

Beyond Transparency: the Spatial Argument for Experiential Externalism

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SUPPOSE I'M AT THE ZOO. I OBSERVE A HULKING GRAY RHINOCEROS as it amiably meanders around its pen. I then muse (as philosophers are wont to do) about the nature of my current visual experience. I introspect "what it's like" for me to see the meandering rhino. In doing so, I become aware of certain properties — **phenomenal qualities**, defined carefully below. These phenomenal qualities constitute what my experience is like, so by gaining awareness of them I am positioned to know what my experience is like.

Where are these phenomenal qualities instantiated? As a first pass, we can characterize **experiential internalism** as the view that all instantiated phenomenal qualities are instantiated in the subject's mind. An experiential internalist might say that the phenomenal qualities associated with my rhino-experience are instantiated in certain neurons in my visual system.

Also as a first pass, we can characterize **experiential externalism** as the contrary view that at least some instantiated phenomenal qualities are instantiated outside the subject's mind. An experiential externalist might say that the phenomenal qualities associated with my rhino-experience are instantiated on the rhino.

In this paper, I will argue for experiential externalism. Put crudely, the argument goes like this: Phenomenal experience has a pervasively *spatial* character. That is, in introspection, all phenomenal qualities associated with experience seem instantiated in certain spatial locations. This alone does not show that phenomenal qualities are instantiated in these spatial locations, for things need not be as they introspectively seem.

Nevertheless, it is reasonable to assume that at least one phenomenal quality is as it introspectively seems. So *that* phenomenal quality must be instantiated in the relevant spatial location. But there is only one kind of space, and the relevant spatial locations are outside the subject's mind. So at least one phenomenal quality is instantiated outside the subject's mind, just as experiential externalism says.

The remainder of the paper carefully refines this crude argument.

Two further introductory remarks are in order. First, in service of this argument, I will meticulously describe the pervasive spatial

character of experience.¹ Aside from its use in my argument, this description is of intrinsic philosophical interest.

Second, my argument will be structurally similar to familiar arguments based on the “transparency of experience”.² Transparency-based arguments are often invoked to support (or at least go a long way towards supporting) specific experiential externalist views. However, I will suggest, phenomenological intuitions about spatiality are considerably more stable than related phenomenological intuitions about transparency. Thus, spatiality considerations should be more dialectically effective than transparency considerations for supporting experiential externalism.

Here is a road map for what follows. §1 proposes a relatively theoretically-unladen framework for classifying experiences and characterizes experiential externalism using this framework. §2 introduces some plausible assumptions. §3–4 examine the spatial character of a particular visual experience and argue that the phenomenal qualities associated with that experience introspectively seem spatially located. §5–7 ambitiously generalize the argument to (nearly) all phenomenal qualities associated with (nearly) all experiences. §8 marshals these points into an argument for experiential externalism and speculatively entertains an extension of the argument. §9 compares this spatial argument to the better-known transparency argument(s).

1. A framework for classifying experiences³

It is natural to sort experiences into **phenomenal kinds**, *i. e.*, into kinds based on *what it’s like* to have the experiences in question. How can

1. For other recent discussions of the spatial character of experience, see Briscoe (2009), Burge (2010, esp. pp. 492–518), Prosser (2011), Schroer (2007), Schwenkler (2012), and Thompson (2010).
2. Contemporary discussion of the transparency of experience traces to Harman (1990). For some prominent transparency-based arguments in favor of specific versions of experiential externalism, see Jackson (2007), Kennedy (2009), Martin (2002), and Tye (2002).
3. I thank an anonymous referee for considerable assistance in refining the framework provided in this section.

one do this? To determine what (phenomenal) kind of experience I am having, I *introspect* what it’s like for me to have that particular experience. When I do this, I become aware of certain properties — properties that seem puzzling in many ways.

These introspectible properties generate many well-known philosophical puzzles, such as the inverted spectrum puzzle, the zombie puzzle, the puzzle concerning what Mary didn’t know, and the explanatory gap puzzle.⁴ Call properties of this sort — properties (i) that I can become directly aware of via introspection⁵ and (ii) which generate, in the appropriate way,⁶ these well-known philosophical puzzles about experience — **phenomenal qualities**. I will sometimes speak of particular phenomenal qualities like *phenomenal redness*; this should be understood as the phenomenal quality associated with my normal experiences of some highly determinate shade of redness.

This characterization of phenomenal qualities is relatively theoretically neutral, for it is a plain sociological fact that these puzzles exist (whether or not these puzzles have solutions and whatever form these solutions might take).⁷ For all I have said so far, phenomenal qualities

4. Influential presentations of these puzzles are offered, respectively, by Shoemaker (1982), Chalmers (1996, pp. 93–171), Jackson (1982), and Levine (1983) and (2001).
5. Some of my opponents — characterized below — have held that it may be *difficult* to introspect these properties. But, as far as I know, none of my opponents hold that it is impossible to introspect, and thereby become directly aware of, such properties. Indeed, many of my opponents appear to rely on introspective awareness of such properties when raising putative counterexamples (concerning blurry visual experiences, pleasure experiences, experiences of spectrum-inverted individuals, etc.) to transparency arguments.
6. What is “the appropriate way” of generating these puzzles? The idea is that phenomenal qualities are those which zombies putatively lack (or lack awareness of), that Mary putatively doesn’t know about, that distinguish the experiences of spectrum-inverted twins, and that generate the appearance of an explanatory gap.
7. Thus the definition of phenomenal qualities does not presuppose that zombies, inverted-spectrum scenarios, etc. are metaphysically possible or even coherently conceivable. It does presuppose that experiences exist. Byrne (2009) rejects this assumption, though he accepts that perceiving, misperceiving, and hallucinating all involve a non-factive propositional attitude

might be properties of things inside or outside our heads, they might be mental or non-mental properties, and they might be physical or non-physical properties.

It is very plausible that phenomenal qualities are the only properties relevant to classifying experiences into phenomenal kinds.⁸ Here, then, is the suggestion:

Phenomenal Kind Thesis: What phenomenal kind an experience E belongs to is wholly determined by which phenomenal qualities that experience presents.⁹

The term **presentation** here is a neutral label for the relation that we bear to phenomenal qualities in experience.¹⁰ Though different theorists will propose very different construals of this relation, every theo-

which he calls “exing”. Ultimately, however, Byrne hypothesizes that exing is simply believing (p. 451); there is no need to posit some new, *sui generis* propositional attitude of *experiencing* to account for the data.

But those who think that experiences exist need not claim that experiencing is a *sui generis* attitude, since they can hold that experiences are a subspecies of belief. Analogy: one can accept that *knowing that p* is a subspecies of *believing that p*, without denying that beliefs exist.

8. Of course, there are myriad *non-phenomenal* ways one might classify experiences. One could sort experiences in terms of what time they begin, how tall the subject of the experience is, etc. Perhaps some such alternative sorting is also a way of sorting experiences into *non-phenomenal* kinds. Mehta (manuscript) explores this idea.
9. Some philosophers (including Tye [2009, ch. 4] and many naïve realists) classify experiences not just in terms of which *phenomenal qualities* they present but also in terms of which *particular* (typically external) *objects* are appropriately involved in the experience. As long as such philosophers grant that this classification is not purely phenomenal, they can still accept the Phenomenal Kind Thesis; they can still agree that phenomenal qualities alone determine the *phenomenal* kind of an experience, per the previous footnote. And this seems right. For, even in optimal conditions, one may have phenomenally identical experiences of distinct objects (*e.g.*, when one successively sees twins). “What it’s like” to see either twin is precisely the same. For detailed discussion, see Mehta (manuscript).
10. The term ‘presentation’ has sometimes been used more narrowly, to refer to the relation that naïve realists (defined below) think that we bear to parts of the external world in experience. On this usage, it may be definitional that

rist who isn’t an eliminativist about experience should recognize such a relation. Given how neutrally I have characterized both phenomenal qualities and the presentation relation, virtually any theorist can endorse the Phenomenal Kind Thesis.

For example, one might think that what it’s like to have an experience E is wholly constituted by the intrinsic physical properties of E¹¹; this is the view that phenomenal qualities are intrinsic physical properties and presentation is simply instantiation. Or one might accept **representationalism**, the view that what it’s like to have an experience E is wholly constituted by what E represents.¹² Representationalists who hold that experiences represent only properties take phenomenal qualities to be these represented properties, so they take presentation to be representation.

Naïve realists, meanwhile, think that (some) experiences are direct relations to bits of external reality: when I see a red flower, the redness of the flower¹³ is a constituent of my visual experience.¹⁴ On this view, presentation is this direct relation, and phenomenal qualities are properties like redness. One might even think, as some **dualists** do, that what it’s like to have an experience is wholly constituted by the non-physical properties which that experience **acquaints** one with.¹⁵ If this is right, then phenomenal qualities are these non-physical properties, and presentation is acquaintance. As this discussion reveals, the present terminological framework is not theoretically loaded.

presentation is not representation. Please note that I am using the term more liberally.

11. See Hill (1991) and perhaps Block (1996).
12. This view is sometimes called “strong representationalism”. It is defended by Carruthers (2000) and (2005); Dretske (1995) and (2003); Harman (1990); Hill (2009); Jackson (2007); Lycan (1996); Pautz (2009); Prosser (forthcoming 2011); Tye (1995), (2000) and (2002); and many others.
13. And perhaps the flower itself. See footnotes 8–9.
14. Proponents of naïve realism include Brewer (2008), Campbell (2002), Fish (2009), Kennedy (2009), Martin (2006), and McDowell (2008).
15. Recent defenses of dualism may be found in Chalmers (2009), Nida-Rümelin (2007), and White (2007).

Further, one might use the term ‘phenomenal quality’ so that it is definitional that experiences instantiate phenomenal qualities. But this is not definitional on my usage. The issue is purely terminological, for, on my usage, any experience will instantiate the property of *presenting such-and-such phenomenal qualities*.

Now I will use this terminological framework to characterize the view I shall argue for. Theories of experience may be divided according to where they locate phenomenal qualities relative to the subject’s mind. (Throughout, the *mind* may be understood to include the brain, nervous system, non-physical soul, or whatever.) There are three possibilities:

- (1) **Experiential extremism:** No phenomenal qualities are instantiated.
- (2) **Experiential internalism:** Some phenomenal qualities are instantiated, and all instantiated phenomenal qualities are instantiated in the subject’s mind.
- (3) **Experiential externalism:** Some phenomenal qualities are instantiated, and at least one phenomenal quality is instantiated outside the subject’s mind.

I will defend experiential externalism. Experiential externalism may be subdivided into these two views:

- (3a) **Moderate experiential externalism:** Experiential externalism is true, but at least one phenomenal quality is instantiated in a subject’s mind.
- (3b) **Radical experiential externalism:** Experiential externalism is true, and all instantiated phenomenal qualities are instantiated outside the subject’s mind.

I am cautiously sympathetic to radical experiential externalism, and I will tentatively suggest an argument to support it.

A word of caution: experiential externalism should not be confused with the more familiar thesis of **phenomenal externalism**. According to phenomenal externalism, two subjects who are exact intrinsic duplicates may differ in their phenomenal experiences. But even if experiential externalism is true, phenomenal externalism may still be false. For suppose that at least one instantiated phenomenal quality is instantiated outside the subject’s mind, as experiential externalism says. It may still be that any two subjects who are exact intrinsic duplicates necessarily must be presented with the same (possibly external) phenomenal qualities (whether or not those phenomenal qualities are actually instantiated), contrary to phenomenal externalism. How plausible this is will depend on one’s view of the presentation relation. Since experiential externalism does not entail phenomenal externalism, I will not discuss phenomenal externalism here.

Why does it matter whether experiential externalism is true? Because many popular views about experience are incompatible with experiential externalism. If my argument succeeds, such views are ruled out. For example:

On some views, no phenomenal qualities are instantiated. Such views are straightforwardly experientially extremist. Meanwhile, on other views, what it’s like to have an experience E is determined wholly by the intrinsic physical properties of E; a strong version of a “mental paint” theory might hold this,¹⁶ as will type-physicalists.¹⁷ This is plainly a form of experiential internalism, as it holds that all phenomenal qualities are properties of one’s mind.

Next, consider representationalism, which says that what it’s like to have an experience E is wholly constituted by what E represents. Most representationalists are experiential externalists.¹⁸ But a representationalist may hold that experiences represent only properties of one’s mind (and that at least some of these properties are instanti-

16. For discussion, see Block (1996).

17. Like Hill (1991).

18. Paradigmatic examples include Dretske (1995) and Tye (1995) and (2000).

ated); this counts as experiential internalism.¹⁹ Or she may hold that experiences represent only uninstantiated properties.²⁰ This counts as experiential extremism.

It is worth taking special note of Sydney Shoemaker's representationalist view that (to use my terminology) at least some phenomenal qualities are mind-dependent properties instantiated in environmental objects — properties like *being disposed to cause experiences of such-and-such type in certain subjects*.²¹ This is an experiential externalist view, not an experiential internalist view. For what matters in classifying a view as a form of experiential internalism or externalism is where phenomenal qualities are supposed to be instantiated — in the subject's mind or outside the subject's mind? It does not matter whether phenomenal qualities are mind-dependent or mind-independent properties. And Shoemaker holds that at least some phenomenal qualities are (mind-dependent) properties instantiated *in environmental objects*, outside the subject's mind.

Finally, according to **sense-datum theory**, experience acquaints us with certain properties of mind-dependent objects (sense-data). On this view, presentation is acquaintance, and phenomenal qualities are these properties of sense-data. Paradigmatic forms of sense-datum theory entail experiential internalism, since such theorists hold that all sense-data are in one's mind.²²

Thus, it matters a great deal whether experiential externalism is true or not. Specifically, if experiential externalism is true, then many leading theories of experience are ruled out, including certain mental paint theories, some forms of representationalism, paradigmatic

versions of sense-datum theory, and views on which no phenomenal qualities are instantiated.

2. Assumptions

My argument requires two assumptions. Both are widely, but not universally, accepted; both seem eminently defensible to me; yet both certainly deserve further discussion. However, providing such discussion would be time-consuming and would require detours into many extraneous issues. So — for want of space, not lack of interest — I will simply help myself to these assumptions in this paper with minimal defense.

The first assumption concerns introspection. For ease of discussion, I will offer an unnecessarily precise formulation of this assumption. But, once the entire argument is on the table, it will be clear that any number of nearby principles will do.

Weak Charity Principle: At least one phenomenal quality, presented by an experience of some actual normal human subject, is as it introspectively seems.

The Weak Charity Principle is aptly named, for it is a *very* weak principle. It does not say that most phenomenal qualities, or even very many phenomenal qualities, are as they introspectively seem. It claims only that *at least one* phenomenal quality presented by the experience of an actual normal human subject is as it introspectively seems. Thus, to deny the Weak Charity Principle is to think that introspection is massively misleading: *no* phenomenal qualities are as they introspectively seem. This is a radical and arguably unwarranted error theory.

Not all philosophers will accept the Weak Charity Principle. Some, like Schwitzgebel (2008), think that introspection really is massively misleading in major respects. Others, including Boghossian and Velleman (1989) and arguably Chalmers (2006), hold that experience routinely involves massive misrepresentation. A proponent of such a view might think that introspection inherits the unreliability of experience.

19. I *very* tentatively interpret Kriegel (2009) as holding such a view.

20. Chalmers (2006) is naturally interpreted as holding such a view.

21. See Shoemaker (2003) and (2006). Related views are discussed in Egan (2006) and Mehta (2012).

22. But in principle a sense-datum theorist could accept experiential externalism, since sense-data might be *mind-dependent* while still being located *outside the subject's mind*. Jackson (1977) considers a view like this.

Because I lack space to discuss such views here, I will just take the Weak Charity Principle for granted. Still, those worried about this principle may construe my argument as having this conditional conclusion: if the Weak Charity Principle is true, then experiential externalism is true. Admittedly, some experiential extremists will be unimpressed by this conclusion, since some experiential extremists are already committed to rejecting the Weak Charity Principle. However, even some experiential extremists will likely want to accept the Weak Charity Principle.²³ Further, many experiential internalists appear to accept the Weak Charity Principle, or at least have given no sign of wanting to reject it.²⁴ So if even this conditional conclusion is true, such philosophers would have to give up the Weak Charity Principle if they wish to continue resisting experiential externalism. This would be a substantial and surprising philosophical result.

The second assumption concerns the nature of space. Call the kind of space that physical objects occupy **ordinary space**.²⁵ (I remain neutral throughout about the metaphysical nature of ordinary space.) I make this assumption, which I take to be empirically well-supported:

Ordinary Space Thesis: There is only one kind of space, namely, ordinary space.

The Ordinary Space Thesis entails that there is not a mental or non-physical space *in addition to* ordinary space. But it does not rule out that there are non-physical or irreducibly mental objects occupying ordinary space alongside familiar physical objects. Nor does it rule out

23. For example, Chalmers (2006) arguably endorses experiential extremism, but Chalmers (2003) argues that, under certain circumstances, introspection is infallible. Assuming those circumstances have actually obtained, this entails the Weak Charity Principle.
24. *E.g.*, Block (2007) treats introspective reports about experiences as at least defeasibly good guides to the nature of those experiences.
25. If string theory is true — if there are multi-dimensional sub-microscopic spaces embedded within macroscopic space — then I will count this whole package of *macroscopic space studded with sub-microscopic spaces* as ordinary space.

that physical objects in ordinary space instantiate non-physical or irreducibly mental properties.²⁶

Physicalists should unhesitatingly endorse the Ordinary Space Thesis, but one might expect dualists to balk at it. As a sociological matter, however, most contemporary dualists do not posit any extra space in addition to ordinary space. Instead, they typically take phenomenal qualities to be non-physical properties instantiated in physical objects (*e.g.*, our brains) located in ordinary space, or to be uninstantiated properties.²⁷ My argument will thus apply even to most actual dualists. And I emphasize again that experiential externalism is compatible with dualism. In any case, those who reject the Ordinary Space Thesis may again construe my argument as having a conditional conclusion: If the Ordinary Space Thesis is true, then experiential externalism is true. This is still a powerful philosophical result.

Some radical pessimists about introspection, and some radical dualists, may reject the assumptions introduced in this section. But all other opponents should find these assumptions innocuous, and my argument applies with full force against them.

3. Spatial appearances introduced

Let's begin the argument for experiential externalism. Focus on this case: I am alert, calm, and otherwise cognitively well-functioning, and I am looking at a mango in good light, carefully attending to its color. I then introspect what it's like for me to experience those colors; I become aware of certain phenomenal colors.

26. We sometimes use the word 'space' loosely: metaphysicians speak of *modal space*; physicists speak of *phase space*; Facebook has been described as a *social space*. But — and this is a purely terminological point — none of these qualify as any kind of space at all, on my usage. I will also use other spatial terms (like 'left' and 'above') in a similarly strict way. I thank an anonymous referee for prompting this clarification.
27. So far as I know, David Chalmers, the most prominent contemporary dualist, does not posit any non-physical space in addition to ordinary space. Similarly, in his reluctant defense of dualism, Lycan (2009) argues that the best form of dualism does not posit an additional non-physical space.

I make the following highly intuitive phenomenological claim about this case: When I introspect my mango-experience, the phenomenal colors presented by that experience seem to be instantiated in certain spatial locations, both relative to me and relative to each other. I'll call the relevant type of space **phenomenal space**.

To bring out the appeal of this phenomenological claim, let's flesh out the example a bit more. When I introspect what it's like for me to have the mango-experience, certain phenomenal color qualities seem instantiated *in front of me* in phenomenal space. Moreover, these phenomenal color qualities seem related to each other in phenomenal space: this speck of phenomenal redness seems instantiated *to the left of* that speck of phenomenal orangeness in phenomenal space. There is nothing special about my mango-experience: the apparent spatiality of phenomenal color qualities is a pervasive feature of visual experiences.

This phenomenological claim by itself rules out almost no theory of experience. For it does not comment on whether phenomenal space is private or public, mental or non-mental, physical or non-physical, etc.

I emphasize that I am focusing on a case involving introspection, not unreflective visual experience. Of course, in normal cases of unreflective visual experience, various properties (like *being red* and *being orange*) seem instantiated in various spatial locations relative to me and to each other, and one could argue that these properties are not phenomenal qualities. But my phenomenological claim concerns the case where I introspect what it is like for me to see the ripe red mango, and introspection (I pointed out in §1) makes me aware of phenomenal qualities. It is specifically these *phenomenal* qualities, discernible introspectively, that seem instantiated in spatial locations relative to me and to each other.

Thus, certain phenomenal qualities introspectively seem instantiated in certain spatial locations relative to me and to each other. (I'll often shorten this by saying that phenomenal qualities introspectively seem *spatially located*, though strictly speaking they seem *instantiated in spatial locations*.)

I have assumed the Ordinary Space Thesis: There is only one kind of space, namely, ordinary space. So we may conclude that, if things are as they introspectively seem, then certain phenomenal qualities must really be instantiated in certain locations in this space.

Let us say that something is a **phenomenal object** at some time t just in case it instantiates a phenomenal quality at t . (I mean to be very generous in what counts as an 'object'. On my usage, expanses of sky, non-physical souls, and neural processes would all count as objects.) This conclusion narrows down what phenomenal objects must be for my introspective seemings to be correct. If phenomenal qualities are instantiated in certain locations in phenomenal space, then phenomenal objects must also be located in phenomenal space. Moreover, introspection provides specific information about the spatial locations of phenomenal qualities. When I introspect my mango-experience, the phenomenal redness presented by that experience seems to cover a surface shaped like a mango. So, if introspection is correct, there must be a phenomenal object shaped like a mango.

Could this mango-shaped phenomenal object be in my brain? This thought would be reasonable if, whenever I visually experienced a mango, a cluster of neurons shaped like a mango collectively fired. But this is not the case. Or perhaps phenomenal objects are on the retina? This suggestion is also unsuccessful. The mango I am looking at is rounded. As I introspect, I notice that the phenomenal qualities presented by my experience seem to occupy a space shaped like the seen surface of a rounded mango. These phenomenal qualities seem to be instantiated in locations along a three-dimensional surface. But, while my retina is three-dimensional, nothing on my retina is shaped three-dimensionally like the seen surface of a mango.

When I see a mango, the only thing that stands in the right spatial relations is the mango itself. But the mango is an external object in ordinary space. So we have arrived at this conclusion:

Singular Spatiality Thesis: If things are as they introspectively seem, then some of the phenomenal qualities

presented by my mango-experience are instantiated in an external object (*i. e.*, an object outside my mind) in ordinary space.

Thus, phenomenological considerations, plus the Ordinary Space Thesis, strongly support the Singular Spatiality Thesis.

4. Can we get by with less?

This section addresses some potential reservations about the argument for the Singular Spatiality Thesis. First, one might claim that, when we introspect, we are aware of *two* types of properties: *phenomenal qualities*, which determine what it's like to have an experience, and *ordinary properties* (like colors, sounds, etc.), which don't determine what it's like to have an experience.²⁸ The proponent of this view might say that while ordinary properties introspectively seem instantiated in some kind of space, phenomenal qualities do not introspectively seem instantiated in any kind of space.

To soothe this worry, I need not take a stand on whether introspection makes us aware of two types of properties. All I need is the claim that the phenomenal qualities themselves introspectively seem spatially located. And this claim is phenomenologically apt. *Phenomenal redness* itself — the quality that I am introspectively aware of, the one that engenders puzzles about zombies, inverted spectra, etc. — seems instantiated to the left of the phenomenally orange speck.

Now turn to a different worry. As I just mentioned, some philosophers think that *phenomenal colors* are different from *colors, simpliciter*. Maybe the former are properties of one's mind or retina, while the latter are properties of external surfaces, volumes, and expanses. A natural further thought is that *phenomenal spatial relations* are different from *spatial relations, simpliciter*. The former might be distinctively mental relations, while the latter are not. (Perhaps phenomenal spatial relations

are relations among neural firing speeds.) Armed with this idea, one might worry that the argument supports only this conclusion:

Weak Singular Spatiality Thesis: If things are as they introspectively seem, phenomenal qualities must stand in phenomenal spatial relations, which need not be spatial relations, *simpliciter*.

But introspection does support the full-blooded Singular Spatiality Thesis. For when I introspect my mango-experience, this phenomenally red speck seems to be quite literally *to the left*, *simpliciter*, of that phenomenally orange speck. If I were to find out that my introspective awareness of the *to-the-left* relation was merely awareness of relations among neuronal firing rates, I would think that introspection was misleading about how phenomenal redness and phenomenal orangeness are related.

For a useful contrast, suppose I were to discover instead that my introspective awareness of the *to-the-left* relation was an awareness of spatial relations in a special mental space distinct from ordinary space. Though I would be greatly surprised, I would think that introspection was correct in its deliverances concerning the *to-the-left* relation.

I emphasize that this is not a semantic point about how we use words like 'left' or 'spatial'. Though I clarified earlier that I am using spatial vocabulary narrowly, my opponent can use other terms to articulate her objections. Rather, I am making a substantive, phenomenologically grounded point about how things introspectively seem. Moreover, as will emerge more clearly in §7, my present claims are all compatible with the claim that phenomenal spatial relations are distinct from spatial relations, *simpliciter*.²⁹

Now let's see whether the considerations supporting the Singular Spatiality Thesis can be pushed further.

28. But see Sundström (2007) for vigorous opposition to such views.

29. I thank Andy Egan and an anonymous referee for very helpful discussion of this point.

5. Spatiality and perceptual experience

The Singular Spatiality Thesis is quite limited: it speaks only about where *some* phenomenal qualities presented by *a single experience* are instantiated if things are as they introspectively seem. I now want to generalize the Singular Spatiality Thesis to all perceptual experiences.

First, consider all phenomenal qualities of my mango-experience. *All* such qualities, I claim, introspectively seem spatially located. To anticipate a bit: I will draw several of my examples from the literature on the “transparency of experience”. The full significance of this will become clear in §9.

Start with phenomenal colors. One delicate issue is exactly which qualities associated with color experience are phenomenal. When I look at a wall that is uniformly white, there is a sense in which the whole wall looks the same color. But there is another sense in which certain areas of the wall (*e.g.*, shaded or highlighted areas) look different with respect to color. If there is just one set of phenomenal color qualities, do these qualities correspond to the sense in which the wall looks uniformly white or the sense in which the wall looks to have different colors? Or are two sets of phenomenal qualities in play here?³⁰

Fortunately, I need not take a stand on this issue, for both types of qualities introspectively seem spatially located. When I introspect my wall-experience, I can identify quite precisely which locations seem to be uniformly white and which locations seem to be shaded or highlighted. So whichever of these color-related properties are phenomenal qualities, they introspectively seem spatially located. (Even reflection on inverted-spectrum³¹ or inverted-earth³² cases does not undermine this point.)

Let’s consider other phenomenal qualities presented by my mango-experience. When I am looking straight at the mango, I experience at least part of the surface of the mango very sharply, while outside of

this clear portion my experience has a more hazy quality. Therefore, one might think that my experience presents *phenomenal haziness*.

If there is such a thing as phenomenal haziness, then it also introspectively seems spatially located. The phenomenally hazy bit *surrounds* the phenomenally sharp bit in phenomenal space. Now, maybe introspection does not determinately say where the phenomenal haziness ends, but instead merely indicates approximately where the phenomenal haziness ends. But even if such indeterminacy exists, qualities like phenomenal haziness still introspectively seem spatially located.³³

Next, consider phenomenal shape qualities. When I look at the mango, there is a sense in which it looks three-dimensional, roughly like an ellipsoid. But there is another sense in which I am apparently aware of something two-dimensional, roughly like an ellipse.³⁴ (It is easier to get this sense when one thinks about how to draw a mango.) Still, both of these phenomenal shape qualities introspectively seem spatially located. This should be clear, since *shapes* of any kind are typed by their (geometric) spatial properties. Moreover, these phenomenal shape qualities introspectively seem to be instantiated in certain locations relative to other phenomenal qualities. The phenomenal ellipsoid I see when I look at the mango introspectively seems to be below *this* phenomenal cylinder and to the right of *that* phenomenal box-shape.

Well, here is something that is arguably a phenomenal quality presented by my visual experience but that is not apparently spatial: the property of *being a visual experience*.³⁵ My experience instantiates

33. But isn’t it implausible that phenomenal haziness really is instantiated in the external world? Perhaps. Someone who thinks this should hold that introspection is misleading in this case: phenomenal haziness introspectively seems instantiated in specific spatial locations, but in fact it is not instantiated at all. I thank an anonymous referee for pressing me about this.

34. Peacocke (1984) famously raised this issue with the “two trees” case. For further discussion, see Hill (2009, ch. 5), Millar (2010), Siewert (2004), and Tye (1996b).

35. Lycan (2003) invokes this example as a problem for transparency theorists like Fred Dretske.

30. See Chalmers (2006, pp. 84–89) for some discussion.

31. See Shoemaker (1982).

32. See Block (1990).

this property, and arguably I can become introspectively aware of this property, too. I can, for example, introspectively tell that I am having a visual experience, not a tactile experience, of the mango's shape.

But the fact that I can introspectively tell that my experience is visual rather than, say, tactile does not show that the property *being a visual experience* is a phenomenal quality. For though I've assumed that phenomenal qualities are properties of the type that (among other things) we can become introspectively aware of, this is quite different from the assumption that all introspectible properties are phenomenal qualities.

Notice that I can attend quite easily to what it is like for me to experience phenomenal redness or phenomenal squareness. By contrast, it is much harder to follow this instruction: 'Attend to what it is like for you to have a visual experience'. Insofar as I can follow this instruction, I do so by attending to phenomenal colors, phenomenal shapes, etc. This suggests that my knowledge that my mango-experience is visual comes, not purely from introspecting what my experience is like, but also from certain background knowledge — for instance, the background knowledge that experiences which present phenomenal colors are visual experiences. So my introspective knowledge that my mango-experience is visual need not threaten the thesis that all phenomenal qualities presented by that experience introspectively seem spatially located.

I know of no other phenomenal qualities presented in my mango-experience that pose a threat to this thesis. Moreover, in the argument I just outlined, while I pointed out many distinctive features of visual experience, I did not rely on distinctive features of my mango-experience (rather than some other visual experience). The same points apply to any visual experiences of normal subjects.³⁶

36. Schroer (2007, p. 408) arrives at a similar conclusion, though via a substantially different route. It is also worth mentioning that this is the strongest phenomenological claim about spatiality that Schroer (2007) endorses. I will defend a much stronger claim below.

These points even extend to non-standard visual experiences, such as blurry experiences, double-vision experiences, and after-image experiences. It's not clear exactly what the relevant phenomenal qualities are for cases of blurry vision. When my eyes water and I have a blurry experience of a frog, am I merely presented with points of phenomenal greenness, shaped something like a cloud? Or is there some proprietary phenomenology of blurriness, so that I am presented with *phenomenal blurry-colors*, whatever those are?

Regardless of what one wants to say, the relevant qualities introspectively seem spatial. This cloud-shaped set of phenomenally green points, or these phenomenal blurry-green specks, or whatever, introspectively seem to stand in *some* kinds of spatial relations to me and to other phenomenal colors (or phenomenal blurry-colors). This holds even if one thinks that these spatial relations introspectively seem imprecise.

Similarly for double-vision cases: if I see double when I look at my left hand, *this* phenomenally presented finger-shape introspectively seems to be to the left of *that* one. The phenomenal qualities associated with after-images, too, introspectively seem to occupy spatial positions: the phenomenal greenness of this after-image seems to be in front of certain other phenomenal colors. Thus, we can generalize the Singular Spatiality Thesis to all phenomenal qualities presented by any visual experience of any normal subject.

Generalizing further: we need not restrict our conclusions to *visual* experiences. Plausibly, the same is true for any perceptual experience at all. Since these considerations parallel those in the visual case, discussion will proceed briskly. (I invite readers persuaded that this generalization succeeds to skip to the Perceptual Spatiality Thesis at the end of this section.) Consider auditory experiences. Phenomenal loudness, phenomenal timbre, and so on introspectively seem to come from various directions in space. One might worry that it's possible to experience a sound (say, in an echoing room) without having any introspective sense of where the sound is coming from. But it's plausible that, even in such a case, phenomenal sounds introspectively seem to

come from all around, or from locations that are changing rapidly, or from locations that aren't precisely specified.

And similarly for other perceptual experiences: phenomenal hardness, phenomenal slipperiness, phenomenal roughness, etc., introspectively seem to be variously located in space. This is especially obvious in a case where I touch two different objects, one with each hand. The phenomenal qualities presented by my tactile experiences associated with each hand seem instantiated in particular spatial locations relative to one another. But the point also applies in cases where I touch only one object.

For similar reasons, phenomenal tastes introspectively seem spatially located. To help latch onto this idea, consider a case where I swish wine inside my mouth. The phenomenal tastes presented by my wine-experience seem instantiated in various rapidly changing spatial locations. The point generalizes to all gustatory experiences. Even phenomenal odors introspectively seem located, though perhaps diffusely.

I just noted that phenomenal qualities associated with tactile, gustatory, and olfactory experiences introspectively seem spatially located in certain ways. Earlier, I argued that, if things are as they introspectively seem, certain phenomenal qualities presented by my mango-experience must be instantiated on the (physical) mango. A parallel argument shows that, if things are as they introspectively seem, then the tactile, gustatory, and olfactory phenomenal qualities that I experience must be located in certain ways with respect to my (physical) body. Since this argument is parallel to the earlier one, I present it swiftly in the next paragraph.

Introspection on perceptual experience provides a wealth of detail about how tactile, gustatory, and olfactory phenomenal qualities are related in some kind of space. But the only things that stand in anything like the correct spatial relations are objects appropriately related to my physical body — perhaps my skin or objects touching my skin, my tongue or objects touching my tongue, and my nose or bodies of air related in certain ways to my nose.

To offer a representative example: when I dip my hands in warm water, I experience phenomenal warmth. This phenomenal warmth introspectively seems to occupy a spatial region shaped roughly like the outer surface of my hands. What object might instantiate such phenomenal warmth? The only good candidates are my hands themselves, or the layer of water surrounding my hands. For there will not be any hand-shaped cluster of neurons firing in my brain, nor are there any other obvious hand-shaped candidates. Similar examples can be constructed for other perceptual modalities.

In light of these observations, I propose this generalized version of the Singular Spatiality Thesis:

Perceptual Spatiality Thesis: For any introspected perceptual experience *E* of any actual normal human subject *S*, if things are as they introspectively seem, then each phenomenal quality presented by *E* is instantiated in an external object (*i.e.*, an object outside *S*'s mind/brain) in ordinary space.

6. Spatiality and non-perceptual experience

So far, we've focused on perceptual experiences. But, as I'll argue in this section, the phenomenological point applies to *all* experiences. (Readers already persuaded of this point may go directly to the Spatiality Thesis at the end of this section.) For want of space, my arguments will be more preliminary and sketchy than the arguments of the previous sections, and these issues deserve further discussion. Still, I believe that these arguments provide reasonable support for my conclusion.

Consider the phenomenal qualities associated with pains, pleasures, and bodily sensations. These phenomenal qualities all introspectively seem (precisely or vaguely) located in regions shaped roughly like parts of one's body. There is no such thing as a pain, pleasure, or tickle that seems to be nowhere. The relevant phenomenal qualities may seem diffuse (as when my whole arm aches) or moving rapidly (as when my arm tingles), but nevertheless these phenomenal qualities

introspectively seem spatially located. For reasons that should now be familiar, the only good candidates for objects that might instantiate such phenomenal qualities (assuming that things are as they introspectively seem) are parts of my physical body. For only parts of my physical body have the right three-dimensional shape.

The argument applies even to experiences associated with emotions or moods. The precise relationship between experiences and emotions or moods is highly contentious. Still, all parties will grant that certain emotions are typically accompanied by distinctive bodily sensations. Think of what it's like to feel the burn of anger, for instance: one experiences the clenching of one's jaw, the tensing of various muscles, a surge of heat in one's chest, etc. Since these are *bodily* sensations, the relevant phenomenal qualities introspectively seem instantiated in specific spatial locations. The only plausible candidates for such locations are within, or on the surface of, my physical body.

Are there additional phenomenal qualities, beyond those associated with bodily sensations, that may accompany emotions or moods? Perhaps. One might think that emotional experiences present some phenomenal qualities that introspectively seem instantiated outside one's body.³⁷ Perhaps when I see a bear in the woods, that phenomenally brown, phenomenally fuzzy thing introspectively seems *phenomenally dangerous*. Or perhaps, in love, my beloved introspectively seems *phenomenally radiant*.

Even if this is right, such phenomenal qualities introspectively seem spatially located. I argued earlier that visually experienced qualities like phenomenal brownness and phenomenal fuzziness introspectively seem spatially located. And when I see a bear, phenomenal dangerousness introspectively seems instantiated by the same object that introspectively seems phenomenally brown and phenomenally fuzzy. So phenomenal dangerousness, if such there be, seems spatially located. Similarly for phenomenal radiance.

37. As Masrour (2011, p. 370) suggests.

To change topics: Recently, many have suggested that there is a distinctive phenomenology of thought.³⁸ For example, Horgan and Tienson (2002, p. 523) claim to introspect a phenomenal difference between "hearing ... 'Time flies' as a cliché about the passage of time, vs. ... hearing it as a command at the insect races". They suggest that this phenomenal difference goes hand in hand with the intentional difference between the two readings of 'Time flies'. If this is so, do these special *intentional phenomenal qualities* seem spatially located?

Yes. For this phenomenology of intentionality, if it exists at all, is associated with episodes of (*e.g.*) hearing words, sentences, etc. This involves ordinary auditory experiences. But I've already argued that auditory phenomenal qualities seem instantiated in spatially located phenomenal objects. (Recall that the term 'object' is being used very loosely, to apply to physical things, non-physical things, processes, etc.) Intentional phenomenal qualities introspectively seem to be qualities of these auditorily experienced phenomenal objects, which are presented spatially. So these intentional phenomenal qualities themselves seem spatially located — specifically, located wherever in space those auditory phenomenal objects appear to be.

This discussion supports a general phenomenological thesis:

Spatiality Thesis: For any introspected experience E of any actual normal human subject S, if things are as they introspectively seem, then all phenomenal qualities presented by E are instantiated in external objects (*i.e.*, objects outside S's mind) in ordinary space.³⁹

Notably, the Spatiality Thesis concerns only experiences of *actual normal human* subjects, so it cannot be undercut by thought-experiments

38. Including Bourget (2010), Horgan and Tienson (2002), Kriegel (2011), and Loar (2003).

39. An anonymous referee suggested that there may be some limited counterexamples to this thesis, such as headache experiences. As a later footnote will clarify, any such incidental exceptions do not threaten the argument.

about aliens with space-free phenomenology or clinical cases of abnormal human patients.

7. A complication: phenomenal spatial qualities

Consider this interesting wrinkle: At least some spatial or space-like properties associated with experience are plausibly phenomenal qualities. After all, there is something it's like to see an orange speck on my left, and what that's like differs from what it's like to see the same speck on my right. A natural explanation is that these experiences present different phenomenal space qualities, just as experiences as of red and orange present different phenomenal color qualities. Does this affect the argument? Matters are complicated.

Consider two subjects: Rightside Up and Upside Down. Rightside Up has the same sorts of visual experiences as normal human beings. Upside Down has the sorts of visual experiences that Rightside Up would have were he to wear up-down inverting goggles: goggles that, intuitively, "flip everything upside down". Upside Down's visual experiences are perfectly normal for her; she lives in a community of beings who have evolved to have such experiences. Moreover, Rightside Up and Upside Down are equally adept at maneuvering in space in all relevant ways and are functionally identical.⁴⁰

Such a case seems perfectly conceivable. Moreover, if these characters take their experiences at face value, then they will acquire true beliefs about the spatial locations of things.⁴¹ This is so despite the fact that if Rightside Up were abruptly to start experiencing things like Upside Down, and if he were to take his experiences at face value, then he would form false beliefs about the spatial locations of things.⁴²

40. Thompson (2010) and Prosser (2011) construct similar cases.

41. So it would be natural for those who think that experiences have content to say that the experiences of Rightside Up and Upside Down both have veridical contents with respect to space.

42. So it would be natural for those who think that experiences have content to say that the experiences of Rightside Up and Upside Down differ in content.

If this is possible, then two individuals can have phenomenally identical and wholly appropriate experiences, even though things introspectively seem different to them with respect to ordinary space. (Imagine Rightside Up views a scene, and Upside Down views a similar scene while hanging upside down from the ceiling.) Call these **spatial inversion cases**. If such cases are not genuinely possible, then there is not even an apparent threat to the Spatiality Thesis. But I will argue that, even if they are possible, the Spatiality Thesis remains secure.

The Spatiality Thesis says that, for any introspected experience E of any actual normal human subject S, if things are as they introspectively seem, then all phenomenal qualities presented by E are instantiated in external objects (*i.e.*, objects outside S's mind) in ordinary space. Subjects like Upside Down are not a counterexample to this thesis. For when Upside Down and Rightside Up introspect their visual experiences, both will agree that *all* the phenomenal qualities presented by those experiences introspectively seem spatially located. More generally, any phenomenal quality Q presented by a particular experience E will introspectively seem instantiated *at some spatial location or other* – though *which specific spatial location Q seems instantiated at* need not remain constant among all subjects who undergo E.

Still, even after recognizing the formal consistency of the view that spatial inversion cases are possible and the Spatiality Thesis is true, one might feel mystified about what such a view would look like. So let me elaborate. Suppose Rightside Up sees a lioness reclining majestically on a rock, watching her cubs napping below. A moment later, Upside Down sees the same scene while hanging upside down from a cord (and the lioness and her cubs have not moved a jot). Rightside Up and Upside Down have phenomenally identical experiences.

A possible suggestion is that, when Rightside Up views the scene, he experiences the lioness as standing in the phenomenal-aboveness relation to her cubs, and on that basis *correctly* takes the lioness to be *above* her cubs relative to his bodily frame of reference. (Those inclined to ascribe content to experience may say that Rightside Up's experience is wholly veridical.) When Upside Down views the scene, like

Rightside Up, she experiences the lioness as standing in the phenomenal-aboveness relation to her cubs. But on that basis, she *correctly* takes the lioness to be *below* her cubs relative to her bodily frame of reference (remember that she is hanging upside down). (Those inclined to ascribe content to experience may say that Upside Down's experience is also wholly veridical.) Both Rightside Up and Upside Down are construing the scene correctly, even though how they construe things is, in some relevant sense, different.⁴³ The crucial point is that, on this view, the objects standing in the phenomenal-aboveness and phenomenal-belowness relations are the *spatially located* lioness and her cubs. This is all fodder for the Spatiality Thesis.

However, an apparently more worrisome threat to the Spatiality Thesis comes from this potential possibility. Perhaps there could be a subject whose experiences are just like those of Rightside Up but where the properties I've been calling "phenomenal space qualities" are normally correlated with some non-spatial property — perhaps color. (This might be thought of as a more radical variant of spectrum inversion.)

Even if this is possible — and intuitions here are very murky — the Spatiality Thesis remains unthreatened. For it concerns only *actual normal human* subjects. It is very plausible that, for any actual experience E that *we* have, all phenomenal qualities presented by E introspectively seem spatially located. This is so even if, for other *actual abnormal* or *merely possible* individuals undergoing the same experience E, those phenomenal qualities wouldn't introspectively seem spatially located.

This completes my phenomenological project of describing the spatial character of experience. In the next section, I will show how the spatial character of experience supports experiential externalism.

43. Shoemaker (2003) develops a view like this for phenomenal colors, and I've extended this view to phenomenal spatial relations. Brad Thompson (who, recall, defends the possibility of spatial inversion cases) has deployed a battery of objections against Shoemaker's view (see Thompson [2007]). But Mehta (2012) develops in detail a Shoemaker-like view that avoids Thompson's objections.

8. The path to experiential externalism

From here, the path to experiential externalism is smooth. I have assumed this principle:

Weak Charity Principle: At least one phenomenal quality, presented by an experience of some actual normal human subject, is as it introspectively seems.

(I remind the reader that, even if this very specific charity principle is false, there is plausibly some nearby true charity principle that may successfully be plugged into this argument.) I have also spent much time arguing for the following thesis by combining phenomenological considerations with the Ordinary Space Thesis:

Spatiality Thesis: For any introspected experience E of any actual normal human subject S, if things are as they introspectively seem, then all phenomenal qualities presented by E are instantiated in external objects (*i.e.*, objects outside S's mind) in ordinary space.

These premises immediately entail experiential externalism, the view that at least one phenomenal quality is instantiated outside the subject's mind.⁴⁴

This argument for experiential externalism is compatible with the thought that some phenomenal qualities are instantiated in the subject's mind or are simply uninstantiated.⁴⁵ I argued only for the claim

44. One minor complication remains. As I mentioned in an earlier footnote, there may be some limited counterexamples to the Spatiality Thesis, such as headache experiences. This leaves logical room for a view that rejects experiential externalism while accepting the Weak Charity Principle: one may hold that only the phenomenal qualities presented by headache and other such experiences are as they introspectively seem, while no other phenomenal qualities are as they introspectively seem. However, it is hard to see this maneuver as anything but desperate.

45. Representationalists standardly think that illusory and hallucinatory experiences often present uninstantiated phenomenal qualities. For different

that *at least one* phenomenal quality is instantiated outside the subject's mind.

Next, I will tentatively suggest a possible extension of this argument. Many will find this principle appealing:

Uniformity Principle: Either all instantiated phenomenal qualities are instantiated in the subject's mind, or all instantiated phenomenal qualities are instantiated outside the subject's mind.

A possible rationale for the Uniformity Principle is that giving up this principle makes it very difficult to retain a unified theory of phenomenal qualities. To mention some influential views about experience: phenomenal qualities have been thought to be environmental/bodily properties, or neural properties, or properties of private mental sense-data, or non-physical properties of one's mind. On the first view, all instantiated phenomenal qualities will be instantiated outside the subject's mind. On the remaining views, all instantiated phenomenal qualities are instantiated in the subject's mind. It is difficult, to say the least, to name a reasonably unified class of properties that (i) may be instantiated inside or outside the subject's mind and (ii) are plausible candidates to be phenomenal qualities.

One may, of course, flout the Uniformity Principle by claiming that phenomenal qualities are fundamentally disunified: perhaps some are neural properties and some are environmental properties. But such a schizophrenic theory of phenomenal qualities is *prima facie* unappealing.

I have already defended experiential externalism, which says that at least one phenomenal quality is instantiated outside the subject's mind. But if one accepts the Uniformity Principle, then radical experiential

reasons, Johnston (2004) also thinks that hallucinatory experiences present uninstantiated phenomenal qualities (which he calls "sensible profiles").

externalism — the view that all instantiated phenomenal qualities are instantiated outside the subject's mind — follows immediately.⁴⁶

In sum: I have argued, with the help of the relatively mild assumptions from §2, for experiential externalism. In a more speculative spirit, I showed that, if we further accept the plausible Uniformity Principle, then radical experiential externalism follows. I am unsure whether the Uniformity Principle is (approximately) true, but it deserves serious consideration.

9. Spatiality and transparency

This section compares the spatial argument for experiential externalism to a closely related argument: the **transparency argument**. Exactly how to state this argument is much disputed, but I will focus on the careful and influential exposition of Tye (2002).

Tye suggests that "[w]hatever the nature of the qualities of which we are directly aware when we focus upon how the surfaces before us *look*, these qualities are not experienced as qualities of our experiences but rather as qualities of the surfaces" (2002, p. 138). He adds that "[t]o suppose that the qualities of which perceivers are directly aware in undergoing ordinary, everyday visual experiences of things are really qualities of the experiences would be to convict such experiences of massive error. That is just not credible" (2002, p. 139). Moreover, while these remarks pertain only to *visual* experiences, Tye later generalizes these points to *all* experiences (2002, pp. 142–144).

Thus, couched in my terminology, Tye's argument may be expressed thus:

Transparency Thesis: No phenomenal qualities appear to be properties of our experiences.

46. What should the experiential externalist say about potential counterexamples like headache experiences (as discussed in previous footnotes)? Well, she may hold that phenomenal qualities are all physical properties of one's environment/body but that a few such phenomenal qualities are instantiated in one's optic nerve, brain, etc. This theory of phenomenal qualities remains unified, and though it flouts the letter of radical experiential externalism, it retains its spirit.

Charity Principle: Such appearances are not systematically misleading.

Thus, no phenomenal qualities are properties of our experiences.

This conclusion does not by itself mandate experiential externalism,⁴⁷ but Tye uses this conclusion as a launching point for an inference to the best explanation to an experiential externalist version of representationalism. (The details of this inference need not detain us.)

There are two obvious strategies for resisting this kind of argument. One is to reject the Charity Principle (and all nearby principles that might be pressed into service in its place), and the other is to reject the Transparency Thesis. Now, the latter has been by far the dominant strategy. This is the strategy adopted by those who focus on cases of blurry or double vision, pain or pleasure experiences, the sense in which a circular plate seen from a certain angle “looks elliptical”, etc.⁴⁸

My argument is structurally similar to Tye’s. I advance a phenomenological claim: that phenomenal qualities introspectively seem instantiated in some kind of space. I endorse a (very weak) charity premise: that some phenomenal quality, presented by the experience of some actual normal human subject, is as it introspectively seems. Given the empirically supported Ordinary Space Thesis, which says that the only kind of space is ordinary space, I arrive at experiential externalism.

But my argument has this important advantage over Tye’s: the phenomenological intuitions behind the transparency argument are much less robust than the phenomenological intuitions behind the spatial

argument. Tye’s phenomenological premise — the Transparency Thesis — is plausible when we focus on some phenomenal qualities. But many have thought that this phenomenological premise is much less plausible when we consider phenomenal qualities made salient by other cases: cases of blurry vision, afterimages, etc. In these cases, opinion has been divided about whether the relevant phenomenal qualities (*e.g.*, phenomenal blurriness) even *seem* to be properties of one’s experience.

By contrast, as I argued in §5, our phenomenological sense of spatiality is robust in all of these cases, as well as in more typical cases. Indeed, I made a point in that section of considering many of the cases that allegedly make trouble for transparency theorists: I considered phenomenal haziness and blurriness, “two-dimensional” and “three-dimensional” phenomenal shape qualities, etc.⁴⁹

If the phenomenological data concerning spatiality are less controversial than the phenomenological data concerning transparency, then spatiality considerations provide stronger support for experiential externalism than transparency considerations, at least dialectically. Still, there is no reason to think of these as *competing* considerations. One may think that both spatial considerations and transparency considerations favor experiential externalism — or, better yet, that these considerations mutually support one another.

In conclusion, robust phenomenological intuitions about spatiality support experiential externalism, which rules out many currently popular views about experience. Given this result, a natural question is whether radical experiential externalism is true. I express guarded

47. As an anonymous referee helpfully pointed out.

48. See, for example, Block (1996), Kind (2003), Peacocke (1984), and Siewert (2004). For responses to some of these concerns, see Lycan (1996a) and (1996b) and Tye (1996a) and (2002).

49. Schroer (2007) holds that something like the spatial phenomenology I’ve described is, in fact, the phenomenon that transparency theorists like Harman and Tye were trying to describe all along. For instance, he says, “Properly understood, the so-called ‘transparency’ of visual experience ... consists of the fact that all the relevant visual phenomenal features are experienced as being located in a spatial field” (p. 414).

My argument puts pressure on this claim. For there are cases (like blurry-vision cases) where the relevant spatiality intuition is robust but the transparency intuition is fragile. It is not immediately obvious how to explain this on Schroer’s view.

optimism that (something very much like) radical experiential externalism may successfully be defended via (something very much like) the Uniformity Principle.⁵⁰

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