Preprint of paper that appears in *Communication and Cognition*, vol. 31 no. 1 (1998): 57-72.

Two Sorts of Consciousness?

It is often said, among philosophers and psychologists alike, that we must distinguish between different sorts of consciousness -- in particular, we must distinguish between the sort of consciousness that depends on the presence of sensory or "phenomenal" properties and the sort that depends on having first-person access to one's own mental states. The latter involves some sort of knowledge *of* one's mental state -- a kind of epistemological access *to* one's states, while the former, if it involves knowledge at all, involves a more primitive knowing *what it is like* to be *in* some state. It is further said that the central cases of "access" consciousness concern intentional states (my thought of my mother is a conscious thought if I have a certain sort of knowledge of or access to it), while the central cases of "phenomenal" consciousness concern sensory states (my headache is conscious because there is something it is like for me to have a headache). Insofar as an intentional state can lack a sensory aspect and thereby fail to be phenomenally conscious, defenders of this distinction allow that it may still be access conscious because it may still be knowable in some first-person way (I might have direct knowledge of my belief that water freezes at thirty-two degrees Fahrenheit, for example, without that belief having any sensory aspect). It might even be possible for an intentional state that is access *un*conscious

to be phenomenally conscious (there may be something it is like to desire revenge even though I am unaware of my desire).

This distinction between two sorts of consciousness is a familiar one, I trust, even if the details of its description sometimes vary. Although I am not sure he still agrees with what he wrote in 1982, Colin McGinn defended the distinction as follows:

> "it does not seem correct to regard the consciousness of propositional attitudes as the same sort of thing as the consciousness of sensation. This suspicion is reinforced by the consideration that it seems to be a necessary conditions (and arguably a sufficient one) of a belief being conscious that one believe oneself to have that belief... but this is not plausible for sensations, since it seems possible to have sensations, and *eo ipso* have them consciously, and not be capable of beliefs of any kind, let alone second-order beliefs... If these reflections are on the right track, then the notion of consciousness is not univocal in application to the two sorts of mental phenomena."[1]

Martin Davies and Glyn Humphreys, likewise, introduce a distinction between phenomenal consciousness and access consciousness in their overview of philosophical and psychological literature on consciousness:

> "Phenomenal consciousness -- the 'something that it is like' notion to which Nagel draws attention -- applies most directly to sensations and other experiences. Access consciousness -- the idea, roughly, of availability of content for verbal report -- applies

most directly to thoughts... On the one hand, it is natural to suppose that there can be sensations without thoughts; there can be phenomenal consciousness without access consciousness. On the other hand, it is very plausible that a system may be capable of information processing and of language production, although there is nothing that it is like to be that system. Such a system would exhibit nothing of phenomenal consciousness, but a good part of what is involved in the idea of access consciousness."[2]

And Ned Block, most recently, has charged various writers with the fallacy of equivocation, as they move from premises about one sort of consciousness to conclusions about the other:

"Consciousness is a mongrel concept ... Phenomenal consciousness is experience; the phenomenally conscious aspect of a state is what it is like to be in that state. The mark of access-consciousness, by contrast, is availability for use in rationally guiding speech and action. These concepts are often partly or totally conflated, with bad results."[3]

In this paper, I want to argue against the distinction, and I want to offer an argument that is rather different in kind from those usually given against it. Let me briefly list what I take to be the usual lines of attack, and then indicate my own.

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[1] Colin McGinn, *The Character of Mind* (Oxford U. Press, 1982), p. 11.

[2] Martin Davies and Glyn Humphreys, eds., *Introduction to Consciousness: Psychological and Philosophical Essays* (Blackwell, 1993).

[3] Ned Block, "On a confusion about a function of consciousness", *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* vol. 18, no. 2 (June 1995), with commentary, pp. 227-287.

First, one can seek to discredit one of these types of consciousness -- by arguing for the incoherence of the concept at issue, for example, or by simply denying that one of the types is a type of consciousness. Attacking the notion of "phenomenal" properties, Daniel Dennett and Patricia Kitcher argue, in rather different ways, that the very idea of a phenomenal quality is somehow incoherent, while David Rosenthal suggests that it is irrelevant to consciousness (some pains being unconscious, for example)[4]. Attacking the notion of special first-person access, on the other hand, Wittgenstein (according to most interpreters) argues that the very idea of privileged access is incoherent, while Dan Lloyd merely argues that such access is irrelevant to consciousness.[5]

Second, one may seek to demonstrate that one type of consciousness is just a by-product of the other -- a result of rather than an alternative to the central type of consciousness. John Searle, for example, seems to think that access consciousness is not a separate type of consciousness so much as a typical (but not necessary) by-product of phenomenal consciousness;

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[4] Daniel Dennett, *Consciousness Explained* (Little Brown, 1991), esp. the section titled "Quining Qualia"; Patricia Kitcher, "Phenomenal Qualities", *American Philosophical Quarterly* vol. 16, no. 2 (1979), pp. 123-129; David Rosenthal, "Two Concepts of Consciousness", *Philosophical Studies* 49 (1986), pp. 329-335, and "The independence of consciousness and sensory quality", in *Philosophical Issues: 1. Consciousness* (Ridgeview, 1991), E. Villanueva, ed.

[5] Dan Lloyd, *Simple Minds* (MIT Press, 1989).

and, conversely, Robert van Gulick seems to think that phenomenal consciousness is merely a typical (but not necessary) by-product of access consciousness.[6]

Third, and finally, one may seek to show that phenomenal consciousness and access consciousness are one and the same by showing that, as a matter of fact, the two concepts pick out the same property, that they have the same extension. This type of argument relies heavily on empirical work, and it is the main type of argument pursued by Ray Jackendoff and Lawrence Weiskranz, for example.[8]

Like those in this third camp, I want to argue for the identity of access consciousness and phenomenal consciousness. But unlike those who base their arguments on empirical work, I hope to establish a convergence on the basis of conceptual considerations alone. I shall argue that the very idea of a mental states with phenomenal properties implies epistemic access on the part of the subject of that state; and, *vice versa*, the very idea of having first-person access to one's own mental states implies the presence of phenomenal properties.

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[6] Robert van Gulick, "What Difference Does Consciousness Make?", *Philosophical Topics* 17 (1990), pp. 211-230, and "Deficit Studies and the Function of Phenomenal Consciousness", *Philosophical Psychopathology*, ed. Graham and Stephen, pp. 25-49.

[7] Ray Jackendoff, *Consciousness and the Computational Mind* (MIT Press, 1987); Lawrence Weiskranz, *Blindsight* (Oxford U. Press, 1986), and "Some contributions of neuropsychology of vision and memory to the problem of consciousness", in*Consciousness in Contemporary Society*, ed. A.J. Marcel and E. Bisiach (Oxford U. Press, 1988).

[8]

These arguments will unfold at a fairly abstract level, seeking to establish some conceptual connections without attending to many interesting and complex aspects of consciousness; it should be emphasized that I am not outlining a theory of consciousness so much as I am attempting to overcome a particular division that has prevailed in recent discussions of consciousness. Where Block sees fallacies, I see at least the promise of analyses.

I

Consider the concept of phenomenal consciousness; how might one get a grip on this notion? Block maintains that it cannot be defined non-circularly; one can only "point" to it through the use of synonyms, the use of examples, or (more contentiously) by appeal to the explanatory gap that seems to exist between physiology and phenomenology.[9] He considers Searle's (clearly circular) definition of consciousness as "those subjective states of awareness or sentience that begin when one wakes in the morning and continue throughout the period that one is awake until one falls into a dreamless sleep, into a coma, or dies or is otherwise, as they say, unconscious", and complains that this points to too many different sorts of consciousness. Block, instead, first 'points' to the meaning of phenomenal consciousness by equating the phenomenal properties of a state with its "experiential properties" and with "what it is like" to be in that state. He then uses examples, stating that we have phenomenally-conscious states "when

[9] Ned Block, "On a confusion about a function of consciousness", *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* vol. 18, no. 2 (June 1995), p. 230.

we see, hear, smell, taste, and have pain" -- but also when we have "thoughts, desires, and emotions." One may well wonder what mental states, or what aspects of mental states have been left out of this list (and why Block doesn't himself fall prey to the criticism he has just made of Searle). But Block goes on to say that what is left out are the purely cognitive, representational, and computational properties of mental states, and he points to the difference between phenomenal and computational properties by reminding us of the explanatory gap that exists between the two -- i.e. the inability of computational analyses to explain what it is like to someone who doesn't already know "what it is like".

Since I don't see how his list of examples can help to distinguish between states that are phenomenally conscious and states that are not -- or, indeed, between states that are conscious and those that are not, and since invoking the explanatory gap seems only to beg the question as to whether the computational properties and the phenomenal properties are equivalent, I return to his synonyms. (The fact that they are synonyms, or circular definitions, is not a concern for me, since I am interested in establishing a conceptual connection between phenomenal consciousness and access consciousness, not a reduction of consciousness to something else.) I shall argue that his synonyms -- "phenomenal", "experiential", and "what it is like" -- all presuppose epistemic access on the part of the subject.

Consider, first, the idea of a *phenomenal* property by itself-- quite apart from the idea of phenomenal *consciousness*. The phenomenal properties of a thing, I suggest, are properties that a thing has in virtue of its relation to a perceiving subject; phenomenal properties depend on

either actual or potential perception, perception constitutes direct epistemic access, and, hence, a subject's epistemic access to a thing is presupposed by the attribution of phenomenal properties to that thing. Recall the philosophical history of the term "phenomenal". Kant was the first to make it central to his philosophy and he clearly thought of phenomenal properties as properties things have only in virtue of their relation to an experiencing subject. Indeed, he held that every property that we experience is a phenomenal property since they all owe their existence to the operations of a transcendental subject. The whiteness and the squareness and the smoothness of this piece of paper are all phenomenal properties of the paper, according to Kant, because they are all properties that depend on the existence of an epistemic connection between things in themselves and a transcendental subject. (Likewise, my current tiridness or the tune now running through my head are phenomenal properties of my (empirical) self because they too presuppose an epistemic relation between things in themselves and a transcendental subject.) As is well known, Kant's notion of things in themselves as existing outside of space and time, and therefore beyond understanding, and his distinction between the empirical self and the transcendental self, the latter of which is also outside of space and time and beyond understanding, creates serious problems and apparent inconsistencies. (For example: if the contribution of the noumenal world cannot be understood, then the very contrast between phenomenal and noumenal breaks down; and if the transcendental self is outside of space and time, it cannot play a causal role in producing experience.) This is not the place to puzzle over Kant, however. I invoke Kant only to make the following two points: first, that when one thinks

of phenomenal properties as properties of things such as this piece of paper rather than properties of mental states, one is thinking of a property that is had in virtue of how it is *for a subject*. And second, if the category of a phenomenal property is to be meaningful at all, it cannot be that *all* knowable or thinkable properties of a thing are phenomenal properties.

Note that these two requirements (let us call them the requirement of subject dependence and the requirement of non-universality) will be met in the case of so-called secondary properties only if the secondary properties of a thing depend on a subject in a way that its primary properties do not. For, on the one hand, if a subject must *actually* perceive or judge a thing to have some property (e.g. redness) in order for that property to exist, then the property may seem to be more a property of the subject, or the perceiving, than of the object, or the perceived. The dependence on a subject becomes too great. And, further, if the judgment creates rather than registers the property, it risks losing its status as a judgment altogether. On the other hand, if one weakens the requirement so that the existence of some property requires only a *potential* to be perceived or judged as present, then the distinction between secondary properties and primary properties threatens to disappear, since primary properties (e.g. shape) are also perceivable, after all. On this option, the dependence on a subject becomes too wide-spread.

However one negotiates this tension (I make one suggestion near the end of this paper), it should be clear that attributing a phenomenal property to something implies that it is experienced or experiencable by a subject. So attributing a phenomenal property to a mental state (and thus attributing phenomenal consciousness) implies that it is experienced or experiencable by a

subject. Which is to say, a subject must have some sort of epistemic access to that mental state -- whatever the details of that access may be.

The need for some epistemic relation to a subject is even clearer in the case of the two other synonyms employed by Block to help identity the phenomenal properties of a mental state -- the "experiential properties" of a state, and "what it is like" to be in a state. A state does not have experiential properties unless it is (at least potentially) experienced by a subject; there is no experience without an experiencer. Likewise, what it is like to be in a state must mean what it is like for some subject; without a subject to experience it *as* something, i.e. to experience it in some way, the state will not be *like* anything for anyone.

Could one grant that the presence of a phenomenal property implies some relation between the state that has the phenomenal property and a subject while denying that the relevant relation is one of epistemic access? I don't see how. For nothing be a certain way *for* a subject, or be experienced in a certain way *by* a subject unless it is presented in some way *to* a subject. Merely having a causal impact on a subject is not enough; it must be perceived or experienced in some way. And unless a presentation to a subject has some reliable connection to the independent properties of a state or an object, and thus some claim to epistemic access, it will not be a way of experiencing that state or that object at all.

II

The above claims leave open the question of just what the relevant subject of consciousness is, and just what sort of epistemic access a subject must have to a mental state in order for it to be conscious. All I have argued so far is that mental states cannot have phenomenal properties, or experiential properties, unless a subject has some sort of epistemic access to that state. This will be true whether one thinks of a subject as a simple non-material substance (ala Descartes), as a specially intertwined set of mental states (ala Locke or Hume), as a reflective, second-order point of view (ala Frankfort), or in any number of other possible ways.

For Descartes, a subject (or soul) is a simple immaterial substance in which immaterial ideas (or contents) inhere. Having mental states is a matter of having such contents as properties of one's immaterial self; and the 'glue' that makes the immaterial contentful properties inhere in an immaterial self is the glue of knowledge. According to Descartes, a thought counts as my thought precisely because I have direct and infallible knowledge of that thought. Whether he thinks of my epistemic access as secured via God or, more directly, through my activity as a thinker, and whether he thinks I have infallible knowledge of *what* I am thinking or only of the fact *that* I am thinking are interesting and puzzling issues, but they don't affect the basic Cartesian story, according to which a mental state is mine only in virtue of the special knowledge I have of it. Rejecting Cartesianism, Block (like many others) embraces what he calls a "Humean" or "deflationary" conception of the self. He writes: "A P-state [i.e. an phenomenally-conscious state] must be a state of a self, and given that there is no Cartesian self, being a state of

a self must involve relations to other states."[10] Any such relations, though, would have to be some kind of access relations -- relations whereby beliefs have access to the information contained in other beliefs, where actions (verbal and otherwise) have access to the information contained in beliefs and desires, etc.. In short, they would be just the sort of access relations that Block considers constitutive of access-consciousness, but which he insists are not required for phenomenal consciousness. I don't see how he can consistently hold both views. If phenomenally conscious states are states of a subject, and states are states of a subject only in virtue of the access relations that connect them with other states of that subject, then phenomenal consciousness requires just those access relations among mental states that define what Block means by access-consciousness.

In reply to my above criticism (published as a short comment, following his original article), Block says he is "willing to countenance P-states in my body that are not fully mine", and he says he is "not convinced that the way in which [phenomenal consciousness] involves the self is incompatible with intrinsicness [since] the mode of self-involvement could be simple ... 'me-ishness'".[11] I am not sure what to make of either of these remarks. The suggestion that my body may be in a phenomenally conscious state without that state being fully mine introduces the possibility of an experience without an experiencer. And while it is easy to see how mental states might be more or less integrated with each other, leading one to attribute degrees of subjectivity

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[10] Ned Block, "On a confusion about a function of consciousness", *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* vol. 18, no. 2 (June 1995), p. 283.

or selfhood, and degrees of consciousness, it is hard to see how the degree of subjectivity could diverge from the degree of consciousness: intense consciousness with no subject of consciousness? being like something -- for no one? These alleged possibilities are not mere oddities; they are conceptually incoherent. At the very least, in order to point to genuine possibilities, more coherent ways of pointing must be found.

Block's other suggestion -- that certain states might have an intrinsic "me-ishness" -- also flirts with incoherence. If he means that within the state (rather than through its relations to other states) there is something that marks it as mine, then *I* cannot be simply a set of appropriately related states, and Block's conception of the self would not be deflationary after all. One can't help but think that his suggestion relies on a Cartesian rather than a Humean conception of the subject. Block's actual arguments for the independence of phenomenal consciousness and access consciousness rely heavily on examples, and it may be useful to address them more directly. To illustrate the possibility of phenomenal consciousness in the absence of access consciousness, he describes a case in which you suddenly realize that you have been hearing an irritating noise in the background for the last hour. Block maintains that, prior to your realization, there was phenomenal consciousness without access consciousness: the sound was a certain way for you but it was not available to guide your thoughts and actions. The accessibility to thought and action (i.e. the access potential) of the hearing experience is, of course, evident from the fact that you do eventually access it. Further, it seems that it would actually have been

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[11] ibid. p. 279 and p. 283, respectively.

accessed sooner if it had been relevant to some matter of importance -- and thus, in a still stronger sense, it was accessible all along. This alone may be enough for what Block calls access consciousness: to be access conscious, he says, a state must merely be "poised for" access. But suppose, more plausibly, that access consciousness requires a subject to have actual rather than merely potential access to the mental state in question. On a Humean account of the self, this means that the conscious mental state must be actively accessed by other mental states. The question, then, is: is your perception of the noise during the half hour in question informing your other mental states during that time? do they have actual, and not merely potential, epistemic access to the sound? Block seems to suppose that there is no actual access because the noise isn't actually causing any further thought or action on your part during the half hour in question. This isn't entirely clear from the example as given; I, for one, imagine the background noise causing me to raise my voice at bit, or causing me to feel harassed and irritable, or leading me to believe (unconsciously) that something new is happening outside. But even if we suppose that hearing the noise has none of these effects, it remains possible that your perception of the noise is part of what is actually *informing* your other thoughts and actions without it *altering* those thoughts and actions in any way. Staring at the sky, I may see a cloud pass by without responding to it simply because there is nothing at stake for me in its passing, but this does not mean that there is no epistemic access between my seeing the cloud and my background beliefs about how clouds act or where they are found, etc.; for the new perception may be so congruent with my prior beliefs that no alteration is called for. Thus, I suggest, in the example as Block

describes it there could be actual access (and of the sort he requires given his Humean concept of a subject) despite a complete absence of response.

III

If the argument so far has been successful, it has established that access consciousness is necessary for phenomenal consciousness. But what about sufficiency? To many it has seemed possible for one to have informational access to one's own states, or to certain states in the world, without that access being (phenomenally) conscious. As Martin and Humphreys put it, in the passage cited above: "it is very plausible that a system may be capable of information processing and of language production, although there is nothing that it is like to be that system".

Block, interestingly enough, is more willing to accept the sufficiency of access-consciousness for phenomenal conscious than its necessity. Although he thinks he can imagine cases where a mental state is available for use in reasoning and rationally guiding speech and action (Zombie cases) he is also impressed by the wealth of empirical evidence that indicates that whenever a subject's states are fully access-conscious, they are phenomenally conscious as well. (For him, though, any implication running in this direction will be due to empirical rather than conceptual considerations.)

For others, however, it is sufficiency rather than necessity that is the sticking point. That we must be able to access information of which we are phenomenally conscious is plausible; the problem is that we seem to be able to access information of which we are not phenomenally

conscious. Which is also to say: it seems possible to have a certain sort of self-knowledge without phenomenal consciousness.

Having a couple of examples in mind here may help. Like Block, I think we should be suspicious of possibilities that can be somehow imagined but not even conceivably verified -- for example the possibility of a 'zombie' that is behaviorally identical to us but experiences nothing ; or the possibility of a subject who can give detailed and spontaneous descriptions of the letters on a presented page ("blue ink, Times font, smudges on left side of the 'o's, etc.) but who has no "experience" of the page at all. (Dennett urges that this sort of case is unimaginable, but others -- including Stevan Harnad in his comment on Block's article -- claim to have no trouble in imagining it .) My quarrel with these imaginary cases is not a quarrel with relying on imagination versus observation, of course; such reliance is often crucial for distinguishing conceptual truths from empirical truths and I am interested in establishing a conceptual truth. My quarrel is, rather, with relying on merely imagined possibilities whose verification could not even be imagined.[12]

Let us consider, instead, a couple of actual conditions which have been thought to illustrate the possibility of access consciousness without phenomenal consciousness. First, there is the case of blind sight, where subjects who report no phenomenal experience are nonetheless

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[12] Whether this position deserves the label "verificationism" is a complicated question, and whether it (or any other form of verificationism) is defensible is a topic well beyond the scope of this paper. Suffice it to say that even if it is a verificationist position, I am interested in defending it.

highly reliable in their responses to the position of things before them: the reliability of the responses is standardly taken to mean that the subjects have some knowledge of what is before them, yet they say that they *see* nothing. And second, returning to the above-mentioned passage in McGinn, it seems that even in ordinary cases of reporting our beliefs, we may know what we believe without having any phenomenal experience of those beliefs. "What does my belief that Fermat's last theorem has now been proven feel like, or look like?" it may be asked.

Let me make a couple of remarks in response to each of these examples, and then attempt to motivate a more general response on *a priori* grounds.

The cases of human blind sight are very few, and researchers still disagree about what they are finding. Tony Marcel, for example, reports that all blind sight patients are willing to speak of "feeling" that there is an object before them, or of having a sense that something is there, even though they say they can *see* nothing. Weiskranz's patient GY, for example, says "I didn't see anything", but also "I was aware that there was an object moving". (Might this be a bit like 'seeing' through a machine that translates an image into pressure points on the skin of one's back?) At the very least, we ought to be careful about what answers to what questions are supposed to indicate a lack of phenomenal consciousness. But, second, and more importantly, it is not clear that the beliefs and actions of blind sight patients have sufficiently rich access to the visual information for that access to constitute knowledge. Blind sight patients, I gather, do not integrate the visual information they receive with any of their ongoing plans or beliefs or spoken

words; so there is really not the relevant, knowledge-constituting sort of access that Block identifies with access consciousness after all. (Block would agree on this.)

In the second example -- our supposed ability to know what we believe without those beliefs being phenomenally conscious, I think that two things are being confused. While it is certainly true that beliefs do not have to be accompanied by *sensations* in order to be known, I do think first person knowledge of beliefs requires that they have some phenomenal property. When I note my belief concerning Fermat's last theorem, there is *something* it is like for me to have the belief -- a combination of images and sounds, perhaps, but something. Such images and sounds are not equivalent to the *content* of my belief, of course, but they are what having the belief is now *like* for me.

Turning from examples to arguments, let us pose the following question: what *more* than access consciousness might be required in order to have phenomenal consciousness? There seem to be only two possibilities, and neither can be relevant. On the one hand, phenomenal consciousness might require actual access to a special sort of information -- say, the intrinsic rather than the relational properties of a thing. If the painfulness of a state is an intrinsic property of that state while its intentionality -- what one is pained by, for example -- is a relational property, then it might be supposed that we can be phenomenally conscious of the former but not the latter aspect of that state. Phenomenal consciousness would require a special sort of object rather than a special sort of access. But then it is unclear why we should speak of two sorts of consciousness as opposed to the same sort of consciousness directed towards different objects.

Or, perhaps the difference in *what* is accessed is correlated with different *ways* of accessing information; different properties may need to be accessed in different ways. This is the second possibility, and it looks more promising. It is sometimes said, for example, that phenomenal consciousness is a kind of sensory consciousness; it arises when our access to states of the world or to states of ourselves involves sensory (as opposed to more purely cognitive) aspects of our bodies. This seems to be part of what is urged by Dretske, for example, when he writes:

> "Seeing, hearing, and smelling x are ways of being conscious of x. Seeing a tree, smelling a rose, and feeling a wrinkle is to be (perceptually) aware (conscious) of the tree, the rose and the wrinkle. [And] there may be other [non-perceptual] ways of being conscious of objects and events."[13]

The problem with this suggestion -- that phenomenal consciousness requires sensory engagement -- is that it is either obviously false or trivially true. It is obviously false if it means that my sensory organs must be currently involved in accessing the information of which I am phenomenally conscious, since remembering pictures or hallucinating pains may be phenomenally conscious experiences despite a lack of present involvement of sense organs. But it is obviously true if it means that phenomenally conscious experiences must be somehow depend on or somehow resemble experiences that rely on the senses, since *all* experiences depend on the senses to some extent and *all* experiences resemble experiences gained through

the senses in some respect. But if the difference between phenomenal consciousness and access consciousness is not a matter of what sort of thing is accessed, nor a matter of how things are accessed, I see no room for a difference at all.

That is my negative argument for the sufficiency of access consciousness for phenomenal consciousness. But there is also a positive argument which goes something like this: If I am to have knowledge of my mental states, I must have knowledge of *particular* states -- namely, knowledge of *this* pain here or *this* belief now as opposed to knowledge of pain (or this sort of pain) or knowledge of beliefs (or this sort of belief) *in general*. I cannot have knowledge of a particular item *qua* particular, however, unless I can place it (whether rightly or wrongly, it doesn't matter here) within the overall spatio-temporal framework of the world as it is for me. Thus, to have knowledge of this pain or this belief requires that I assign it a spatio-temporal location within the world as I know it (a pain now in my foot, a belief now in my head, or above my head, etc.)[14]. But to assign a state a spatio-temporal location just *is* to give it a phenomenology. Following Kant, I would argue that the world is a certain way for me only insofar as it appears in space and time. This does not mean that we are the source of space and time (as Kant maintains) -- only that there is no experience of a world outside of space and time, and to experience the world as in space and time is to experience it "phenomenally". In sum: my knowledge of my thoughts as particulars requires that they be spatio-temporally presented --

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[13] Fred Dretske, "Conscious Experience", *Mind* 102 (1993), p. 265.

which, in the end, is equivalent to saying that in order to be known they must have a phenomenology.

In an interesting paper on just what sort of self-knowledge Descartes thought thought required, Daise Radner concludes that it is only knowledge of the presence of a thought -- not knowledge of its particular content -- that is necessary in order for it to be conscious and thus for it to be a thought at all.[15] Likewise, I am here suggesting that experiencing a thought as a particular -- i.e. as something occurring at a particular place and a particular time (whatever its content) -- is enough to give it phenomenological properties, and thus to make it conscious.

IV

I would like to close by clarifying the place of unconscious mentality in the overall account I have been giving. (This will also lead to a suggestion about how to resolve the dilemma discussed earlier.)

Unconscious mental states are not a possibility according to Descartes, of course. (As we have seen, this position derives, in part, from a simplistic, and ultimately mysterious, picture of what it means for a subject to have epistemic access to his or her thoughts.) But unconscious mental states are perfectly possible on a more Humean, or deflationary picture of the self. For,

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[14] Here I rely on a Strawson-type interpretation of Kant, especially as developed in P.F.Strawson, *Individuals* (Anchor Books, 1959).

[15] Daise Radner, "Thought and Consciousness in Descartes", *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 26:3 (July 1988), pp. 439-452.

as indicated above, the Humean picture allows there to be degrees of integration or accessibility between mental states, and so one could think that the conscious states are those states that are *highly* integrated with (or accessible to) other states, while unconscious states are those less well integrated. (This seems to be the thought behind suggestions of Dennett and van Gulick to the effect that conscious states are states with a sufficient degree of informational richness.)

There are some problems with this approach, however. First, it seems doubtful that our most highly integrated states are our most conscious states; a moment of intense (and intensely conscious) pain may have little bearing on my life more generally, while a largely unconscious belief about strangers may color most everything I do and think. Second, it is not clear how a state can be integrated with only a few other states of a subject (and therefore unconscious) if each of those other states are integrated with still others, forming an extensive network of access relations (which is supposed to insure consciousness). And last, any willingness to speak of more versus less conscious mental states -- i.e. to allow for degrees of consciousness -- must go hand in hand with a willingness to speak of being more or less a subject, which seems at least problematic. (There are many possible replies to these objections, of course; here I am simply indicating some of my reasons for adopting a different position.)

Rather than appealing to different degrees of access to make the conscious/unconscious distinction, I would make the distinction on the basis of *actually* versus *potentially* accessed states. Conscious versus unconscious perceptions are not a matter of how much information is access*ible* but, rather, a matter of what information is *actually* accessed at any given time.

Unconscious states, then, are states that are accessible but not actually accessed by a subject. Given my above comments on phenomenal properties as spatio-temporal properties, this means that all states that *can* be experienced are phenomenal states, but only those that *are* experienced are conscious states. It is important, then, to distinguish between phenomenal properties -- which, I am suggesting, include all properties we can experience -- and phenomenal consciousness, which is just consciousness simpliciter, or the actual occurrence of spatio-temporal experience. For all the interesting and important questions regarding the nature of self-knowledge and selfhood that remain, there can be nothing more, and nothing less, to phenomenal consciousness than this.

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