin 2006: 366–72).

This response to the argument from hallucination denies the highest common factor conception, which claims that what explains the phenomenal character of the experiences is the same in all cases. And it does so by denying that the experiences





have the same constituents and are of the same fundamental kinds. Martin offers numerous arguments in defence of this view, which can be found in his (2002, 2004, and 2006).

So, what, if anything, does this phenomenal disjunctivism have in common with epistemological disjunctivism and experiential disjunctivism, and how does it differ?

Phenomenal disjunctivism seems to entail experiential disjunctivism. If the experiences (or L-states) involved in cases of perception and those involved in cases of hallucination belong to different fundamental kinds, then what it is to have an experience in a perceptual case must differ from what it is to have an experience in a hallucinatory case.

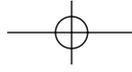
According to the disjunctivist, the phenomenological character of all perceptual experience requires us to view the transparency and immediacy of perceptual experience as involving actual relations between the subject and the objects of perception and their features. In just the case of veridical perception, the experience is a matter of certain objects being presented as just so. (Martin 2002: 402)

Thus, we could not have that experience, and according to Martin (2006) not even that phenomenology, in the absence of the mind-independent stuff, and one way to capture this point would be to say that the experience “intrinsically involves” the stuff. So, at least part of what it is to have an experience in the perceptual case is to be in a state that “intrinsically involves” such stuff. By contrast, at least part of what it is to have an experience (with the relevant phenomenology) in a hallucinatory case is to be in a state that does not involve the perception of mind-independent stuff.

But experiential disjunctivism arguably does not entail phenomenal disjunctivism. It seems to be consistent with the fact that an experience (or L-state) “intrinsically involves” public objects that these objects do not explain the phenomenology of the experience. Nor need an experiential disjunctivist think that the phenomenal character of the hallucination and of the veridical perceptual experience are different. Further, unlike a phenomenal disjunctivist who promotes naïve realism, an experiential disjunctivist can endorse intentionalism, and even accept some versions of sense-datum theory—namely, versions that took appeals to content and sense-data merely as a way to explain and conceive of the phenomenal character of experience, and not as a way to conceive of the entire nature of the experience. An experiential disjunctivist could hold that the phenomenology of veridical visual experiences is determined by a content or mind-dependent object that it shares with the hallucinatory case but claim that, nonetheless, the veridical experience *in toto* is partly constituted by mind-independent objects. On such a theory, the fact that an experience intrinsically involves an object is compatible with its making no difference to the experience’s phenomenal character. The phenomenal character of an intrinsically object-involving perceptual experience and the character of an object-free hallucination would have the same explanation, and could actually be the same, if the experiences shared the appropriate content or sense-data.

Phenomenal disjunctivism seems to differ substantially from epistemological disjunctivism. For example, the former need make no claim about the epistemic status of the different experiences, and the latter need make no claim about their





phenomenology. It seems clear that McDowell, our prime example of an epistemological disjunctivist, thinks experiences in perceptual and hallucinatory cases can share representational content that is not object-involving. In his (1998) he speaks of them both as cases in which we seem to see, or ostensibly see, that there is a red cube over there, for example. Nonetheless, it does not follow that such an epistemological disjunctivist is committed to thinking that they share phenomenal character, for there is no reason for them to endorse (or deny) any kind of strong intentional theory. Their concerns are simply different.

The final point to note is that phenomenal disjunctivism conforms to the *fundamental disjunctivist commitment*. It refuses to credit a certain kind of philosophical significance to the fact that a pair of states can each be truly described as a case of its looking to S as if things are some way (where the way is the same in both cases, and the looking is phenomenological). That is to say, it refuses to let this fact ensure that the states' phenomenal characters have the same explanations (or even that the states have the same phenomenal characters) because it makes room for the possibility that what it is for at least one of the states to have its phenomenology is for S to see mind-independent stuff in their environment.

The phenomenal disjunctivist position raises a host of fascinating questions. What notion of indiscriminability ought to be employed in spelling out a plausible version of the position? Can one claim both that hallucinatory experiences have phenomenal character and that a hallucinatory experience is *simply* a situation that is introspectively indiscriminable from a situation of perception? Is it possible to claim that some or all hallucinations *lack* a phenomenology? The essays in this volume by Scott Sturgeon, William Fish, A. D. Smith, and Susanna Siegel discuss these issues and either elaborate, or criticize, phenomenal disjunctivism.

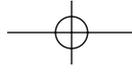
An interesting question for phenomenal disjunctivism (indeed for any disjunctive view) is how to handle cases of illusion. Should they be treated more like hallucination or more like veridical perception? The essays by Bill Brewer and Alex Byrne and Heather Logue explore the answers to these questions. In addition, Byrne and Logue go on to address the issue of whether phenomenal disjunctivism ought to be the default position and, indeed, whether it is true at all.

4 ACTION

Disjunctivism in the philosophy of action is in its infancy. In this section, we trace its roots in McDowell's work, and distinguish its various varieties.

McDowell was the first person to offer a disjunctivist thesis in the philosophy of action. He suggests that S can acquire knowledge of another's mind by seeing that the other's behaviour is "giving *expression* to [the other's] being in [a certain] 'inner' state" (McDowell 1982: 387), where 'expression' is used in such a way that it is not possible for someone's behaviour to give expression to her being in an inner state unless she is in the inner state in question. McDowell refers to this suggestion as an aspect of his disjunctive conception of appearances, and draws attention to how it "flouts" the idea of an "interface" between the subject and "external reality" (McDowell 1982: 392–3).



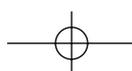
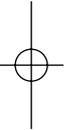
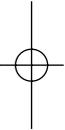


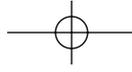
In the context of visually acquired knowledge about the external world in general, this “interface” idea is the idea that our visually acquired justification is restricted to what is yielded by facts to the effect that it looks to us as if p . In the context of visually acquired knowledge of other minds in particular, the idea is that such justification is restricted to our perception of “psychologically neutral” facts about the “facing surfaces of other human bodies” (McDowell 1982: 392–3); that is to say, of facts about other human bodies that fall short of facts about inner states. The disjunctive conception of appearances introduced in section 2.1 flouts the first of these ideas, and the current suggestion flouts the second.

Although the disjunctive conception of appearances does not deny that visually acquired knowledge involves its looking to S as if p , it nevertheless insists that some of the cases in which it looks to S as if p are cases in which S acquires an indefeasible justification to believe p , precisely because they are cases in which S sees that p . The current suggestion makes an analogous epistemological point. It does not deny that visually acquired knowledge of other minds requires seeing how things are with the other’s body, but it nevertheless insists that some of the cases in which S sees this are cases in which S sees that the other’s behaviour expresses the fact that she is in a certain inner state. To illustrate: I might come to know that your hand is moving backwards and forwards by seeing that it is. In some cases such bodily movement may express your inner state of intending to greet me. In other cases it may not, and may instead express the fact that you intend to bid farewell, or that you desire to get rid of unwelcome flies, or that you are in another inner state. In yet other cases it may express no fact about your inner states at all. The view under consideration claims that, in some of the cases in which I see a bodily movement, I see that your behaviour expresses the fact that you intend to greet me. We might capture this idea by saying that the bodily movements available to S’s perception are *either* movements that are expressive of the other’s being in a certain inner state, and which thereby help to put S in a position to know that the other is in that state when they are present in S’s perception; *or*, mere movements, which are not so expressive, and whose perceptual presence to S cannot put S in a position to have perceptual knowledge of such facts. ‘Epistemological disjunctivism about bodily movement’ seems an apt name for this suggestion.

We might think of epistemological disjunctivism about bodily movement as, *inter alia*, a conception of the bodily behaviour involved in intentional bodily action. And, just as McDowell’s epistemological disjunctivism about experience sometimes seems to be consistent with a causal theory of visual perception, and so with the denial of experiential disjunctivism, the epistemological disjunctivist conception of bodily movements under discussion seems to be consistent with a causal theory of bodily action. According to such a theory, part of what it is for S to act intentionally is for there to be a causal relation between items of S’s bodily behaviour that are intrinsically independent of S’s mental states, and S’s mental states. Is there any reason to think that the truth of this theory will prevent S’s perceptions from being perceptions to the effect that others’ behaviour expresses facts about their mental states?

However, just as there can be a disjunctive theory of appearances that denies that all L-states—that is to say, all experiences—are intrinsically independent of public





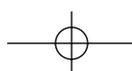
objects, and thereby endorses experiential disjunctivism, so there could also be a disjunctive theory of bodily movement that does an analogous thing. This theory would tell us what it is to be in (what we might call) an M-state—a state that consists in one's body moving in a certain way. It is to be in a state that *either* intrinsically involves mental states (such as intentions), *or* is intrinsically independent of these states. Various philosophers have endorsed a theory of this kind, and for various reasons. To take two examples: in his essay for this volume, David-Hillel Ruben does so in order to avoid the difficulties that he claims to discern in causal and volitional theories of action; and, in her (1997), Jennifer Hornsby does so in order to show that certain bodily movements do not belong in a physicalist ontology, because they are essentially mind-involving.

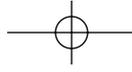
So, as with disjunctivism about experience, disjunctivism about bodily movement comes in epistemological and metaphysical varieties.

A rather different way of employing disjunctivist thinking in the philosophy of action is to defend, and render plausible, a certain account of reasons for acting. This account consists of two components: (I) it must be possible that the reasons for which a subject acts are, in certain cases, the good reasons that there are for the subject to act; and (II) good reasons are facts.

Forms of disjunctivism that address this issue do not come in epistemological varieties, because they are concerned *exclusively* with what it is for us to act for a good reason, and *not* with what it is for us to possess knowledge (of our reasons, or anything else). They are developed in response to the following putative problem for the above account of reasons for acting. If the fact that p is both a good reason for the subject to act, and the reason for which the subject acts, it looks as if we can explain why the subject acts as they do with an explanation of the following shape: he acts because p . However, it also looks as if the agent can act for some kind of reason even though it is not a fact that p : in such a case, he acts because he believes that p . For example, when someone goes to the doctors because he believes he has the flu, he can go to the doctors for a reason even though, in fact, he does not have the flu, but merely a hang-over. And now a tempting highest common factor assumption looms into view: the reason for which the agent acts, and the rational explanation of his action, must be the same in cases where p is so as it is in cases where p is not so.

Two distinct disjunctive conceptions are employed to target this assumption. The first concerns the idea of a reason for which agents act, and says the following: the reason for which S acts is *either* that p , *or* that S believes that p . (Jonathan Dancy toys with, and rejects, this conception in Dancy (2000), and in his essay for this volume.) The second concerns the idea of a rational explanation of action: rational explanations to the effect that S acts because she believes that p entail explanations to the effect *either* that S acts because she knows that p , *or* that S acts because she merely believes that p —where mere belief is simply belief that falls short of knowledge. (Jennifer Hornsby endorses this conception in her contribution to this volume.) It may be possible to accept the first conception, and reject the second, and vice versa. For example, Dancy seems to think the first does not need the second because, although a sentence of the form 'S acts because p ' is an acceptable way of expressing a rational explanation, it is really a form of loose talk; strictly speaking, the way to express such an explanation





is with a sentence of the form ‘S acts for the reason that p ’. In similar vein, Hornsby seems to think the second conception does not require the first, for the simple reason that all of the reasons for which agents act are *propositions*— true ones if the reasons are good, and false ones otherwise.

Exactly how disjunctivist thinking can help to defend this account of reasons for acting, and whether it is needed to do so, are points of contention that Dancy and Hornsby discuss in their essays in this volume.

5 CONCLUSION

According to Byrne and Logue (this volume), disjunctivism comes in epistemological and metaphysical varieties. We should now be able to see the truth in this claim, even as we can also see that it would be a mistake to think that McDowell—the chief proponent of epistemological disjunctivism—has never committed himself to at least one of the two sub-varieties of metaphysical disjunctivism: namely, experiential disjunctivism (as advocated, for example, by Snowdon) and phenomenal disjunctivism (as advocated, for example, by Martin). But can we say anything about what unites these disjunctivisms—what it is in virtue of which they deserve to be thought of as varieties of the same kind?

Philosophy has tended to credit a certain kind of significance to the fact that a pair of states can both be truly described as states of its looking to S as if things are some way (where the way is the same in both cases, and the looking is phenomenological). One such significance is that S’s experientially acquired reasons for belief must be the same in both cases. Another is that the intrinsic nature of such states must be the same in both cases, and cannot involve anything ‘outer’. And another is that, in both cases, experiential phenomenology, and what explains it, must be the same. It is a mark of disjunctivism about experience to question these assumptions.

Philosophy has also tended to credit a certain kind of significance to the fact that a pair of states can both be truly described as ones in which someone’s body moves in some way. One such significance is that S’s perception of the other’s bodily movement must yield the same knowledge in both cases. Another is that the intrinsic nature of each bodily movement must be the same, and cannot involve anything ‘inner’. It is a mark of disjunctivism about bodily movement to question these assumptions.

Finally, philosophy has tended to credit a certain kind of significance to the fact that a pair of cases can both be truly described as ones in which someone acts for a reason. One such significance is that in both cases the reason must be the same. Another is that rational explanations of the relevant actions must, in both cases, be exhausted by: the agent acts because they believe that p . It is a mark of disjunctivism about reasons for acting to question these assumptions.

But apart from the fact they are questioned by disjunctivisms, is there anything else that these assumptions have in common?

The Cartesian picture of the mind understands the inner world as constitutively independent of anything outer: it is possible that the outer world differs radically,





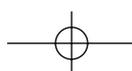
and the inner world remains exactly as it is. There are various ways of understanding the notion of an inner world. We might understand it as the idea of (amongst other things) the subject's experiences (what Snowdon calls their L-states). We might understand it as (simply) the idea of a subject's experientially acquired reasons—those reasons that a subject enjoys when it looks to him as if things are a certain way. And we might also understand it as the idea of the phenomenology of experience, perhaps for the reason McDowell (1986) suggests, namely, that it is the idea of what is within the scope of the subject's capacities for infallible knowledge.

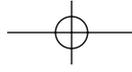
In this light, we can see that Snowdon's metaphysical disjunctivism opposes the Cartesian picture once the idea of the inner world is understood to include a subject's experiences, for it understands some of these as constituted by outer objects and facts. McDowell's epistemological disjunctivism also opposes it, once the idea of the inner world is understood as the idea of the subject's experientially acquired reasons, for this variety of disjunctivism insists that, in some cases, these reasons can be to the effect that she sees that p . And Martin's metaphysical disjunctivism also opposes it in the experiential case, once the idea of the inner world is understood as the domain of experiential phenomenology, for it insists that this can sometimes be explained (and even constituted) by outer objects and facts.

Something similar can be said for disjunctivism about bodily movement. We might understand the idea of the outer as consisting at least of the subject's bodily movements. We might understand it as (simply) the idea of those of a subject's reasons that concern the behaviour of others—reasons that specifically concern how things are with the bodies of others. Metaphysical disjunctivism about the surface sees some bodily movements as partly constituted by inner states. And its epistemological variant sees some of the reasons that concern behaviour as also concerning the state of the other's inner world (as when subjects see that the other's behaviour is expressing the fact that they are in pain). We might think of disjunctivism about bodily movement as an inverted, but structurally analogous, version of disjunctivism about experience, because it asserts, not the suffusion of the inner by the outer, but that of the outer by the inner. Put together, both kinds of disjunctivism yield a conception of the inner and the outer as each suffusing the other.

Disjunctivism about reasons for acting has a similar significance. Reasons for which agents act might be thought to belong to the subject's inner world. By insisting that some such reasons are facts (such as the fact that the subject has the flu), it serves to place aspects of the outer within the scope of the inner. By the same token, the *explanans* of rational explanations might be thought to show the agent to be moved only by states of the inner world—namely, only by facts that the agent believes that p . Disjunctivism about reasons for acting ensures that some explanations that appeal to such states *ipso facto* guarantee that the agent is moved by aspects of the outer: they act because p . Again, we have a picture in which the inner and the outer suffuse one another.

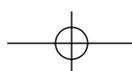
We can, therefore, say the following: the mark of disjunctivism, in all of its varieties, is a conception of the inner and the outer as suffused. Each brand of disjunctivism—be it about experience, bodily movement, or reasons for acting—exemplifies this central mark in distinct, and sometimes very different, ways.





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