



Kant's Theory of Experience

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Abstract

In this thesis I present and defend an interpretation of Kant's theory of experience as it stands from the viewpoint of his empirical realism. My central contention is that Kant's is a conception of everyday experience, a kind of immediate phenomenological awareness as of empirical objects, and although he takes this to be representational, it cannot itself amount to empirical knowledge because it can be non-veridical, because in such experience it is possible to *misrepresent* the world. I outline my view in an extended introduction. In Part I I offer a novel interpretation of Kant's doctrine of sensibility and sensation. Utilizing a data-processor schematic as an explanatory framework, I give an account of how outer sense, as a collection of sensory capacities, is causally affected by empirical objects to produce bodily state sensations that naturally encode information about those objects. This information is then processed through inner sense to present to the understanding a manifold of mental state sensations that similarly encode information. I also give accounts of how the reproductive imagination operates in hallucination to produce sensible manifolds in lieu of current causal affection, and of the restricted role that consciousness plays at this low level of cognitive function. In Part II I turn to the role of the understanding in experience. I offer a two-stage model of conceptual synthesis and explain how Kant's theory of experience is a unique blend of conceptualist and non-conceptualist elements. I show that it explains how our experience can provide us with reasons for belief while at the same time accounting for the fact that experience is what anchors us to the world. Finally, I return to non-veridical experience. I confront recent naïve realist readings of Kant and argue that, for Kant, the possibility of non-veridicality is built into the very nature of the human mind and the way it relates to the world.

Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	v
Note on Sources and Translations	vi
General Introduction	1
0.1 The Viewpoint of Empirical Realism.....	1
0.2 Experience and Empirical Knowledge	3
0.3 Experience, Sensation, and the Representation of Objects	13
0.4 Locating Kant Among the Isms	19
0.5 Intuition and Perception	24
Part I Sensibility and Sensation	33
1.1 The Internal Structure of Sensibility.....	34
1.1.1 The Basic Model.....	35
1.1.2 The Supplemented Model.....	40
1.1.3 Naturalness and Semantic Normativity	46
1.1.4 Naturalness and Passivity	51
1.1.5 Two Conceptions of Sensation.....	56
1.1.6 The Reproductive Imagination	64
1.1.7 The Complex Model: A Summary Description and Diagram.....	72
1.2 Consciousness and Sensibility	75
1.2.1 The Problem: Two Kinds of Consciousness.....	77
1.2.2 The Solution: The Parasitic Nature of Thin Consciousness.....	79
Part II Understanding and Experience	85
2.1 The Internal Structure of the Understanding	86
2.1.1 A Note on Imaginative Synthesis	90
2.1.2 A Two-Stage Model of Conceptual Synthesis	97

2.1.2.1	Stage I: Schematic Categorisation.....	97
2.1.2.2	Stage II: Empirical Determination.....	104
2.1.3	Kant's Weak Non-Conceptualism.....	111
2.1.4	Experience and Reason.....	118
2.1.4.1	Judgemental Structure and Rational Ground.....	118
2.1.4.2	Rational Ground and the Spectrum Conception.....	123
2.1.4.3	Semantic Normativity Again.....	128
2.1.4.α	Section Appendix: The Logical Space of Reasons.....	133
2.1.5	Constraint Level I: World-Experience.....	141
2.1.5.1	Conceptual Functions.....	141
2.1.5.2	Spontaneity Again.....	149
2.1.6	Constraint Level II: Experience-Thought.....	154
2.1.6.1	Learning Concepts From Experience.....	154
2.1.6.2	Arguments From Nurture and From Nature.....	161
2.2	Non-Veridicality.....	165
2.2.1	Naïve Realism.....	166
2.2.1.1	Defining the View.....	166
2.2.1.2	Intuition Again.....	169
2.2.1.3	More Systematic Problems.....	178
2.2.2	Hallucination and Illusion.....	184
	Conclusion.....	192
	Citations Index.....	198
	Bibliography.....	201

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Note on Sources and Translations

All references to Kant's works other than the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* are given by the volume and page number in *Immanuel Kants gesammelte Schriften*, the edition of the Deutschen (formerly Königlichen Preussischen) Akademie der Wissenschaft, 29 volumes (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1902-), generally known as the *Akademieausgabe*. These are accompanied either by a short English title (when found in the main body of the text) or an abbreviation (when found in footnotes), a key to which is given below. References to the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (Critique of Pure Reason) take the standard A/B format, referring to the original pagination of the 1781 and 1787 editions respectively.

In general I follow the English translations of *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant*, but I have made modifications where deemed appropriate. The details of the particular volumes I have used from this collection are contained in the bibliography. Occasionally I have referred to other English editions of Kant's works and the details of these are also to be found in the bibliography. An index of citations is given at the end.

Where I refer to modern editions of works by historical figures other than Kant, the original date of publication appears in square brackets after the date of the edition I have used.

Abbreviations:

<i>Anthr</i>	<i>Anthropologie in pragmatischer Hinsicht</i> (1798) (Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View)
<i>Br</i>	<i>Briefwechsel</i> (Correspondence)
<i>CJ</i>	<i>Kritik der Urtheilskraft</i> (1790) (Critique of the Power of Judgement)

- Disc* *Über eine Entdeckung, nach der all neue Kritik der reinen Vernunft durch eine ältere entbehrlich gemacht werden soll* (1790)
(On a Discovery, Whereby Any New Critique of Pure Reason is to be Made Superfluous by an Older One)
- Dr* *Träume eines Geistersehers, erläutert durch Träume der Metaphysik* (1766)
(Dreams of a Spirit-Seer Elucidated by Dreams of Metaphysics)
- FI* *Erste Einleitung in die Kritik der Urteilskraft* (1790)
(First Introduction to the Critique of Judgement)
- FS* *Die falsche Spitzfindigkeit der vier syllogistischen Figuren* (1762)
(The False Subtlety of the Four Syllogistic Figures)
- ID* *De mundi sensibilis atque intelligibilis forma et principiis* (1770)
(On the Form and Principles of the Sensible and the Intelligible World [Inaugural Dissertation])
- LB* *Logik Blomberg* (early 1770s)
- LDW* *Logik Dohna-Wundlacken* (1792)
- LF* *Gedanken von der wahren Schätzung der lebendigen Kräfte* (1747)
(Thoughts on the True Estimation of Living Forces)
- LJ* *Logik. Ein Handbuch zu Vorlesungen* (1800)
(Logic: a handbook for lectures [the Jäsche Logic])
- LP* *Logik Pölitz* (around 1780)
- LW* *Logik Wiener* (around 1780)
- MD* *Metaphysik Dohna* (1792-3)
- MFNS* *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Naturwissenschaft* (1786)
(Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science)
- MK₂* *Metaphysik K₂* (early 1790s)
- ML₁* *Metaphysik L₁* (mid 1770s)
- ML₂* *Metaphysik L₂* (1790-1)
- MM* *Metaphysik Mrongovious* (1782-3)
- MV* *Metaphysik Volckmann* (1784-5)
- WOT* *Was heist: Sich im Denken orientiren* (1786)
(What Does it Mean to Orientate Oneself in Thinking?)
- OP* *Opus Postumum* (primarily between 1796-1801)
Opus Postumum
- Prolog* *Prolegomena zu einer jeden künftigen Metaphysik, die als Wissenschaft wird auftreten können* (1783)
(Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics That Will be Able to Come Forward as Science)
- Prog* *Welches sind die wirklichen Fortschritte, die die Metaphysik seit Leibnizens und Wolfs Zeiten in Deutschland gemacht hat?* (1793-1804)
(What Real Progress has Metaphysics Made in Germany Since the Time of Leibniz and Wolff?)
- Ref* *Reflexionen von der handschriftlichen Nachlaß* (various dates)
- Rel* *Die Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der blossen Vernunft* (1793)
(Religion Within the Boundaries of Mere Reason)

Hence, the question I wish to have answered is this: How does the soul transpose such an image, which it ought, after all, to represent as contained within itself, into quite a different relation, locating it, namely, in a place *external* to itself among the objects which present themselves to the sensation which the soul has. Nor shall I allow myself to be fobbed off with an answer which adduces other cases which have some kind of similarity with this kind of description, and which occur, for example, in the state of fever. For whether the victim of the delusion be in a state of health or illness, what one wishes to know is not whether such deceptions also occur in other circumstances, but rather how the deception is possible...

I think we can offer a reasonable explanation of that type of mental disturbance which is called madness, and which, if it is more serious, is called derangement. The distinctive feature of this malady consists in this: the victim of the confusion places mere objects of his own imagination outside himself, taking them to be things which are actually present before him.

Dreams of a Spirit-Seer Elucidated by Dreams of Metaphysics

Immanuel Kant

1766

(2:344-6)

General Introduction

0.1 The Viewpoint of Empirical Realism

A caveat regarding the scope of this thesis: I will not at any length discuss transcendental idealism. I will be concerned with how we are to understand Kant's theory of experience from what I will call the viewpoint of empirical realism. Kant repeatedly affirms his commitment to empirical realism. For example:

Our assertions accordingly teach the *empirical reality* of time, i.e., objective validity in regard to all objects that may ever be given to our senses. (A35/B52)

empirical realism is beyond doubt, i.e., to our outer intuitions there corresponds something real in space. (A375)¹

And many other things Kant says confirm this commitment. In particular, his insistence on there being a distinction *within* the world of appearance between the object as it is in-itself and the object as it merely appears, between reality and ideality, objective and subjective validity, truth and illusion, being and seeming, and so forth.²

My method in this thesis is to take Kant's affirmations of empirical realism at face value and to see where we can get from there. I will not try and define precisely what Kant's empirical realism amounts to. To do so would require engaging at length with transcendental idealism and to engage at length with transcendental idealism would be to

¹ Cf., e.g., Bxxxix-xli, A28/B44, B69, B274-9, A367-80; *Prol* (4:292-4, 374-5); *Prog* (20:268-9); *OP* (22:320).

² See, e.g., A45-6/B62-3, B69-71, A183/B227, A293-8/B349-54; *Prol* (4:289, 290-1, 375); *Prog* (20:268-9).

write a different thesis. Kant clearly has *some* conception of how we human animals cognitively interact with the spatiotemporal objects around us, doing things like seeing trees and forming beliefs about them, and the thought is simply that we can explore this conception without getting bogged down in transcendental idealism. After all, at the end of the *Prolegomena*, in the course of vehemently defending his realist credentials against the spurious criticisms of the (Feder-) Garve Review,³ Kant observes of the 'sort of idealism it is that runs through my entire work' that it 'does not by far constitute the soul of the system' (4:374).

Another way to make the same point is to say that I will approach Kant as a philosopher of mind, rather than as a metaphysician (or, as it may be, depending on one's interpretation of transcendental idealism, as a meta-metaphysician). Philosophy of mind and metaphysics (and meta-metaphysics) are intimately intertwined. But sometimes we have to neglect one in order to be able to focus on the other. This is no less the case when it comes to Kant scholarship.

Putting things this way also has the benefit of making it clear that, in neglecting transcendental idealism in the way I do, I am not pursuing anything as strong as the Strawsonian separatist project of amputating the gangrenous metaphysical limb of transcendental idealism from the healthy body of Kantian epistemology.⁴ Much recent work on transcendental idealism has argued that this cannot be done, sometimes arguing at the same time that transcendental idealism is not at all as hopeless as Strawson thought it to be.⁵ I happen to be inclined to think that each of these projects has enjoyed some success, but here I do not take a stance on either.

³ Reprinted in Kant (2004).

⁴ See Strawson (1966).

⁵ See especially Allison (2004), but also, e.g., Bird (1962), Prauss (1974), Langton (1998), Hanna (2001), and Bird (2006).

One result of trying to understand Kant's theory of experience from the viewpoint of empirical realism has been the very naturalistic model of sensibility that I will offer in Part I. Here and elsewhere, in particular in my discussion of non-veridical experience (**1.1.6, 2.2**) and thin consciousness (**1.2**), I have been heavily influenced by how Kant presents his view in the *Anthropology*. This is a work that has been almost entirely overlooked in the literature on Kant's theoretical philosophy.⁶ This can only be because of the fact that it has relatively little to say regarding metaphysics or transcendental idealism. But as I have said, this leaves Kant's philosophy of mind to be dealt with. And part of the worth of this thesis lies in the extent to which it shows how unjustifiable neglecting the *Anthropology* is when it comes to understanding Kant's theory of experience.

This is by no means to say that the theory of experience that I present is not the one already present in the first *Critique*. To a large extent my interpretation is a unified one, although we must allow for a degree of terminological shift (see **0.5**). It is true that the *Anthropology* expands on certain issues in key ways, but we will see that all of the crucial points are prefigured in the *Critique*, and although I draw on a wide range of texts, this work remains my main point of reference.

0.2 Experience and Empirical Knowledge

In saying that I will be concerned with how we are to understand Kant's theory of experience from the viewpoint of his empirical realism, what do I mean by 'experience'?

⁶ The only two book-length exceptions are Brandt (1999) and Foucault (2008 [1964]). Of these only the latter has (very recently) been translated into English. As regards article-length English-language exceptions, Caygill (2003) and Wunsch (2011) focus on what the *Anthropology* has to say about sensibility, and in Stephenson (2011) I focus on the topic of non-veridical experience, which will also be central here. Frierson (2009) and Zinkstok (2011), who focus on empirical psychology, should also be mentioned in this vein, the former for the connection of psychological disorders to the topics of non-veridical experience and self-knowledge, the latter for the connection to what Kant calls applied logic.

In a nutshell, I mean the everyday experience enjoyed by normal human adults *and* I take this to be what Kant normally means by 'Erfahrung'. In this section I will expand on this view in a preliminary way and explain why it is controversial yet plausible.

There is an influential strand of thought in Anglophone Kant scholarship that takes Kant to equivocate quite radically over two very different conceptions of experience.⁷ On the one hand, there is the pre-synthesis, sensational conception of experience that we might call *thin* experience. This is what William James (2007 [1890], p. 488) calls a 'blooming, buzzing confusion' of fleeting sensory episodes. It is the kind of experience, one might suppose, that infants and certain non-human animals undergo, but it is not the kind of experience that normal human adults normally undergo. On the other hand, however, there is what we might call *thick* experience, which, for Kant, is the product of the conceptualising activity of the understanding in synthesising the representations provided to it through sensibility. My primary concern is with thick experience. (I will also have something to say about thin experience, especially in **1.2**. But it is worth pointing out straightaway that I think that the role Kant grants to thin experience is in fact very minor and that Kant himself only very rarely, if ever, denotes this kind of experience with the term 'Erfahrung').

It is widely held that thick experience is a kind of empirical knowledge.⁸ I will argue that it is not. Thick experience is the everyday experience of normal human adults, not

⁷ See especially Kemp Smith (2003 [1923], p. 52), Beck (1978, p. 40), Kitcher (1981, p. 220), Guyer (1987, pp. 79-81ff), and Van Cleve (1999, pp. 73-6). Van Cleve delineates no less than eight different senses that 'experience' might have in a Kantian context, though his claim does not seem to be that Kant himself equivocated quite so radically. If this is his claim, he adduces no evidence for it apart from what I deal with here.

⁸ To take a small sample beyond those already mentioned in the previous footnote, see Paton (1936), Cassirer (1954), Bird (1962), Strawson (1966), Bennett (1966), Walker (1982), Allison (2004), and Allais (2012, p. 42).

experience in some contrived technical sense.⁹ It is what I am undergoing as I type this sentence and what you are undergoing as you read it, we both occasionally pausing to look out of our respective windows at the world going about its business. It is what happens when I see a tree, when I see a bird in a tree, and when I see a bird flying out of a tree. It is, as I will say, our everyday experience *as of* an independently existing external world of causally connected objects. Everyday experience is not a kind of empirical knowledge because it can be mistaken, because it can be what philosophers tend to call *non-veridical*.

Non-veridicality has been a central topic in epistemology and philosophy of mind since the pre-Socratics. Even disregarding worries about radical sceptical scenarios in which experience is globally non-veridical, the residual but trenchant issue of how to deal with local non-veridicality arguably remains *the* dividing question in contemporary philosophy of perception.¹⁰ Yet, strangely, little has been written that explicitly aims to expound Kant's views on the matter.¹¹ I mean to begin to remedy this fact, and in doing so, show how important the issue is for gaining a proper understanding of Kant's theory of thick experience.

(That I think thick experience can be non-veridical because I think it is everyday experience is one reason that I will talk about it being *as of* empirical objects – this locution does not commit us to the actual existence of the objects of thick experience.

There are two more reasons for the 'as of' locution that I will introduce in due course.)

⁹ Caygill (1996, p. 186) claims that 'Kant considerably redefines his concept of experience, making it something far from humble and commonsensical'. On my view this erroneously conflates showing that something far from humble is involved in something commonsensical with no longer dealing with the commonsensical.

¹⁰ See Crane (2006), although Siegel (2011b) can well be seen as an attempt to shift the focus away from non-veridicality.

¹¹ One notable exception is Beck (1978). However, Beck does not in fact spend much time addressing positively Kant's account of non-veridical experience. Rather he focuses on the absolutely correct and consummately summarised point that 'the categories do not differentiate veridical from non-veridical experience; they make the difference between dumbly facing chaos without even knowing it – 'less even than a dream' [A112] – and telling a connected story, even if it is false' (p. 54).

So why is this claim about thick experience – about what Kant means by ‘Erfahrung’ – controversial?

To begin with, Kant defines thick experience as a kind of empirical Erkenntnis.¹² And until recently, ‘Erkenntnis’ has been translated into English as ‘knowledge’.¹³ ‘Cognition’ is now generally accepted as a better translation.¹⁴ But this is largely for linguistic reasons such as its ability to take the plural form and its derivation from the Latinate ‘cognitio’, which Kant occasionally parenthetically appends (for example at A320/B377). It is sometimes also acknowledged that Kant talks explicitly about Erkenntnis that is false. For example:

cognition [Erkenntnis] is false if it does not agree with the object to which it is related even if it contains something that could well be valid of other objects. (A58/B83)¹⁵

But even then, such usage tends to be dismissed.¹⁶ After all, we need not even appeal to Kant's well-known terminological inconsistency in order to be able to explain away his talk of false Erkenntnis. We could simply reason as follows. Granted, if Erkenntnis is to be understood as knowledge, then it (and therefore thick experience, as empirical Erkenntnis) cannot be false. But perhaps Kant on these occasions is not really talking about Erkenntnis that is false. Perhaps he is rather talking about something which purports to be Erkenntnis, but isn't, because it's false. Talking in this way would not be so strange. We can legitimately talk about false banknotes even if we know perfectly well that there is really no such thing as a false banknote. What we mean by ‘a false banknote’ is a piece of paper

¹² See, e.g., B147, B165-6, B218, B234, B277; *Prol* (4:302); *MFNS* (4:472); *FI* (20:203); *Anthr* (7:128, 141, 144).

¹³ Most notably in Kemp Smith's translation of the first *Critique* (Kant (2003)), but also in those of Micklejohn (Kant (2004)), Müller (Kant (1896)), and others.

¹⁴ See the Pluhar (Kant (1996)) and Guyer-Wood (Kant (1997)) translations of the first *Critique*, and more generally the Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant.

¹⁵ Cf., e.g., A59/B84, A709/B737; *LJ* (9:50-1, 54).

¹⁶ See, e.g., Engstrom (2006, p. 21) and Dicker (2004, p. xii).

that *purports* to be a banknote, but isn't, because it's false. So our talking of false banknotes does not entail that we think that banknotes can be false. In the same way, Kant's talking of false Erkenntnis does not show that he thinks that Erkenntnis (and therefore thick experience) can be false, or non-veridical.

The default assumption remains that in defining thick experience as a kind of empirical Erkenntnis, Kant is defining it as a kind of empirical knowledge. Thus Henry Allison (2001, p. 23) writes in a typical passage:

[Kant] identified experience with empirical knowledge rather than merely the reception of the raw material for such knowledge (impressions)

My point, then, is to press the question: is there really no middle ground between two such conceptions of experience? I think there is, and I think Kant's conception of thick experience occupies this ground. So I think it is a mistake to interpret Kant's definition of thick experience as empirical Erkenntnis as a definition of it as empirical knowledge. However, my view and why it is controversial goes much deeper than an issue of translation and it does not depend on a few isolated passages.

To see this, let us consider two lines of reasoning that might lead us to accept that influential claim that Kant equivocates over the thick and thin conceptions of experience, and in particular the claim that he must sometimes be mobilising the thin conception in his talk of 'Erfahrung'. Each of these lines of reasoning is very common and each relies on the assumption that thick experience is a kind of empirical knowledge. In each case I will present the line of reasoning, point out how it relies on the assumption that thick experience is a kind of empirical knowledge, and explain where it leads us to replace this assumption with my own alternative proposal that thick experience is everyday experience.

(The main concern of the discussion is with how my view is controversial yet plausible. It is *not* the main concern of the discussion to undermine the claim that Kant must sometimes be mobilising the thin conception of experience in using the term 'Erfahrung'. Insofar as it does this too, so much the better, for I think this claim is mistaken, but this point is not so central to my account.¹⁷)

The first line of reasoning has a systematic motivation concerning Kant's method of argumentation in relation to scepticism. It runs as follows:

Arguing that X is a necessary condition for the possibility of Y is of no use in defending X against the sceptic if the sceptic does not accept the possibility of Y. So if Kant's transcendental arguments are going to have any force against the sceptic, then they had better start from a premise of thin experience. For although Kant often talks about thick experience, if his arguments started from a premise of this, the sceptic would not even get on board.

In order for this line of reasoning to go through, we need to assume that thick experience is a kind of empirical knowledge. For without this assumption, it is not at all obvious that what the sceptic denies is the possibility of thick experience.

Suppose that instead we assume that thick experience is everyday experience. If this is what thick experience is, then it is far from obvious that Hume, for example, denies it.

How could he? I will not have the space to go into Kant's relation to Hume or his relation

¹⁷ It is worth noting at this point that a claim regarding Kant's equivocation over the term 'Erfahrung' can also be found in the German-language tradition. But the distinction drawn in this tradition is quite different from that standardly drawn in the English-language tradition, and in particular is not concerned with any conception of experience so rarefied as that of thin experience. See especially Eisler (1961, p. 123) and Caird (1877, p. 202), who cites Paulsen (1875, p. 175) and Hölder (1873, p. 31) as claiming that Kant equivocated over 'the ordinary consciousness or common sense view of things' and 'the developed consciousness of science'. This distinction looks more like that which Sellars (1963, pp. 7-40) draws between the Manifest and Scientific Images. I think it quite plausible that Kant equivocated in *this* way, and this is quite compatible with taking thick experience to be everyday experience.

to scepticism more generally. My task in this thesis is to present and defend my interpretation of Kant's theory of experience. But the basic thought is familiar from the work of Wilfrid Sellars.¹⁸ It would be that the force of Kant's arguments against Hume is first and foremost anti-empiricist in nature, rather than anti-sceptical. It lies in showing that Hume's analysis of what is required for everyday experience is wrong and that in fact a great amount of a priori cognition is already involved in it *even seeming to us as though* there is a unified self and an independently existing external world of causally connected objects. This is not to say that ground against some forms of scepticism could not also be gained in this way, though it would be gained indirectly, by undermining the theory of experience on which the scepticism in question is based.

The second line of reasoning that I want to discuss is textual. The paradigm case of Kant's equivocating over the thick and thin conceptions of experience is supposed to be the first paragraph of the B-edition Introduction. This is worth quoting in full and for ease of reference I number the occurrences of 'experience':

There is no doubt whatever that all our cognition [Erkenntnis] begins with [1]experience; for how else should the cognitive faculty be awakened into exercise if not through objects that stimulate our senses and in part themselves produce representations, in part bring the activity of our understanding into motion to compare these, to connect or separate them, and thus to work up the raw material of sensible impressions into a cognition of objects that is called [2]experience? *As far as time is concerned*, then, no cognition in us precedes [3]experience, and with [4]experience every cognition begins. (B1)

The claim is that occurrences 1, 3, and 4 mobilise the thin conception of experience and refer to those immediate, unprocessed results of the stimulation of our senses that Kant

¹⁸ See especially Sellars (1967, pp. 635, 647) and Sellars (1953a, pp. 129, 132), as well as Ameriks (1978) and Bennett (1979). Allison (2008) also favours this approach – that Kant contra Hume is an issue of competing models of the mind and not, at least in the first instance, an issue of competing views on whether we can have empirical knowledge. Though as noted above, Allison still maintains that experience for Kant is a kind of empirical knowledge. For sympathetic, though much more wide-ranging discussion, see Ameriks (2000) and Ameriks (2003). And see Forster (2008) for a contrasting view.

here calls 'the raw material of sensible impressions'. Only occurrence 2 mobilises the thick conception of experience and refers to the result of the understanding's activity in working up these sensible impressions. As prima facie implausible as it sounds to attribute to Kant such a remarkable disregard of basic standards of terminological consistency, this must be the case, so the claim goes, because thick experience cannot be that with which 'all our cognition begins'.

Again this line of reasoning relies on the assumption that thick experience is empirical knowledge. Free of this assumption, thick experience can indeed be that with which all our cognition begins.

Suppose we adopt my alternative proposal again: that thick experience is everyday experience. Then the basic thought this time is that thick experience is that with which all our cognition begins simply in the sense that it is what constitutes normal human consciousness. It is, in this non-Sellarsian, non-McDowellian sense, what is *given*.¹⁹ More specifically, thick experience as everyday experience can be that with which all our cognition begins in at least the following three senses:

1. Our empirical knowledge of the world is a kind of cognition, and we acquire this knowledge, or at least make claims to such, on the basis of thick experience, either directly through what in particular thick experience tells us about the world, or indirectly through making various inferences on the basis of what it tells us.

¹⁹ As Lewis (1956, p. 50) memorably puts it: 'It is indeed the thick experience of the world of things, not the thin given of immediacy, which constitutes the datum for philosophic reflection. We do not see patches of color, but trees and houses; we hear, not indescribable sound, but voices and violins.' And as Kant says in *Dr* (2:368), 'we find ourselves back on the humble ground of experience and common sense, happy if we regard it as the place to which we have been assigned: the place from which we may never depart with impunity, the place which also contains everything which can satisfy us' (cf. A226/B274).

2. Our a priori knowledge is a kind of cognition, and we can only articulate this knowledge on the basis of thick experience, this time not because of what in particular thick experience tells us, but rather through reflecting on the necessary conditions for the possibility of such experience, precisely abstracting from what in particular it tells us. Our a priori knowledge is knowledge of the structure of thick experience.

3. Our practical knowledge of how we ought to act is a kind of cognition, and we acquire this knowledge on the basis of thick experience in the following sense. Self-awareness is only made possible through undergoing thick experience. And it is only as possibly self-aware subjects, which is to say, as *agents*, that we form our practical knowledge of how we ought to act. In this way, thick experience is a necessary condition for our practical knowledge of how we ought to act.

Of course this is all very rough, and although my primary concern is with thick experience itself, I will in due course have something more to say about each of these. But the key point is clear. If we understand thick experience as everyday experience, then *all four* of the occurrences of the term 'experience' in the above passage can refer to thick experience.

On my reading of the first paragraph of B1, then, Kant begins with a pithy slogan concerning thick experience, which, *although itself a kind of cognition*, is nevertheless that cognition which grounds all other cognition in the senses just described. Indeed, it is only because thick experience is itself cognition that it can play this role at all. With this slogan Kant signals his empiricism. That thick experience is cognition does nothing to hamper this. However, he then goes on to give a thumbnail sketch of what thick experience, as cognition, involves – it is itself the result of the conceptual activity of the understanding in working up raw material (though any such activity must therefore be sub-personal because it is what first produces thick experience, our everyday datum of investigation and that

alongside which we as agents first come into existence – see 1.2.2). It is in filling out this thumbnail sketch in the Aesthetic and Analytic that Kant will temper his empiricism with rationalism (and thereby attack Hume) by showing the wealth of innate ability and a priori knowledge that is already involved in our having thick experience. Finally, in the same rationalist vein, Kant emphasises that he means only to give precedence to this kind of cognition in a *temporal* sense. And in particular what Kant has in mind here is that thick experience does *not* precede a priori knowledge or practical cognition in a *logical* or *epistemic* sense.

It is true that thick experience *does* precede *empirical* knowledge in *more* than a temporal sense because thick experience, as we shall see, is the *rational ground* for empirical knowledge. But first of all, what Kant says in this passage does not rule this out; he just neglects to mention it. And second of all, the thought is that he would neglect to mention it precisely because he is, in a sense, not particularly interested in *securing* empirical knowledge at all. He does indeed have an account of our empirical beliefs and *claims* to empirical knowledge, but at no point in this account is it especially important whether any one of these in particular is successful. This, then, is the real force of my thesis that thick experience is everyday experience and not itself a kind of empirical knowledge. Well beyond any specific theses to do with Kant equivocating over the term 'Erfahrung' or the correct translation of 'Erkenntnis', it is widely accepted that one of Kant's primary concerns is to secure empirical knowledge.²⁰ I think this view is mistaken.

(Henceforth I will generally talk about experience without specifying that I mean thick, everyday experience. I will also be focusing on the visual perceptual aspect of our everyday, thick experience. I think that, insofar as he thought about these matters at all,

²⁰ Greenberg (2001) is critical of this view insofar as he argues that Kant's primary concern is rather with securing *a priori* knowledge. I agree with this. But Greenberg shares the identification of experience with a kind of empirical knowledge that is my own reason for the rejection of the view.

Kant's theory is supposed to generalise across the sensory modalities.²¹ But recent work in philosophy of perception has shown us how difficult any such generalisation might turn out to be and I will not go into this issue.²² I will generally leave this specification implicit too.)

0.3 Experience, Sensation, and the Representation of Objects

In this section I will introduce a key contrast between the cognitional way in which (thick, everyday, visual perceptual) experience involves representation and the non-cognitional way in which sensation involves representation. At the end of the section I will also say something more about the topic of non-veridicality.

'Representation' ('Vorstellung'²³) is Kant's most basic term of art. He says that a representation is a modification or determination of the mind or soul.²⁴ He also says that 'All representations, as representations, have their object [Gegenstand]' (A108), and it has long been recognised that there is a clear affinity to Brentano's conception of intentionality here.²⁵ Brentano argues that intentionality is the definitional mark of the mental in the sense that all and only mental states are intentional states. But it is important to be aware

²¹ See especially *Dr* (2:344-5) and *Anthr* (7:153-61).

²² Much of the work in this area is collected in two recent anthologies: Macpherson (2011) and Biggs, Matthen, Stokes (forthcoming). See Melnick (2009, pp. 165-7) for a rare account of Kant's theory of outer perception that focuses explicitly on how it runs for the non-visual, non-auditory case of perceptually detecting impenetrability, inertia, and moving force. On quite a different tack, though worth mentioning in this context, Strawson (1959, pp. 59-88) famously considers whether a purely auditory experience might ground objective thought (and seems to conclude that it could). There are hints that Kant would agree – see *Dr* (2:345).

²³ Pluhar (Kant (1996, p. 22)) translates 'Vorstellung' as 'presentation' because he does not think that Kant's theory of perception is representational. He does not say exactly what he means by this but suffice it to say that on my account Kant's theory certainly warrants being called representational, since we perceive/experience objects by representing them and the representations themselves, not their objects, are what we are directly related to in perception/experience. (See also Schwarz's 'concise' translation (Kant (1982)) and Broad (1978))

²⁴ See, e.g., A34/B50, A50/B74, A197/B242; *Ref* (16:77; 17:496).

²⁵ See, e.g., Vaihinger (1892), Pereboom (1988), Sellars (1968), Aquila (1983), and Aquila (1989); and see Aquila (2003) for a contrastive view of these very different approaches.

that this claim is mitigated by a very broad understanding of intentionality, which itself tracks a very broad understanding of what kind of thing can count as an object.

For Brentano, all mental states are directed at objects, but even momentary mental episodes, such as transitory sensations, can fulfil the role of objects here. Brentano's idea is simply that all mental states are directed at something distinct from themselves.²⁶ And the same broadness is sometimes at work in Kant's talk of representations and their objects. After all, a *Vorstellung* is most literally just a putting before and a *Gegenstand* is most literally just a standing against. Thus continuing the sentence just quoted from A108, Kant says that all representations 'can themselves be objects of other representations in turn', and he goes on to say that 'one can, to be sure, call everything, and even every representation, insofar as one is conscious of it, an object [*Objekt*²⁷]' (A189/B234). The point is that in order for it to be useful to talk about the representation of objects, we need to be a bit more specific.

First let us specify what kind of objects we will be dealing with. Working as we are from the viewpoint of empirical realism, we are concerned with the representation of *empirical* objects, which is to say spatiotemporally located and extended, sensible property possessing, causally interacting entities that are not only distinct from our representations of them but also (in *some* sense) independent of these representations. Paradigmatically, these are things like birds and trees, tables and chairs. They are what Austin (1962, p. 8) famously dubs 'moderate sized specimens of dry goods'. Experience, as a species of

²⁶ Brentano (1995 [1874]).

²⁷ Allison (1986, pp. 135-6) claims that Kant uses 'Gegenstand' and 'Objekt' to denote different senses of object, the latter in fact being the much broader term with the former taking on the narrower meaning of an independent, spatiotemporal entity, essentially what I go onto call an empirical object. The claim was excoriated from the revised edition, Allison (2004), however. And Vanzo (2008), for example, shows convincingly that the various uses of these terms cut across one another. More generally, Kant often switches between Latinate and Germanic forms of a word merely for reasons of style. (Interestingly, the distinction that Allison proposed between the narrow 'Gegenstand' and the broad 'Objekt' would reverse the relation between these terms, and especially their corresponding adjectives, that many have found in Husserl. See, e.g., Husserl (1973 [1950]).)

empirical cognition, indeed merely as a species of empirical representation, involves the representation of these kinds of thing, *empirical* objects. In fact this is definitional – an empirical object just is an object of possible experience. We will have cause to look at this notion more carefully, not least because there is a sense in which there is only a single object of possible experience, a single empirical object, namely the world (as it appears). This is *the* (very large) particular, *the* (very complex) state of affairs, *the* (very long and still on-going) event – that single unified whole of which all other empirical objects are merely proper parts. But this much will suffice for now.

Second let us distinguish two fundamentally different ways in which empirical objects can be represented. This will give us two fundamentally different kinds of representation, cognitional and non-cognitional. (Kant sometimes marks this distinction as that between objective and subjective representation, but I will generally try to avoid these especially multifarious terms.)

On the one hand, we have that kind of representation of empirical objects that is merely the result of the causal affection of our senses by empirical objects. At B1 Kant calls these ‘sensible impressions’, but his most common term for this kind of ‘mere causal effect’ representation is ‘sensation’ (‘Empfindung’):

The *effect* of an object on the capacity for representation, insofar as we are affected by it, is *sensation*. (A19/B34, first italics mine)

Note, then, that despite the term ‘sensation’, we should not have in mind here anything like the feeling of pain. First of all, even if we are talking about sensations directly accompanied by consciousness, they need not be emotive in the way that pain is. Sensations in Kant’s sense can be affectively neutral.²⁸ Second of all, sensations in Kant’s

²⁸ See Kant’s distinction between sensation and feeling: *Anthr* (7:153); *CJ* (5:189, 205-6).

sense need not be directly or even indirectly accompanied by consciousness. Sensations are not qualia. In normal human adults, when sensations are accompanied by consciousness, it is normally only *indirectly*. This occurs when they play their role in forming the material foundation of experience, when they are conceptually synthesised into thick experience. Sensations *directly* accompanied by consciousness, on the other hand, would be thin experience. Kant does seem to allow that this can occur even in normal human adults (although as I have already mentioned, I don't in fact think that he uses the term 'Erfahrung' for this). In which case, a better model than pain would be something like a raw colour-field. But we will see in **1.2** that if a normal human adult is to undergo thin experience, it must necessarily be abnormal and parasitic on a wider framework of (thick) experience. Sensations that are neither indirectly nor directly accompanied by consciousness are still sensations. It's just that they play no role in either kind of experience. Sensations are merely the immediate results of the stimulation of our senses by empirical objects, mere causal effects.

As a first pass we can say that sensations represent empirical objects in something like the sense that a lawyer represents her client in court – they stand *in* for their objects, acting as cognitive proxies for their objects.²⁹ Or to use a different analogy, sensations refer to empirical objects in something like the sense that people are referred to doctors – they point us in the direction of empirical objects, but they do not do so by describing them and in a sense they do not *say* anything about empirical objects at all.³⁰ Nevertheless, it is precisely by representing empirical objects in this minimal, non-cognitional sense that sensations can play their role in providing the raw material for experience.

²⁹ The lawyer analogy is from Landy (2012, p. 36) and the 'stand *in* for' locution from Rosenberg (1980), both of whom, as I do, take their lead from Sellars (1968).

³⁰ The doctor analogy is from Landy (2009, p. 245).

What, then, beyond bare sensation, is required for experience according to Kant? Beyond the mere causal affection of our senses by empirical objects, experience requires the activity of the understanding in *making sense* of that causal affection, in understanding that it *means* that the world is a certain way. This is how I will parse conceptual synthesis – to conceptually synthesise sensations is to understand what they mean. It is in understanding or interpreting sensations as meaning that the world is a certain way that we represent the world *as* being that way. Or slightly more specifically, in order to make it clear that the switch from talk of empirical objects to talk of the world is not too significant: it is in this way that we represent the world *as* being such that in the subject's perceptual presence there are such and such empirical objects with such and such empirical properties, arranged and interacting in such and such a way.

We can say that while sensation involves a kind of representation that is merely *of* empirical objects, experience involves a kind of representation that is of empirical objects *as such*. This 'as such' locution is designed to capture two intimately intertwined aspects of the kind of representation involved in experience, both of which mark this cognitional kind of representation out from the previous, non-cognitional kind of representation that is already involved in bare, unconceptually synthesised sensation.³¹

First, that experience is *judgementally* structured. A representation of the world *as* being a certain way is akin to the judgement *that* the world is that way. Unlike bare sensation, experience precisely does *say* something about the empirical objects it represents – it has,

³¹ It should be noted that there is in Kant a broader conception of cognition than the one operative in specifying experience as cognitional. According to the broad conception, even concepts in isolation are cognitions, as is *any* unification thereof (see, e.g. A320/B376-7; *LJ* (9:91)). In this sense a cognition is any representation with a logical extension. This very broad conception would still exclude sensation, which is merely intensional, but it would include our representations of God, for example, and thus would not distinguish cognition from thought in the way that Kant often does (e.g. at Bxxvi, B146). For this reason, I think everyone concerned would accept that this broad conception of cognition is in some way secondary or deviant – it is not the conception of cognition for which Kant is centrally concerned to articulate necessary conditions of possibility.

in short, propositional content. Second, that our experience involves an understanding of what kind of things the objects we experience are. In experience, empirical objects are represented *as* empirical objects.

One might object immediately that by 'understanding' in the previous paragraph, I surely just mean knowledge, and so doesn't this trouble my claim that experience and empirical knowledge are distinct? There is something right here. The understanding that I think Kant thinks is necessary for the representation of empirical objects *as such*, and thus for experience, is indeed a kind of knowledge. Moreover, it is a kind of knowledge that involves empirical elements. However, it is not empirical knowledge in the relevant sense, the sense in which I am claiming that experience and empirical knowledge are distinct.

The representation of an empirical object *as*, for example, a tree, involves, we might suppose, *knowing* various things about what it takes to be a tree, as well as various things about how trees might be related to one another and to other empirical objects, like birds. But it does *not* require *knowing* that the way one is representing things as being is really the way things are; it does not require knowing that the empirical object one is representing in experience as a tree is in fact a tree. For although things might be the way one is representing them as being, they might not, and we cannot know what is not the case. I return to this central contention in a moment. The point right now is just that the kind of representation involved in experience requires *conceptual* knowledge, and while this knowledge can include whatever knowledge comes along with possessing specifically *empirical* concepts, it does not thereby require empirical knowledge of how particular parts of the world really are. In order to remain clear on this distinction I will therefore talk about experience requiring understanding and conceptual ability. Things could perhaps be cashed out in terms of knowledge, so long as it was born in mind that what is meant is conceptual knowledge, but this is not the way Kant does things, and with good reason.

(That experience involves 'as such' representation is another of the reasons that I will talk about experience being *as of* the world and its empirical objects. Recall from **0.2** that the first reason was that experience can be non-veridical.)

My main argument for the view that experience is not a kind of empirical knowledge, then, takes the form of showing that, for Kant, the possibility of non-veridical experience is built into the very nature of the human mind and the way it represents the world in experience. The basic thought behind this argument is very simple. In understanding our sensations as meaning something, we represent the world as being a certain way, and in doing so, we can be right. But we can also be wrong. For perhaps we have misunderstood the meaning of our sensations. Perhaps it is not the case that our sensations mean that the world is the way we effectively judge it to be in experience.

0.4 Locating Kant Among the Isms

I will have much more to say about the two fundamentally different kinds of representation that were introduced in the previous section (as well as about the relation between them and the topic of non-veridicality). In Part I of this thesis I begin by cashing out the metaphors of being 'raw material' and 'standing in for' in terms of the notion of the natural encoding of information, and I go on to argue that from the viewpoint of empirical realism sensations provide the *entire* material foundation of experience – they encode information about the qualitative *and quantitative* properties of empirical objects. A large portion of Part II is concerned to analyse just how conceptual synthesis proceeds, to look more closely at how this is connected to judgemental structure, and to draw out what exactly this entails.

However, I want to make it clear straight away that I will not have much more to say by way of a *philosophical* defence of two broadly conceptualist theses that are in the background here.

We as normal human adults experience empirical objects *as* the objects they are and *as* possessing properties. And for Kant, I will argue, doing so requires both that the subject undergoing experience has some related conceptual ability and that experience itself has some related conceptually structured – which is to say, judgemental-propositional – content. On my interpretation we can call Kant's theory conceptualist, so long as we bear in mind that we do so without thereby meaning in any way to align it to any particular contemporary version of conceptualism. All it signifies for the moment is a general commitment to those broadly conceptualist theses that 'as such' representation, and thus 'as of' experience, involves conceptually structured content and requires conceptual ability. As I said, what exactly these commitments amount to for Kant – the exact way in which and extent to which Kant thinks experience has conceptually structured content and requires conceptual ability – is a central subject in Part II of this thesis. And in explaining in detail Kant's version of conceptualism, I will effectively be arguing that he is committed to it.

But I would have to do more than this if I wanted to show that Kant refutes, say, Hume. For Hume would surely not accept conceptualism, at least not in Kant's version. And relatedly, I would also need to say more if I wanted to argue against the host of contemporary philosophers who reject in some way the aforementioned broadly conceptualist theses.³² Again, my task in this thesis is to present and defend my

³² For an important selection, see the essays collected in Gunther (2003), as well as Crane (1992), Peacocke (2001a), and Ayers (2004) for discussions that are particularly relevant given the way I am framing things here.

interpretation of Kant's theory of experience. I will not have space to go on and consider whether his theory is better than Hume's, not to mention whether it is right.

Having said that, however, I do think, and it will be a central concern of mine to argue, that Kant's theory of experience is a philosophically well-designed theory. I will explain what I mean by this.

Let us suppose for the sake of argument that any plausible theory of experience needs to explain how our experience can provide *rational* ground for our beliefs.³³ For surely my seeing that the bird is in the tree, for example, can in some sense *justify* (albeit defeasibly) my belief that the bird is in the tree. That is to say, the relation here is not merely causal. Experience takes place in what Sellars (2003 [1956]) so famously called the logical space of reasons (2.1.4).

Kant's theory explains how experience can rationally ground belief in the following way. We have just seen that experience involves the representation of the world *as* being a certain way, and that for Kant (on my reading), this kind of conceptually structured representation is akin to judgement – experience is judgementally structured and has propositional content. It is this that allows experience to rationally ground belief. For belief is also judgementally structured and has propositional content. Thus experience and belief *are the same kinds of thing with the same kinds of content*. Experience can therefore rationally ground belief in exactly the same, unmysterious way in which one belief can rationally ground another belief – in virtue of the *rational* relations, like entailment and probabilification, that hold between propositional contents.

Now, a worry that has occupied much of contemporary philosophy of mind is that conceptualist moves like this one might leave a theory of experience unable to explain

³³ See Brewer (1999, p. 18ff.) for a defence of this claim, following McDowell (1996). See Byrne (2005) for an argument against it.

either how experience is constrained by the world or how experience in turn constrains thought, in particular how we have the concepts we do *because* we experience what we do and not the other way around.³⁴ What I mean by saying that Kant's theory of experience is a philosophically well-designed theory is that I think, and will argue in **2.1.5** and **2.1.6**, that Kant's theory has quite unique resources to allay this worry. It can satisfy both of these closely connected demands for constraint. And it can do so *without* running the risk of removing experience from the space of reasons altogether.

To explain how Kant's theory achieves this, even in a preliminary way, would require more than is appropriate to an introduction. I will just say that it has to do with the constitutive and partially determining role that sensations as raw material play in experience, with Kant hierarchical-containment conception of the distinction between pure and empirical concepts, and with the fact that Kant's account of what it takes to possess a concept is very demanding, all of which allows his theory to explain how we can both learn our empirical concepts from experience and have these concepts, once learned, feeding back down to structure experience. On my interpretation, Kant's is a rich and sophisticated form of conceptualism, in some ways quite strong but in some ways quite moderate.

In terms of the debate within Kant scholarship regarding whether or not he was a conceptualist, then, my reading of Kant steers a middle way between McDowell-type strong conceptualist readings and the strong non-conceptualist readings of Robert Hanna and Lucy Allais.³⁵ I will attribute certain weak forms of non-conceptualism to Kant –

³⁴ This is how McDowell (1996) influentially sets up the problem. See also Davidson (1973).

³⁵ See McDowell (1996) and McDowell (1998) on the one hand, and Hanna (2005), Hanna (2008), Allais (2009), and Hanna (2011) on the other. Further literature on the conceptualist side of the debate includes Abela (2002), Engstrom (2006), Ginsborg (2006b), Ginsborg (2006a), Ginsborg (2008), Landy (2012), Griffith (2012), Land (2012), and Bauer (2012), though each of these broadly conceptualist interpretations is, like mine, in some way weaker than McDowell's. Other literature on the non-conceptualist side of the debate includes Grüne (2009) and Arens (2010).

weaker than those attributed to him by Hanna and Allais – but I will also maintain that his theory of experience nevertheless remains at heart a conceptualist one (see especially **2.1.3**). Contra McDowell (1996, p. 9), sensibility does for Kant make a notionally separable contribution to experience. But contra Hanna and Allais, its contribution to experience is just that: *notionally* separable from the contribution of the understanding.

If the theory of experience that I attribute to Kant nevertheless counts as a non-conceptualist theory by today's lights, then so be it. I think this would be a misleading title for the theory as I interpret it. But in any case, it doesn't much matter what we call the theory. What is important is how good it is at explaining what we need to explain about experience. I think the theory can provide an explanation of how experience is able to rationally ground belief, and furthermore that it can do so without losing sight of the fact that experience is also what provides us with our grip on the world.

A far more fundamental disagreement between my interpretation and those of Hanna and Allais is their attribution to Kant of a naïve realist theory of our everyday, visual perceptual experience.³⁶ I confront the naïve realist reading of Kant directly and at proper length in **2.2.1**. But in a nutshell, their claim is that, for Kant, everyday experience is not a representational mental state at all, that experiencing puts us in a direct relation to empirical objects and not merely in a direct relation to representations of empirical objects (whether or not such representations need to be externally individuated or are object-dependent³⁷). To utilise a nice analogy from Siegel (2011a) the claim is that the content of experience is more like the content of a bucket than that of a newspaper – objects themselves, and not merely information about them, are conveyed to us by means of

³⁶ Hanna and Allais proceed in terms of intuition, rather than experience, since they take 'intuition' to be Kant's term of art for everyday experience. Thus they can agree with the tradition that 'experience' as Kant uses the term denotes a kind of empirical knowledge and is therefore representational. Of course I disagree with this, and I explain my views on intuition in the next section, but the difference between our interpretations goes much deeper than an issue of terminology.

³⁷ See Willaschek (1997).

experience. I think that this reading of Kant mischaracterises the basic nature of his model of the mind and its place in the world.

0.5 Intuition and Perception

One might wonder at this point where some of the other species of representation have got to. The purpose of this final section of the introduction is to clear some terminological ground in this regard. Kant's technical vocabulary is so large and protean that this is always helpful. For one thing, it will allow me to avail myself of quotations where I think some of the notions central to my interpretation are being invoked although a certain terminological shift has occurred (albeit one far more forgivable than using the same word in two completely different senses within the same sentence (see **0.2**)). The current section is, if you like, my own selective *Stufenleiter* (A320/B376-7): a summary presentation of some key terms and the relation between them. What I have to say will be controversial, and it will play a significant role in my attempts to steer a middle way between the strong conceptualist readings and the strong non-conceptualist readings and to undercut the naïve realist reading. Yet I leave much of what I say as dogmatic assertion for now. For the most part I will leave support for the claims I make here to come out in the course of my account.

Why, then, have I not yet said anything about intuition (*Anschauung*), or for that matter, though it is surely a less significant omission, perception (*Wahrnehmung*)? This is because, ultimately, I do not think we need these in order to understand Kant's theory of experience from the viewpoint of empirical realism. For I do not think that they play an essential *and distinct* role in this theory. Kant's talk of empirical intuition and perception can be reduced to talk of sensation and experience. (Working from the viewpoint of

empirical realism, I will say little about pure intuition and I will generally talk about intuition without specifying that I mean empirical intuition exclusively.)

Here is how I see the reduction going. Kant equivocates over two conceptions of intuition and perception.³⁸ This equivocation naturally infects his singularity and immediacy criteria of intuition.³⁹ Sometimes intuition is just sensation or a manifold thereof. I will dub this the thin conception of intuition, or simply thin intuition. Thin intuitions, as sensations or manifolds thereof, are singular in the sense that they only encode information about particular objects and their particular properties. They are immediate in the sense that they are mere causal effects that have not undergone any conceptual processing. When sensations are directly accompanied by consciousness – that is, in what I called thin experience – Kant sometimes calls this subjective perception, or just perception. I will call this the thin conception of perception, or thin perception for short.

Sometimes, however, by ‘intuition’, ‘objective perception’, and ‘perception’, Kant just means individual episodes of (thick) experience – experiences that put us in cognitional touch with empirical objects as such, but on a more or less individual basis. I will dub these the thick conceptions of intuition and perception, or thick intuition and thick perception. Thick intuitions, as experiences, are singular in the sense that they are as of particular objects possessing particular properties. They are immediate in the sense that the objects they are as of are *phenomenologically* present to consciousness. What we

³⁸ A similar claim can be found in Sellars (1968, pp. 3-4), though as will come out, our accounts differ in several important ways.

³⁹ See, e.g., A19/B33, A68/B93, A320/B377; *Dr* (2:363, 366), *ID* (2:402, 405); *LJ* (9:91), *LW* (24:806, 905). For some classic papers on the singularity and immediacy criteria, see Hintikka (1969), Parsons (1969), Thompson (1972), Howell (1973), and Wilson (1975), as well as more recently Smit (2000) and Banham (2005, pp. 1-20). Hintikka argues that the logical criterion of singularity is sufficient to define intuition, while Parsons and Thompson argue (in different ways) that the epistemic criterion of immediacy is also necessary, the latter being narrower in scope than the former. As I will suggest in **2.2.1.2**, I think this probably depends on whether we are talking about pure or empirical intuition. Putting pure intuition aside, however, the position I take here bears most similarity to Wilson's in that I effectively consider the criteria intensionally different but extensionally identical (though Wilson does not, as I do, distinguish two different manifestations of the criteria tracking the two kinds of intuition).

experience at least seems to be really *there*. This is simply supposed to contrast with whatever less immediate sense in which trees are present to consciousness when I merely abstractly judge that some trees are green without thinking about any trees in particular, for example. (This quite peculiarly phenomenological brand of cognitional representation is the third and final reason that I will talk about experience being *as of* empirical objects. Recall from **0.2** that the first reason was experience can be non-veridical and from **0.3** that the second reason was that it involves 'as such' representation, that experience represents empirical objects *as* empirical objects and *as* being a certain way.)

Note that the givenness of intuition can be treated in a similar way, paralleling the above treatment of immediacy.⁴⁰ First, thin intuitions are themselves givens in the sense that they are mere causal effects that have not undergone any conceptual processing, and thick intuitions are themselves givens in the non-Sellarsian sense I used this phrase in **0.2** – they constitute normal human consciousness. Second, thin intuition is that through which 'the object is given to us' (A19/B33) in the sense that it is that through which we initially receive information about the object, and thick intuition is that through which the object is given to us in the sense that the objects of experience are given as phenomenologically present to consciousness (even when they are not really present).

This might all seem like a rather large exegetical bullet to bite. I do not think that it is. I take it to be both plausible and useful (to interdependent extents).

One way in which it is useful is in allowing us to see that Kant's thick conception of experience is a conception of everyday experience. For one of the main hindrances to this view has been a misunderstanding of the relation between (thick) experience on the one hand, and intuition and perception on the other. One might reason as follows: If (1)

⁴⁰ For givenness, see, e.g., Bxli, A15-6/B29-30, A19/B33, A50-1/B74-5, A68/B93, A89-90/B122-3, A93/B126, B129, B132-5, B137-8, B143, B146, B151, B165.

'intuition' and 'perception' are Kant's terms of art for everyday experience, and (2) intuition and perception are not themselves (thick) experience, then (3) by (thick) 'experience' Kant cannot mean everyday experience. Yet if we are talking about intuitions and perceptions under the thin conceptions, then (1) is false; and if we are talking about intuitions and perceptions under the thick conceptions, then (2) is false. In either case, we are not forced to accept (3).

Another way in which it is useful is in resolving the well-documented and apparently contradictory things Kant says about intuition and, to a lesser extent, perception. In a nutshell: when 'intuition' means sensation and 'perception' means sensations directly accompanied by consciousness, these do not require conceptual ability or have conceptually structured content; when 'intuition' and 'perception' mean experience, they do.

More specifically, my stance on intuition allows me to accommodate into a broadly conceptualist reading of Kant the following passages, regularly mobilised in support of strong non-conceptualist readings:⁴¹

The categories of the understanding, on the contrary, do not represent to us the conditions under which objects are given in intuition at all, hence objects can indeed appear to us without necessarily having to be related to functions of the understanding, and therefore without the understanding containing their a priori conditions... appearances can certainly be given in intuition without functions of the understanding... intuition by no means requires the functions of thinking. (A89-91/B122-3)

That representation which can be given prior to all thinking is called *intuition*. (B132)

the manifold for intuition must already be *given* prior to the synthesis of the understanding and independently from it (B145)

⁴¹ See Hanna (2005, pp. 259-60), Hanna (2008, p. 45), and Allais (2009, p. 387).

The standard way in which conceptualist readers deal with the first passage is to dismiss the paragraph as representing a mere epistemic possibility, and thus a potential view someone might hold, rather, that is, than a genuine metaphysical possibility or Kant's own view.⁴² Whatever one makes of this approach, it would not be a very plausible way in which to deal with the second and third passages. My proposal allows us to take a more general approach. We can understand intuition according to the thin conception in each of these passages.

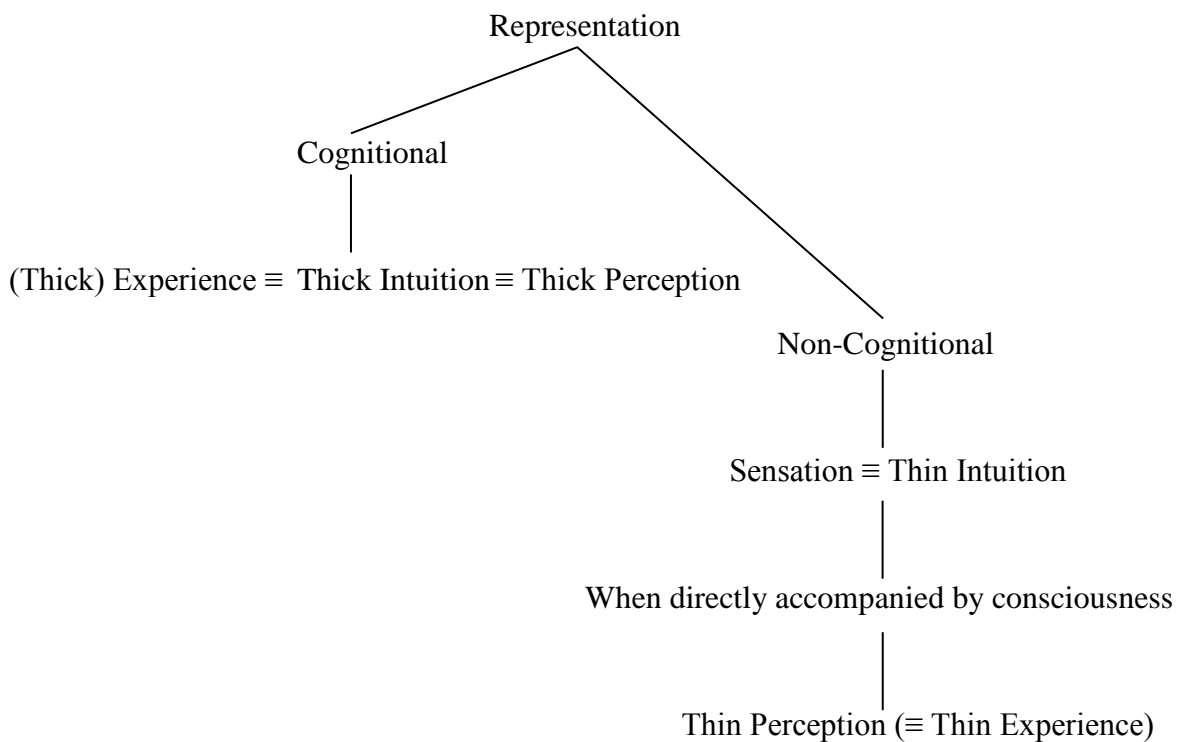
However, it is important to be clear that my claim that Kant equivocates over thick and thin conceptions of intuition does *not* commit me to saying that on *any* given occasion he has one *or* the other conception in mind. This would be overstating the case. We will see that very often what Kant says about intuition is simply true of both conceptions, in which case I need not decide between them. And on those occasions when this is not the case, this can very often be ascribed to ambiguities inherent in terms and phrases other than the term 'intuition' itself. Take, for example, the third of the passages quoted above. What 'must already be given prior to the synthesis of the understanding and independently from it' is '*the manifold for*' intuition. Thus, strictly speaking, whether or not this passage suggests some strong form of non-conceptualism depends not on the term 'intuition' itself but on what it is for something to be a manifold for intuition. If a manifold for intuition is identical to an intuition, then this passage would indeed suggest non-conceptualism. Unless, that is, one took Kant to be mobilising the thin conception of intuition. But if 'the manifold for' intuition is just that manifold of sensations that form the material foundation of intuition but does not itself amount to intuition prior to conceptual synthesis, then this passage is already compatible with a conceptualist reading of intuition. The case is similar

⁴² See, e.g., Grüne (2011, p. 475). For discussion, see Allais (2009, p. 387) and Gomes (2012, p. 15).

for the first of passages quoted above, though there the ambiguity concerns what it is to be 'given in' intuition.

This is part of the reason that I do not take my stance on intuition to be an especially big exegetical bullet to bite. I claim that there are two conceptions of intuition at work in Kant's text. I do not need to claim that Kant had just one in mind on this occasion, just another in mind on that occasion. I can allow that the text is often ambiguous. And this is not at all surprising.

Here, then, is my own selective Stufenlieter in diagrammatic form:



Before moving on to Part I and my data-processor model of sensibility, I want to say something brief about how I am thinking of the relation between (thick) experience on the one hand and thick intuition and thick perception on the other. I said above that thick intuitions and thick perceptions are just individual episodes of experience – experiences

that put us in cognitional touch with empirical objects on a more or less individual basis.

What did I mean by this?

Suppose I look out of my window now. My experience is as of a spatiotemporally extended but unified state of affairs. A bird has just landed on the corner of the house opposite. A tree stands in the foreground, another to the side of the house. And I think I can even make out a plane flying overhead. This entire state of affairs is what I experience. But we could individuate parts of this state of affairs, and in doing so we would be individuating parts of my experience. We do this in philosophy all the time. What we get, I propose, is thick intuitions and thick perceptions. Each of these is *as of* a single particular in the state of affairs in just the same way as my experience as a whole is *as of* the state of affairs as a whole. This is roughly what I meant by saying that thick intuitions and thick perceptions are just individual episodes of experience, or experiences that put us in cognitional touch with empirical objects on a more or less individual basis. They are artificially isolated proper parts of experience.

It doesn't take much to see that this distinction is in fact rather artificial and arbitrary. For example, once we allow thick intuitions and thick perceptions to be as of things like trees, then what's to stop that tree blowing in the wind or having a bird in it, or that wind-swept tree with a bird in it being in a field, or that wind-swept tree with a bird in it being in a field that is being ploughed by a farmer, and so on? We *can* say that thick intuitions and thick perceptions are just artificially isolated proper parts of experience, so long as this part-talk is understood mereologically, in the sense that a chair's legs are proper parts of the chair. It must not, that is, be understood in what we might call a transcendental way, where part-talk is supposed to indicate that something essential and type-distinct is still missing from thick intuitions and thick perceptions. Something essential and type-distinct is only missing in the case of sensations, thin intuitions, and thin perceptions. It is *not*

missing in the case of thick intuitions and thick perceptions. Thick intuitions and thick perceptions already constitutively involve concepts and cognitional representation. The difference between these latter and experience is merely that thick intuitions and thick perceptions are as of particulars on a more or less individual basis, whereas experience strictly speaking is as of the unified state of affairs in which those particulars are situated. There is thus no *in-principle* line being drawn by talking in this way and we could equally well say that experience is just a limiting case of thick intuition – it is that thick intuition of which all other ‘smaller’ thick intuitions are (mereologically speaking) proper parts. And similarly for thick perception.

Ultimately, then, what I have in mind here is connected to something I mentioned in **0.3**: that there is a sense in which there is only a single object of experience, a single empirical object, namely the world, that single unified whole of which all other empirical objects are merely proper parts. There is accordingly for each of us only ‘a single all-encompassing experience’ (A232/B284), that single unified whole of which all other experiences are merely proper parts (mereologically speaking).⁴³ Sometimes Kant uses the terms ‘intuition’ and ‘perception’ to refer to these proper parts, as in the following passage:

There is only *one* experience, in which all perceptions are represented as in thoroughgoing and lawlike connection, just as there is only one space and time, in which all forms of appearance and all relation of being or non-being take place. If one speaks of different experiences, they are only so many perceptions insofar as they belong to one and the same universal experience. (A110)

But then, sometimes he just uses the term ‘experience’.

So despite there indeed being some discernible distinction between experience on the one hand and thick intuitions and thick perceptions on the other hand, it is not, I contend, a

⁴³ See Bxli, A146/B185, A230/B282; *Prol* (4:292, 320); and especially *OP* (21:85; 22:353, 457, 550, 552, 611). The same idea, although less explicitly, is present in Kant's talk of ‘experience in general’ (e.g. at A225/B272) and of the ‘unity of experience’ (e.g. at A229-30/B282).

particularly robust or significant one. And accordingly, I will generally just use the term 'experience' whether I mean something that is as of empirical objects on a more or less individual basis or whether I mean something that is as of a multitude of empirical objects arranged into a state of affairs.

Part I

Sensibility and Sensation

1.1 The Internal Structure of Sensibility

1.1.1 The Basic Model

1.1.2 The Supplemented Model

1.1.3 Naturalness and Semantic Normativity

1.1.4 Naturalness and Passivity

1.1.5 Two Conceptions of Sensation

1.1.6 The Reproductive Imagination

1.1.7 The Complex Model: A Summary Description and Diagram

1.2 Consciousness and Sensibility

1.2.1 The Problem: Two Kinds of Consciousness

1.2.2 The Solution: The Parasitic Nature of Thin Consciousness

1.1 The Internal Structure of Sensibility

In this part of the thesis I present and defend my interpretation of Kant's account of our passive faculty for receptivity, sensibility, and its attendant representations, sensations. The key claim of my interpretation is that sensibility, operating in isolation, does not produce representations of empirical objects *as such* and does not bring us into a normative-logical space of reasons, but rather resides in an entirely natural realm. Sensibility is, for Kant, our animal faculty.

Part I is divided into two main sections. In this first section, which is much longer than the second, I give an account of the internal structure of sensibility. In **1.1.1** I begin to elaborate on the sense in which sensations provide the raw material for experience by representing empirical objects by standing in for them. I do so by fitting Kant's characterisation of sensibility as a receptive faculty into a data-processor schematic, which allows me to make use of the notion of information encoding. In **1.1.2** I argue that bodily state sensations and the bodily faculties through which we come by such sensations play a central and systematically integrated role in Kant's model of the mind, and in **1.1.3** I show how significant this fact is. In **1.1.4** I argue that what it is for sensibility to be a passive faculty is for it to be unable to produce output with a fundamentally different structure than that of what it takes as input. Since we have seen that its input is naturally structured, it follows that its output is naturally structured too. Sensibility produces as its output a temporal manifold of mental state sensations that naturally encode information about the

subject's immediate environment. In **1.1.5** I deal with an objection to this model. The objection is based on certain well-documented but misunderstood things that Kant says about the relation between sensations and space and time. Sensations provide us with both qualitative *and* quantitative information regarding empirical objects. And in **1.1.6** I give an account of the reproductive imagination as part of sensibility, operating between outer sense and inner sense to produce sensational output in lieu of genuine causal affection. My account of the reproductive imagination will play a central role in my argument that experience can be non-veridical. Finally, in **1.1.7**, I present a summary description and diagram of my completed model of sensibility.

In **1.2**, the second main section of Part I, I will deal with the issue of what role consciousness plays at this low level of cognitive function.

1.1.1 The Basic Model

Kant says that sensations are the 'raw material'¹ of experience and I said in **0.3** that as a first pass we can understand sensations as playing this role by 'standing in' for empirical objects. In this section I will begin to give cash value to these metaphors.

¹ See, e.g. A1, B1. In fact the preferred characterisation of sensation in the *Critique* is as the 'matter' ('Materie') of experience. See, e.g., A50/B74, A86/B118, A167/B208-9, A42/B60, A267/B323. But elsewhere 'material' ('Stoff' or 'Material') is more common, for example in the logic lectures: cf. *LB* (24:236), *LW* (24:806, 24:824), *LJ* (9:36, 53). And there are yet other terms, for example in *Ref* (15:268): 'The primary elements of all our cognitions are sensations. This is what one calls the representations in which the mind is regarded as merely passive, acted upon by the presence of an object'.

I prefer 'material' because Kant also uses the term 'matter' to designate 'substantia phenomenon' (A277/B333) or phenomenal substance – basically what I have been calling empirical objects. And this is a far more central usage. It is, for example, in this sense that matter is the central concept in the transcendental doctrine of body and thereby the topic of the *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science*. When the term 'matter' is used in this sense, then, and when working from the viewpoint of empirical realism, sensation can only itself be called matter in the derivative sense that it plays an essential role in enabling our experience of matter. Given Kant's strong functionalist tendencies, such derivative attribution is common (see Kitcher (1990) and Brook (1997)). The same kind of thing occurs even more frequently with the term 'content', for example. It need not be especially harmful or

To do this we need to abstract from the notion of sensation for a moment and begin by looking at the nature of the faculty to which sensation belongs, sensibility. Kant introduces this faculty like so:

The capacity (receptivity) to acquire representations through the way in which we are affected by objects is called *sensibility*. (A19/B33)

Working as we are from the viewpoint of empirical realism and given what we have seen in **0.3** about representation, I will read this passage as meaning the following: that what it is for us to possess a receptive faculty, sensibility, is for us to be able to undergo mental states in virtue of being causally affected by empirical objects.

Suppose that we fit this reading into a data-processor schematic. Doing so very naturally yields the following model: sensibility takes as its input bodily states that encode information about the empirical objects that cause them and it produces as its output mental states that similarly encode such information. Call this the *Basic Model*.

The notion of information-encoding may at first sound rather anachronistic or otherwise out of place, but it is simply supposed to latch on to the idea that the different states at this level have different properties in virtue of the different circumstances in which they are brought about, and that it is these properties that are exploited in various ways by whichever processes they serve as input to. So states at this level of cognitive function count as encoding information simply by having the properties they do.

Note that this requires that there must be some regular correspondence between the properties of the states and the properties of the objects about which the states encode information. 'I call that in the appearance which *corresponds* to sensation its *matter*'

misleading. But it is more precise to talk of correspondence rather than identity here, as Kant often does. See the next footnote.

(A20/B34, first italics mine).² But we needn't say anything more specific than this. For property F of state S to be that in virtue of possession of which S counts as encoding information about empirical object O, say specifically about property G of O, it must be the case that G-like properties of O-like objects regularly correspond to F-like properties of S-like states.

Note also that regular correspondence does not entail resemblance. F and G themselves need not be in any way similar to one another. And this is not a point about tokens and types. Nor need there be any similarity whatsoever between F-ness and G-ness. Thus we can maintain that the notion of information-encoding is a suitable one with which to explore Kant's model of sensibility while at the same time acknowledging what he says in the *Prolegomena*:

I can attach no sense... to the assertion that the sensation of red is similar to the property of cinnabar that excites this sensation in me. (4:290)

The substantial naturalistic tendencies embedded in the Basic Model do nothing to debar Kant's anti-Humeanism on this point.³

It is easy to see how the Basic Model fits in with talk of raw material. The raw material that is worked on (*bearbeitet* – A1) and worked up (*verarbeitet* – B1) to eventually become experience just is encoded information. It is material insofar as it is information. It is raw insofar as it remains *encoded*. Working on and working up this raw material through its conceptual synthesis consists in *decoding* it, in understanding what it *means*. And recall

² Cf. the A- and B-edition titles of the Anticipations of Perception (A166, B207) as well as A143/B182, A581/B609, A723/B751, and, less explicitly, A168/B209 and A170/B211-12. Falkenstein (2004, pp. 103-18) discusses at length the issue of whether Kant really means correspondence here, or rather identity. This question does not arise from the viewpoint of empirical realism – we can straightforwardly assume that Kant means what he says.

³ As Brandom (2009, p. 28) points out, Kant's rejection of resemblance in favour of representation is already clear in his *Inaugural Dissertation* (see especially *ID* (2:393)). Interestingly, Brandom also suggests that this move from resemblance to representation was Descartes' own Copernican Revolution, an early paradigm of representation over resemblance being Descartes' algebraic geometry.

that the states described by the Basic Model encode information about empirical objects simply by having the properties they do, which is to say that the encoded information just is the state. So the states described by the Basic Model just are the raw material of which Kant speaks.

It is also easy to see how the Basic Model fits in with talk of representing empirical objects by standing *in* for them. The states described by the Basic Model represent empirical objects by encoding information about them. But they do this simply by having the properties they do, which requires the aforementioned regular correspondence between the properties of the representing states and the properties of the represented object. It is in this sense that the properties of the states stand in for those of empirical objects.

So far, so good. I have begun to cash out the metaphors of raw material and 'standing in for' representation by using the notion of information-encoding. But how are we to bring the discussion back around to sensation? The answer might seem obvious. The states described by the Basic Model are sensations. I think this is right. But at first it might seem odd. For it would mean that sensations come in both bodily state and mental state varieties. Or, to come from the other direction: if what it is to be a sensation is to be the raw material of experience, and what it is to play this role is to encode information about empirical objects, then we have a characterisation of sensations that, according to the Basic Model, covers both the bodily state input to sensibility and its mental state output.

As I said, I do not think that this is a problem, which is to say, I think this is entirely as it should be. I will argue that the states described by the Basic Model are sensations and sensations do come in both bodily and mental state varieties. The *appearance* of a problem arises because of the fact that the data-processor schematic as applied to sensibility in isolation is a somewhat artificial, idealising device of explanation. This schematic is very

useful, not least because it allows us to make use of the notion of information-encoding. And as we shall see, it receives more textual confirmation than I have so far presented. But I fully accept that in some ways it fits better to Kant's model of the mind as a whole. For one thing, there is no denying that Kant does not always distinguish clearly between the input and output of sensibility. Rather he focuses on sensibility's unifying role as input provider to the understanding. As he says in the *Anthropology* 'without sensibility there would be no material that could be processed' (7:144).⁴ And *given* this focus, it is precisely what the input and output of sensibility have in common that is more important than what distinguishes them. For they have in common their encoding of information simply by having their properties, their role as raw material, representing empirical objects by standing in for them. And moreover, as we shall also see, they have in common their naturalness, their status as mere causal effects. All of these things come as a package that defines sensation, yet none of them distinguishes between the bodily and the mental.

Nevertheless, it will pay to take things slowly. First I will look at bodily states, showing that these play a central and systematically integrated role in Kant's model of the mind. This will require supplementing the Basic Model and provide further support for the structural fit of my data-processor schematic generally. Then I will look at the significance of the fact that bodily states play a central and systematically integrated role in Kant's model of the mind. This significance has to do with the evident naturalness of the kind of bodily states under consideration. Finally I will consider the transition to the mental state aspect of sensibility and the repercussions that the passive nature of this transition has for what sensibility is able to produce in isolation.

⁴ Cf. *Br* (10:125), where Kant talks about our kind of intellect having to 'derive the data for its logical procedure from sensuous intuitions of things'.

1.1.2 The Supplemented Model

The role of bodily states is often overlooked or downplayed in discussions of Kant's theory of experience.⁵ Yet from the viewpoint of empirical realism, there is a common sense thought from which I see no reason to believe Kant errs, namely that bodily states can and indeed must play some role in a full explanation of how our cognitive system functions to produce experience. And indeed, their presence in the story of our interaction with the world is far from un-Kantian.

Although it is true that explicit mentions of the physical mechanisms of perceptual experience are relatively rare in the first *Critique*, there are some. At A28 Kant talks about 'modifications of the sense of sight, which is affected by light in a certain way'; at B44 he gives as examples of kinds of sense 'sight, hearing, and feeling'; at A213/B260 he mentions 'the light that plays between our eyes and the heavenly bodies'; and at A226/B273, talking about the 'constitution of our organs', he observes that the specific degree of crudeness in the human senses is a matter of contingency.⁶

Similar such remarks in passing are also to be found throughout the *Opus Postumum*. Kant gives a more explicitly naturalistic bent to the claim with which he begins the B-edition *Critique* (quoted in **0.2**), confirming that 'without the stimulation of the sense organs, which is its effect [i.e. that of the motion of matter], no perception of any object of the senses, and hence no experience, takes place' (22:551; cf. 21:583). And again he gets a little more specific: 'The organs of our sense-perception, as feelings, are determined

⁵ Two especially significant exceptions are Adickes (1929) and Falkenstein (2004).

⁶ It is interesting to note that Kant makes this observation in the course of pointing out that scientific realism – that is, realism about the unobservable posits of scientific theories and thus a major part of his empirical realism – is compatible with his restriction of the cognisable to the sensible (where 'sensible' means 'that which can be sensed'). These are compatible because the relevant notion of the sensible abstracts from any restrictions on what we can sense that are due to the crudeness of our sense organs – the latter is a matter of contingency, the former is not. Cf. *Anthr* (7:165-6) and *MM* (29:883): 'O yes, for how many fine matters might there be which we do not perceive for want of an organ'.

through stimulation of the materials: air, light, and heat' (21:79; cf. 22:434). 'Organic bodies', Kant says, 'are natural machines' (21:186; cf. 22:548).

The most extended treatment of this topic, however, is concentrated in sections 15-23 inclusive of the *Anthropology* (7:153-60). There Kant says that:

The senses, however, are in turn divided into *outer* and *inner* sense (*sensus internus*). The first is where the human body is affected by physical things; the second, where it is affected by the mind. (7:153)

He goes on to talk about 'the senses of physical sensation', categorising using notions like 'vital', 'organic', 'mechanical' and 'chemical'. He talks about 'the whole system of nerves' as well as distinguishing particular organs – 'the eyes', 'the mouth' – and those nerves 'that belong to a certain part of the body' – 'the fingertips and their nerve papillae'. Of the traditional five senses taken together he says that they are 'nothing but senses of organic sensation, as it were like so many external entrances prepared by nature so that the animal can distinguish objects.' While the details of Kant's account might appear rather quaint to modern eyes, his distinctions rather unsophisticated and ad hoc, the feature that is important here is structural – namely the connection of such thoroughly naturalistic phenomena to sensibility and sensation.

These passages are striking, but it is important to remain clear that I am not suggesting that sensibility and sensations are being identified with or reduced to bodily faculties or states.⁷

For one thing, if representations are mental states (see **0.3**), then, strictly speaking, the bodily state sensations under consideration do not qualify as representations. This point in

⁷ Falkenstein (2004, p. 119ff.) comes very close to making this mistake, though ultimately he diagnoses Kant's view as inconsistent and goes on to offer his own 'speculative solution that, while not grounded in anything he says, is Kantian in spirit' (p.127). I take the data-processor model I provide here to be a significant improvement on this, yet one that can nevertheless accommodate Falkenstein's key insight that bodily states and faculties should not be eradicated from the story. In a nutshell, I think that what Falkenstein in effect gives us is an account of outer sense, rather than an account of sensibility. Outer sense is just one part of one part sensibility.

itself does not carry too much weight.⁸ But it remains undoubtedly the case that there is a mental aspect to sensibility. After all, repeating at the beginning of the *Analytic* the characterisation of sensibility given at the beginning of the *Aesthetic* (quoted in **1.1.1**), Kant adds a telling qualification:

call the receptivity *of our mind* to receive representations insofar as it is affected in some way sensibility (A51/B75, my italics)

I built this dual aspect into the Basic Model. But the question remains exactly how we are to understand the division of labour here.

I propose that we answer this question in the following way. We add to the Basic Model an alignment of the bodily state input of sensibility to outer sense and of its mental state output to inner sense (I italicise what is new to the model): sensibility takes as its input *through our bodily faculty of outer sense* bodily state *sensations* that encode information about the empirical objects that cause them, and it produces as its output *through our mental faculty of inner sense* mental states (*of a yet to be specified kind*) that similarly encode such information. Call this the *Supplemented Model*.

At this point I must admit that Kant says explicitly, though only once and parenthetically, that outer sense specifically is ‘a property of our *mind*’ (A22/B37, my italics). This might lead one to wonder whether what he says in the *Anthropology* and the *Opus Postumum* represents a change of view, or at the very least a distorting change of perspective. Perhaps the *Supplemented Model* is not in fact a good model of the theory of sensibility that Kant

⁸ First of all, note that if Kant can be read (consistently) as any kind of realist at all, which working from the viewpoint of empirical realism we must assume he can, then we are going to need to find a somewhat broader characterisation of representation anyway in order to deal with the passages in which he calls appearances representations (see, e.g., A99, A101, A104, A250, A371-2, A537/B565). See Collins (1999, pp. 31-59) for a compelling and sustained attempt at this.

Second of all, my naïve realist opponents would presumably also have to deny that all representations are mental states for the added reason that experience (and thick intuition and thick perception) is a species of representation but it is not, according to the naïve realist interpretation, a species of mental state.

is adhering to in the *Critique* and which is part of his genuinely *philosophical* theory of experience. After all, many have taken the *Anthropology* as containing merely empirical observations on the thoroughly contingent, historical and social aspects of the human situation.⁹ And in several of those passages we saw from the *Opus Postumum*, Kant's immediate concern is a proof of an ether principle to the effect that there exists an all-encompassing physical continuum.

I do not think this is right. First of all, quite apart from those other passages we have already seen from the *Critique* in which Kant talks about bodily faculties in close connection with outer sense, there is also the fact that in almost all of the notes from Kant's metaphysics lectures that we have – running right from the mid-1770s to the early 1790s – it is absolutely clear that Kant is thinking of outer sense as a collection of such faculties. Here is a passage from the *Mrongovius* lectures notes of 1782-3 which mirrors exactly the account of outer sense set out in the *Anthropology*:

Outer sense is classified (1) into organs senses, which limit themselves to certain parts, of which, as is known, there are five, and (2) into the vital sense, or the sense for sensing something without a special organ. This is wherever there is life, and since life is in the nervous system, this is particularly in the outer ends of the nerves. (29:882)¹⁰

Second of all, in a rarely cited passage towards the end of the *Critique* itself, Kant grants as a 'permissible hypothesis' that:

our body is nothing but the fundamental appearance to which the entire faculty of sensibility and therewith all thinking are related, as their condition, in our present state (in life). Separation from the body would be the end of this sensible use of

⁹ The classic statement of this assessment is also the first, namely Schleiermacher's 1799 review, which begins 'A summary of this book could not be much more than a collection of trivial matters' (cited in Manfred Kuehn's Introduction in Kant (2006, p. x)).

¹⁰ Cf. *ML*₁ (28:224-5, 231), *ML*₂ (28:585), *MD* (28:673), and *MK*₂ (28:738). The following passage from *ML*₁ is particularly relevant to the issue in the next paragraph: 'The soul is thus not merely thinking substance, but rather constitutes a unity insofar as it is connected with the body. Accordingly the alteration of the body are my alterations. *As soul*, I am determined by the body, and stand with it in interaction' (28:224-5).

your cognitive power and the beginning of the intellectual. The body would thus not be the cause of thinking, but a merely restricting condition on it (A778-8/B806-7)

Now, Kant grants this hypothesis as a means to 'weaken the power' of what he seems to regard as a proof that the mind cannot exist without the body (i.e. the contradictory of the claim that the mind can exist without the body, the impossibility of any proof for which he has already demonstrated in the Paralogisms (A341-405, B399-432, especially the fourth in the B-edition) and the Refutation (B274-9)). Thus what Kant takes to be important in this hypothesis is its mobilisation of transcendental idealism, since he is coming at it from the opposite direction to us. But what the hypothesis weakens the proof *to* is precisely a proof of the position that is in the background of the Supplemented Model, namely that the mind, *in its experience*, is essentially embodied. Kant was evidently quite comfortable with this position. And although it does not follow that outer sense as a bodily faculty is itself 'a property of our mind', we can well begin to understand how Kant might say this without thereby meaning that outer sense is not a bodily faculty. In light of what we have seen it is entirely plausible to suppose that what he means is rather that outer sense, as a bodily faculty, is essential to the mind in its experience.¹¹

The Supplemented Model's alignment of the bodily state input of sensibility to outer sense understood as a bodily faculty stands. What about the Supplemented Model's alignment of the mental state output of sensibility to inner sense?

I do not want to get into the issue of inner sense. First because, as is generally acknowledged, it is one of the most difficult and obscure part of Kant's philosophy.¹²

¹¹ Hanna (2006, pp. 37-80), Rukgaber (2009), and Hanna (2011) go further than I have done here and argue that, for Kant, the mind is essentially embodied in even its *a priori* cognition (though not its mere thought (see footnote 31 in **0.3**)). The key texts for these commentators are the Refutation of Idealism (B274-9) and *WOT* (8:133-146). See also Melnick (2009, pp. 151-9), who argues that the mind is essentially embodied in its personhood.

¹² See, e.g., Paton (1947, p. 233).

Second because, fortunately, this aspect of the Supplemented Model will not be so central to my account. I will just say that even if it does not capture Kant's entire doctrine of inner sense, which it certainly does not, the Supplemented Model makes straightforward sense of what in this doctrine it does capture.

First, it makes straightforward, if restricted, sense of the notion of self-affection. Self-affection is manifested in the Supplemented Model as the body's affection of the mind, or in the terms I prefer, as the sensible processing that takes us from bodily state input to mental state output. More on this in **1.1.4**. I say 'restricted' because this aspect of self-affection is neither the mind's affection of itself nor the understanding's affection of sensibility.¹³

Second, it accounts for what many take to be a key aspect of Kant's mature thinking on this topic, namely that inner sense has no manifold of its own (B67).¹⁴ According to the Supplemented Model, the only manifold had by inner sense is that provided by outer sense.

Third, it does this while at the same time being able to begin to make sense of Kant's claims to the effect that all representations, as representations, which is to say, as modifications of the mind, belong to inner sense (A34/B50, A98-9). The Supplemented Model, as a data-processor, input-output model, requires that all the material provided through outer sense must be filtered through inner sense before it can be presented to the understanding. More on this is in **1.1.5**.

¹³ See B67-8 and B153-6. Paton (1936, pp. 388-9) points out the apparent gulf between these two aspects of self-affection, though Melnick (2009, p. 113) offers a weak reading of the second aspect of self-affection, the one I have said is not captured by the Supplemented Model, that would be quite compatible with the current line of interpretation. The topic occurs most frequently in *OP* (22:33, 37, 78, 85, 300, 320-1, 325, 358, 376, 405, 450, 463-5, 478-9, 502, 508).

¹⁴ See, e.g., Brook (1997, pp. 54, 77-8), Allison (2004, pp. 277-8), and Melnick (2009, p. 112).

And fourth, it makes straightforward sense of the thought that whilst both space and time are the forms of outer sense, only time is the form of inner sense (A33-4/B49-50). Usually, Kant's attribution of spatiotemporal form to the senses themselves (A19-20/B33-4) either has to be explained by appealing to transcendental idealism, or it has to be taken as derivative, meaning merely that the senses are the means through which we cognise objects that themselves have spatiotemporal form non-derivatively. According to the Supplemented Model, however, the bodily states that belong to outer sense have spatiotemporal form in the straightforward sense that *they themselves*, qua physical states, are necessarily spatiotemporally extended and located; and the mental states that belong to inner sense have temporal form but not spatial form in the straightforward sense that *they themselves* are necessarily temporally extended and located but not necessarily spatially extended and located. More on this in **1.1.5** too.

In addition to these four notes, I will look briefly at some of the things Kant says about inner sense in the *Anthropology* in relation to non-veridical experience (in **1.1.6**). But as I said, I do not want to get into the topic of inner sense. Far more central to my account is outer sense and its attendant bodily state sensations. I now turn to why this is so.

1.1.3 Naturalness and Semantic Normativity

Essentially what is significant about the place of bodily state sensations in the Supplemented Model is that it emphasises the presence of an entirely natural element *within* the data-processing system itself, rather than merely as an outside instigator that prompts that system into operation. There remains such an instigator, namely the empirical object; but once this object has affected us and brought about the bodily state sensations of outer sense, we have already moved inside the processing system. I will elaborate.

To begin with, the presence of bodily state sensations in the Supplemented Model motivates a problem which Kant's intellectual machinery is supposed to solve. The bodily states at issue here are, relatively speaking, extremely basic – the initial dissipation of molecules of fatty acid caused by light striking the retina, for example. And while we have seen that there is a sense in which such states can 'have' objects and 'represent' them insofar as they encode information about them, they certainly cannot represent empirical objects *as* the objects they are or *as* being a certain way. Undergoing bodily state sensations does not suffice for undergoing everyday thick experience. Yet we have seen that, from the viewpoint of empirical realism, Kant grants the common sense, proto-scientific, realist-empiricist thought that such states are our initial and most basic points of contact with the world around us, which points of contact thereby form the material foundation of all other cognitive interaction with that world. So a question naturally arises as to how we get from this extremely basic but nonetheless essential material foundation of experience to experience itself, to a level at which we represent empirical objects *as such*.

In this respect, we can compare the Supplemented Model to the Sellarsian model. In the case of the different properties of the mental states which serve as input to the understanding – that is, those that constitute the output of sensibility according to the Supplemented Model – Sellars (1968) talks in terms of such states having properties *counterpart* to those possessed by the objects that caused them. This is consistent with the Supplemented Model and it presupposes the same empirical realist viewpoint on Kant's characterisations of human receptivity. Parsed in the Sellarsian terminology, the Supplemented Model would be this: the relevant mental states have properties counterpart to those of the bodily state sensations from which they are derived through the processing of sensibility, which bodily state sensations in turn have properties counterpart to those of the objects that caused them. *However*, it is precisely the Supplemented Model's

introduction of an intermediary step here – that of bodily state sensations – that makes the aforementioned problem as salient as it needs to be.

Because we are talking about properties of basic bodily states, just what these properties can be is restricted. In particular, it cannot be a property of a basic bodily state that it conveys to a subject some proposition about the world being a certain way – basic bodily states do not have propositional content. No such restriction is inherently built into the Sellarsian model, which misses out the intermediary step of bodily states. On that model, our initial causal interaction with the world results in mental states that have properties counterpart to those realised in the world. But what is it for a mental state to have such a property? If an object *O* has the property *G* of being green, then perhaps the following property *G** qualifies as counterpart: that of conveying to a subject the proposition that *O* is green. I do not mean to suggest that this is something Sellars himself intended to allow for at the level of sensibility operating in isolation, but *G** is certainly a property that some mental states can possess. It is not a property any basic bodily state sensation can possess.¹⁵

It is in light of this fact about bodily state sensations, in conjunction with the fact that such sensations form our initial point of contact with the world around us, that the problem of how we come to experience the world *as* being a certain way comes into its starkest relief.

The Supplemented Model captures this better than the Sellarsian model.

¹⁵ The qualification 'basic' here, used to denote the kind of bodily state that is a sensation, has been meant to ensure that this point is independent of whether or not one is committed to some form of mind-brain identity theory. Such a theory would have it that some bodily states, not basic sensational ones but complex brain states, *can* possess cognitively representational properties. See Melnick (2009) for an interesting discussion of Kant's relation to mind-brain identity theories. Melnick hypothesises that, although Kant 'rejects mind-brain identity theory in any of its forms... almost everything [he] says about the thinking subject, the person, and the transcendental ideality of space and time would hold even if one accepted mind-brain identity' (p. 176). Thus while the pre-critical Kant was clearly a mind-body dualist of a Cartesian ilk (see, for example, *LF* (1:1-181)), it is far from certain that this highly metaphysical view survived the Critical turn.

Let us now begin to unpack this problem a little. There are several ways in which we might do so. One particularly useful way is in terms of the distinction between the natural and the normative. Bodily state sensations stand to empirical objects as effects to causes and the structure of a causal relation is natural. No questions whatsoever concerning propriety or correctness arise with regard to the processes or results of a causal chain – they are simply part of the natural, mechanistic, deterministic order. But for Kant, in experience we represent the world as being a certain way, and in doing so, we can at the very least be right or wrong. If the way one represents the world as being is not the way it is, if the propositional content that is conveyed to us in experience is false, then one has *misrepresented* the world. And already this brings in a certain notion of correctness, albeit a minimal and not uniquely Kantian one. That is to say, our experience as of the world is *in some way* normative. In these terms, Kant's problem is none other than how to get from the natural to the normative.¹⁶

I will call the kind of normativity that is present in experience *semantic* normativity. That we can at least be right or wrong in how we represent the world as being in experience shows us that semantic normativity has truth as one of its core structuring concepts and we can say that a representation exhibits semantic normativity if and only if it has truth-conditions.

I will have more to say about semantic normativity, both directly and indirectly by way of a fuller account of experience and as such representation. For example, it might at first seem odd to call this a kind of normativity at all, but we will see in **1.1.4** and **2.1.4.3** that there is good reason to do so. In any case, this much is sufficient for present purposes, for

¹⁶ For related proposals, though ones developed quite differently, see Ginsborg (2006a), Ginsborg (2006b), and Anderson (2001).

it is enough to signify a fundamental shift beyond the purely natural realm, and thus a fundamental shift beyond the level of bodily state sensations.

For even if we decide that we want to be able to classify certain operations of our sensory organs and nervous system as malfunctions, as seems likely, this does not mean that the bodily state sensations resulting from such operations can themselves be classified as false in any way. The information these sensations encode may be different from the information they would have encoded had these operations functioned 'properly', but this information, *in its encoded form*, simply does not have the requisite structure to be assessed according even to simple truth-conditions (not to mention any richer and more uniquely Kantian norms). Recall that in its encoded form, this information is not a list of propositions *about* the salient properties of the relevant state. Rather it *is* the salient properties of the relevant state. Again, it is *just what it is* for bodily state sensations to encode information about empirical objects for them to have their properties in virtue of the different features of the mechanistic manner in which they were brought about. As I suggested at the end of 1.1.1, we can say that the fact that bodily state sensations merely *encode* their information goes hand-in-hand with the fact that they do so merely by having their properties, and these facts in turn go hand-in-hand with the merely natural, non-truth-conditional and therefore non-semantically normative structure of bodily state sensations.

As Kant puts the point at the beginning of the Dialectic:

Thus it is correctly said that the senses do not err; yet not because they always judge correctly, but because they do not judge at all. (A293/B350)

And with a striking turn of phrase in the *Anthropology*:

The senses do not deceive... not because they always judge correctly, but rather because they do not judge at all. Error is thus a burden only to the understanding. –

Still, *sensory appearances* (*species, apparentia*) serve to exculpate, if not exactly to justify, understanding. (7:146)¹⁷

Thus what we *can* have at this level is the *causal ground* for something that qualifies as a mistake or falsehood further up in the cognitive chain. As the *Vienna Logic* has this distinction, ‘The *cause* of illusion is sensibility’ though ‘Sensibility is not itself the *source* of errors’ (24:825, my italics).¹⁸ And this will be very important in my account of the reproductive imagination and its role in non-veridical experience. But a bodily state sensation itself is entirely part of the natural world and cannot itself be assigned a truth-value or a semantically normative structure in exactly the same way that this holds for empirical objects themselves. Empirical objects and bodily state sensations are not true or false; they just are.

1.1.4 Naturalness and Passivity

Still, one might wonder as to what the real philosophical as opposed to merely expository significance is of allowing *into* the data-processing system an entirely natural, non-semantically normative element, as the Supplemented Model so explicitly does. To answer to this we need to return to the second key feature of the nature of our faculty of sensibility, this time looking not at its receptivity but rather at its passivity.¹⁹

¹⁷ I have translated ‘zur Entschuldigung’ as ‘to exculpate’ rather than the more common ‘to excuse’ in order to emphasise how this passage recalls McDowell (1996, p. 8): ‘In effect, the idea of the Given offers exculpations where we want justifications’. Cf. *Prol* (4:290-1), *MM* (29:759), *LV* (24:833, 24:856), *LJ* (9:53), and *LB* (24:84-7), the last of which has it a little differently: ‘There is no disputing about sensation. It is a *datum*’.

¹⁸ In the *Critique* Kant talks about this in terms of the ‘unnoticed influence of sensibility on understanding’ (A294/B350). Cf. *LJ* (9:54) and *LDW* (24:720).

¹⁹ It is worth noting that despite its textbook role in characterising sensibility, explicit references to passivity are in fact surprisingly rare in the theoretical philosophy. See B153, *CJ* (5:158, 5:292), *Anthr* (7:140, 7:144), *Ref* (15:268; 16:145; 17:466), *LB* (24:86), and *LDW* (24:706), *ID* (2:396). And that the notion arises far more frequently in the practical philosophy could be seen as suggestive of precisely the connection to naturalness that I go on to draw here. Nevertheless, we can see passivity as at least implicitly present in all of the canonical characterisations of sensibility, for example in the

The point we have in our pockets thanks to the last sections is that the bodily state sensations of outer sense that form the input to sensibility on the Supplemented Model lie firmly within the natural realm, mere causal effects, not exhibiting semantic normativity or representing empirical objects as such. And the key thought for moving forward is that the processing involved at the level of sensibility – that processing which, on the Supplemented Model, takes us from the bodily state sensations of outer sense as input to the mental states (of a yet to be specified kind) of inner sense as output – is *not* of such a kind as to be able to alter the fundamentally natural structure of either the data-items themselves or the relation in which they stand to the objects about which they encode information.

Why? Because the processing involved in sensibility is entirely mechanical and deterministic. It consists merely in the transmission of information encoded in one natural form into information encoded in another natural form. Consider as an analogy the processing involved as I type this sentence, which takes my strikes of the keyboard as input and produces pixelated images on the screen as output. The information encoded in my strikes of the keyboard is transmitted to the screen, thereby being converted into information encoded in pixelated images. But the information remains *encoded*. It is only *decoded* in the relevant sense once someone reads the sentence and understands what it means. (At least I hope they understand what it means!) The case is similar with sensibility. In producing its output, the processing of sensibility does not actively interpret or decode the information it takes as input. Rather, through an entirely mechanistic, deterministic process of transmission and conversion, it merely alters the mode in which information is encoded. After all, states at this level encode their information simply by

introductions to the Aesthetic (A19/B33) and the Logic (A50-1/B74-5), and more specifically it is plausible that it is part of Kant's standard conception of both immediacy and givenness (see **0.5**).

having their properties, and presumably bodily states and mental states have different properties. In a slogan, sensibility does not *decode*, it *recodes*.

I should note that this is not supposed to rule out that sensible recoding could involve a kind of funnelling or filtering or coarse-graining effect, so that as it were *less* information gets encoded in the mental state output for presentation to the understanding than was originally encoded in the bodily state input. That Kant (rightly) took something like this to take place is strongly suggested by the following passage from the *Anthropology*:

Everything the assisted eye discovers by means of the telescope (perhaps directed towards the moon) or microscope (directed toward insuforia) is seen by means of our naked eyes. For these optical aids do not bring more rays of light and thereby more created images into the eye than would have been reflected in the retina without such artificial tools, rather they only spread the images out more, so that we become conscious of them. (7:135-6)²⁰

This is entirely compatible with the mechanistic understanding of sensible processing just sketched. After all, modern science tells us that all sorts of analogous filtering effects occur even at the level of the bodily state input. Neural adaptation, for example, is the process by which sensory neurons (of all kinds, with the possible exception of those involved in pain) become less and less sensitive in the face of a continuous stimulus.

Rather the point of this mechanistic understanding of sensible processing is that it gives us precisely a specification of the mental state output of this faculty as remaining merely *sensational*. The mental state output of sensibility remains sensational because the processing that derives this output from the bodily state sensational input leaves something crucial about this input untouched, namely its natural status as mere causal effect. The output of sensibility remains, like its input, *raw* material.

²⁰ Cf. A226/B274 and *MM* (29:883).

This, I propose, is what Kant intends when he characterises sensibility as a *passive* faculty.

Natural input in conjunction with a *passive* process yields a *natural* output.

Kant linked these notions – those of passivity and being part of a natural, causal chain – early on. In the famous letter to Herz of February 1772, he writes:

If a representation comprises only the manner in which the subject is affected by the object, then it is easy to see how it is in conformity with this object, namely, as an effect accords with its cause, and it is easy to see how this modification of our mind can *represent* something, that is, have an object. Thus the passive or sensuous representations have an understandable relationship to objects. (10:130)²¹

Crucially, note that although Kant does not use the term ‘sensation’ in this passage, he is clearly talking about *mental* states, and moreover, mental states *that belong to sensibility*. He talks about *passive* or *sensuous* representations and gives one of his canonical definitions of such as a modification of the *mind*. That is, Kant is talking about what, on the Supplemented Model, is the *output* of sensibility. Yet he implies that such states stand to the affecting object as an effect stands to a cause, which is to say in a natural, mechanistic, deterministic relation. This is exactly the same kind of relation in which bodily state sensations stand to their objects and the kind of relation that we have seen is definitional of sensation.

The same point is made even clearer in the following, much later passage from the *Opus Postumum*:

Subjectively, outer perceptions, as material for possible experience (which lack only their form of connection), are *nothing other than the effect* on the perceiving subject of the agitating forces of matter (22:552, my italics)²²

²¹ And there is a correlate point here that Kant goes on to mention in this passage, namely that minds that *lack* a passive part are (therefore) *not* similarly embedded in a causal network, but are rather themselves ‘the ground of things’. This kind of mind is thus Kant’s model for the divine intellect (cf. especially the *CJ* (5:401-6), but also B72, B149, B307 and *ID* (2:397)). I return to this issue briefly in **2.2.1.2**.

²² Cf. *OP* (21:601; 22:377, 408, 460), where Kant talks of the efficient cause of perceptions.

We have to allow for a certain amount of terminological slippage here, but what is crucial is (a) that Kant is clearly talking about mental states that belong to sensibility, and thus states that on the Supplemented Model form the output of this faculty, and (b) that these mental states remain, like bodily state sensations, mere causal effects. Due to the passive nature of the processing, the naturalness that is present at the level of the input to sensibility as it were seeps upwards or is carried through to infect its output.

What we have here, then, is the following argument: the input to sensibility is entirely natural (which is to say, not even semantically normative); the processing of sensibility is passive, which means it cannot alter the fundamental structure of what it processes; therefore the output of sensibility is entirely natural (not semantically normative).

Given that experience *is* semantically normative, this is essentially the negative side of the core Kantian doctrine that spontaneity is necessary for experience, that passive receptivity is not alone sufficient for experience.²³

Note that it is *not* the point of this argument that representations that stand in an entirely natural relation to the objects they represent, like sensations, cannot contribute to or be turned into representations that stand in some kind of normative relation to the objects they represent, like experience. Such a transformation certainly can take place. It must. Sensations are the raw material of experience. Rather the point of the above argument is that such a transformation requires more than a merely passive processing. According to Kant, it requires a spontaneous processing.

²³ See, for example, A97: '*receptivity* can make cognitions possible only if combined with spontaneity'; A50/B74: 'Our cognition arises from two fundamental sources in the mind, the first of which is the reception of representations (the receptivity of impressions), the second the faculty for cognising an object by means of these representations (spontaneity of concepts)'; A258/B314: 'With us *understanding* and *sensibility* can determine an object *only in combination*'. Cf. *LJ* (9:36).

What this kind of processing amounts to and how it effects such a transformation is the topic of Part II of this thesis. For now it just remains to note that bringing in this notion of spontaneity allows us to augment what we have said so far about the distinction between the natural and the normative. For it brings with it a notion that is absolutely central to the Kantian conception of this distinction – that of freedom.

To be spontaneous is in some way to express or exhibit freedom (and to possess an active capacity for spontaneity is to be able to do so). Thus we can expand the above argument in the following way: the *reason* that the functioning of sensibility in isolation providing us with sensations that encode information about the world does *not* bring us into a normative realm of representing-as relations to that world is that that functioning is entirely automatic and part of the causal order of the natural realm *and therefore in no sense allows for the expression of any kind of freedom, which expression is a prerequisite for normativity.* (I return to this in **2.1.4.3.**)

Thus pure passivity in our representations of the world, a lack of any spontaneous freedom therein, does not suffice to put us in any kind of normative relation to that world, even when such a relation merely consists in being potentially right or wrong about that world.

1.1.5 Two Conceptions of Sensation

In this section I will deal with an objection to the Supplemented Model which targets the claim that the output of sensibility remains sensational (that is, which targets the conclusion of the previous section). The objection, in the terms I have been using here, is that the output of sensibility cannot consist merely in sensations because sensations do not encode information about the quantitative, spatiotemporal properties of empirical objects, whereas the output of sensibility does encode such information. My response to this

objection is that it is based on a misunderstanding of the nature of sensations. Sensations do encode information about the quantitative, spatiotemporal properties of empirical objects, and Kant never meant to imply otherwise.

In the *Critique* Kant says that:

Apprehension, merely by means of sensation, fills only an instant (A167/B209)

and in the *Prolegomena* he says that:

sensation itself *fills no part of space and time* (4:309)

It has been an almost universal assumption that these remarks refer to sensation under something akin to the current conception of sensation as raw material, and that sensations as raw material are therefore severely restricted both in what they themselves can be like and in what they can contribute to experience.²⁴ If these remarks about sensation refer to the raw material of experience, then sensations as raw material must themselves be extensionless, both spatially and temporally, and can only encode information concerning quality, telling us nothing whatsoever about quantity, in particular about spatiotemporal location, extension, and so forth. Or so the story goes.

Even from the viewpoint of transcendental idealism, the assumption that the quoted remarks refer to sensation as the raw material of experience is both philosophically and textually highly problematic. It seems to me both true and a fundamental commitment of Kant's that we can sense quality only through sensing spatiotemporal instantiations of quality – extended patches of colour and so forth. I simply have no grasp of what it would be for us to sense an extensionless point of colour by undergoing some kind of punctiform

²⁴ To take a small sample: Kemp Smith (2003 [1923], p. 86), Vaihinger (1892, pp. 771-88); George (1981, p. 240), Guyer (2006, p. 103), Al-Azm (1967, p. 39), Pippin (1982, p. 56), Westphal (2004, p. 44), Van Cleve (1999, p. 75), Watkins (2008, p. 530), and even Kitcher (1990) and Collins (1999, p. 15).

mental state, and this is precisely one of the reasons I feel a deep truth in Kant's claim that space and time are the universal forms of the faculty through which we sense – in the adverbial idiom, that we cannot sense qualitatively without sensing quantitatively.

But the current framework makes this problem even more intractable. From the viewpoint of empirical realism, empirical objects are spatiotemporal entities that exist (in some sense) independently from us. They have spatiotemporal properties, such as extension and location, and they stand in spatiotemporal relations to one another and ourselves. To repeat two quotations from **0.1**:

Our assertions accordingly teach the *empirical reality* of time, i.e., objective validity in regard to all objects that may ever be given to our senses. (A35/B52)

empirical realism is beyond doubt, i.e., to our outer intuitions there corresponds something real in space. (A375)

Yet we learn about the contingent properties of empirical objects through, and only through, sensations. Sensations are our initial and most basic points of contact with the world around us, which points of contact thereby form the material foundation of all other cognitive interaction with that world. This is what it is for sensations to be the raw material of experience. And if this is how we learn about empirical objects – through sensation – then the information concerning empirical objects that is encoded in sensations must include information concerning their spatiotemporal properties, extension, location, relation to one another in space-time, and so forth.

Indeed, not only must sensations encode such information. According to the Supplemented Model, sensations *themselves* have spatiotemporal properties. Bodily state sensations, for example, qua physical states, *themselves* possess spatiotemporal properties.

Fortunately, the assumption that the remarks quoted at the beginning of this section concern sensation as raw material is false. When Kant says that 'Apprehension, merely by means of sensation, fills only an instant' (A167/B209) and that 'sensation itself *fills no part of space and time*' (4:309), he is *not* referring to sensation conceived of as the raw material of experience. I will explain.

According to the conception of sensation as raw material, the term 'sensation' picks out an identifiable class of states, namely those that naturally encode information about empirical objects. What I want to propose is that there is a further, closely connected but crucially distinct conception of sensation at work in Kant's text, which he distinguishes with phrases like 'sensation in general' (for example at A167/B209) and 'sensation itself' (for example at 4:309). Under this conception, the term 'sensation' does not pick out an identifiable class of states and is more important for articulating the specific role of a specific synthetic a priori principle concerning intensive magnitude. Accordingly, this conception of sensation is in fact more like that of a single a priori concept, namely *sensible qualitateness* itself. This is not sensation as an identifiable class of states at all, but rather sensation as a concept that is instantiated in every member of an identifiable class of objects, namely empirical ones.

This might at first seem like an odd proposal. Unlike the mental and bodily conceptions of sensation, which could be unified under the conception of sensation as raw material, a conception of sensation as the concept of sensible qualitateness seems rather too different for any unifying move like this. And so it is. However, there *is* a crucial connection here. And that is that we can only cognise instantiations of sensible qualitateness through raw material. This connection is what leads Kant to equivocate in the way he does. We can see the kind of reasoning that led Kant to use both of these apparently quite different conceptions of sensation in the following passage:

the sensation... cannot be anticipated at all... But if it were supposed that there is something which can be cognised *a priori* in every sensation, as sensation in general (without a particular one being given), then this would deserve to be called an anticipation... And this is actually how things stand. (A167/B209)

The basic thought behind my proposal is in fact quite innocuous. It is that Kant sometimes talks about sensation when his concern is to pick out and analyse a universal characteristic of sensations as raw material, namely that *some* of the information they encode – that regarding sensible quality – is of such a kind as can only be understood in terms of degrees of intensity and not in terms of relations of parthood or spatiotemporal extension. And whatever one makes of the Kant's inference or the principle in which it results,²⁵ what is crucial here is that this in no way entails that sensations as raw material cannot themselves stand in relations of parthood and have spatiotemporal extension, nor does it entail that they cannot encode information about such.

With this proposal in mind, then, let us take a closer look at those passages in which Kant appears to deny spatiotemporality to sensation.

Apprehension, merely by means of sensation, fills only an instant (if I do not take into consideration the succession of many sensations). Hence sensation, as something in the appearance, the apprehension of which is not a successive synthesis, proceeding from the parts to the whole representation, therefore has no extensive magnitude (A167/B209)

Quite apart from the qualification Kant adds to the initial claim suggesting that such instantaneous apprehension might well not be a real possibility, note that, in the second

²⁵ To my mind Kant's position, insofar as it maintains that some part of final physics will be irreducible to a mathematics of discrete quantitative magnitudes, is quite plausible. Guyer (2006, p. 103) points out that 'the felt temperature of 72 degrees in my study room today, although it does not itself *consist* of seventy-two or any other number of parts, is certainly *caused* by some finite number of molecules of matter moving at some finite velocities in the finite volume of my room, all of which are (in principle) measurable extensive magnitudes'. This much might be true, but it is not a complete description of the physical system involved in the felt temperature, since it does not take us down to the fundamental quantum level. And at least in physics as it stands today, as far as I understand it, any such description *would* involve a mathematics of intensive magnitudes. If Guyer is assuming that final physics will eliminate this, he offers no grounds for such an assumption.

sentence, where Kant actually denies extensive magnitude to sensation, he is talking about sensation 'as something in the appearance'. This is not sensation as itself an information encoding state, as the raw material of experience. It is rather sensation as a feature of the objects themselves, *about* which the states that constitute the content of sensibility encode information and which are themselves the represented objects, and not merely the material, of experience. It is sensation as sensible qualitateness in general, as itself a concept of that which has a magnitude that is only measurable intensively by degree.²⁶

And the situation is similar if we continue with the sentence from the *Prolegomena* about sensation itself filling no part of space or time:

although sensation, as the quality of empirical intuition with respect to that by which a sensation differs specifically from other sensations, can never be cognised *a priori*, it nonetheless can, in a possible experience in general, as the magnitude of perception, be distinguished intensively from every other sensation of the same kind (4:309)

Again we clearly have two conceptions of sensation here, the second this time being even more explicitly sensation 'as the magnitude of perception', that is, as the intensive magnitude of sensible qualitateness itself. And it is intensive magnitude as such that 'fills no part of space and time', that is measurable in 'only an instant'. How specifically it will be instantiated, either with regard to specific quality or specific magnitude, we cannot know a priori, we cannot anticipate, rather we must learn through sensing. What we can know a priori, what we can anticipate, is that there will be *some* quality of *some* magnitude, and that because the magnitude is a magnitude of a quality, it will be intensive. And this, according to Kant, is enough to ground the applicability to appearances of the mathematics of intensive magnitude.

²⁶ The difference here is closely parallel to that between sensation as merely corresponding to the matter in appearance and sensation as being identical to the matter in appearance – see footnotes 1 and 2 in 1.1.1.

So the thought is that Kant picks out quality and sensation as intrinsically connected because quality is what is *unique* to sensation, *not*, contrary to the traditional assumption, because it *exhausts* sensation. And conversely, Kant does not pick out sensation and quantity as intrinsically connected, although, contrary to the traditional assumption, they are, simply because quantity is *not* unique to sensation. Unlike quality, we can cognise quantity without sensation, albeit not empirically. For in contrast to quality, quantity belongs not *merely* to those appearances which are the empirical objects that we sense, but *also* to those appearances which are the *pure* objects of sensibility, namely the mathematical objects of geometry and arithmetic. And it is this that grounds the sense in which quantity is more basic than quality, the sense in which it is axiomatic (A161-6/B200-7), which in turn grounds the fundamental commitment mentioned above that we cannot sense qualitatively without sensing quantitatively. Yet it does so while at the same time allowing that we can cognise (albeit not empirically) one without the other, as we do in separating the respective principles about extensive and intensive magnitude.

Sensations as the raw material of experience – the natural, information-encoding states that constitute the entire (empirical) content of sensibility and that come in both mental and bodily state forms – can and indeed must tell us literally everything there is to know about the particular, contingent properties of empirical objects, be these properties qualitative, like yellowness, or quantitative, like cuboidness and space-time location. Whatever else will be involved in experience, sensations so conceived constitute *the whole* of its material foundation. And since this is precisely what sensibility provides – the whole of the material foundation of experience – it is unproblematic that, according to the Supplemented Model, what sensibility provides, its output, remains sensational.

Before moving on, I think it is worth briefly reiterating a point about resemblance and representation that I made in **1.1.1**. It is worth reiterating this point because of what I said

above about sensations on the Supplemented Model not only encoding information *about* the spatiotemporal properties of empirical objects but themselves also *possessing* such properties.

It is true that bodily state sensations, qua physical states, are themselves spatiotemporally extended and located, but it is crucial to bear in mind that this fact about bodily state sensations is strictly incidental with regard to their ability to encode information about spatiotemporality. As I said in **1.1.1**, sensations encode information about empirical objects in virtue of being caused by them and having properties. But although this requires that the properties of sensations must regularly correspond to those in the empirical objects about which they encode information, these regularly corresponding properties need in no way resemble one another. For otherwise we could worry that running information-encoding bodily state sensations through the temporal filter of inner sense and converting them into mental states, as we do according to the Supplemented Model, not only strips those states of their own spatial form but also thereby of their ability to encode information about spatial form.

To see how the mental state sensational output of sensibility can still encode information about spatial form without itself having spatial form, consider the following analogy. Information about spatiotemporal form could be given what we might call a number-wise mode of encryption (which, given Kant's views on arithmetic, would presumably count as having temporal form). Any list of four natural numbers, $\langle 1,2,3,4 \rangle$ say, can be understood as a space-time co-ordinate. And suppose that we could assign a unique natural number to every possible sensible quality, for example 1 to redness, 2 to greenness, 3 to loudness, 4 to fluffiness etc. Then given what Kant says about such qualities always having a degree that can be represented on a continuum between 0 and 1 (A165-76/B207-18) – that is, an *intensive magnitude* – any real number could be understood as a quality co-ordinate – 1.99

would be a very bright red, though 1.999 would be still brighter. Putting these number-wise modes of encryption together, we could encode any and all information about empirical objects in an entirely non-spatial form. Think of a coloured picture of a tree on a computer screen being ultimately based on a binary code (though this analogy eliminates the infinitude provided by the real number co-ordinate which is required to fit with Kant's doctrine of intensive magnitude). Perhaps any vaguely realistic model in this vein would require several more dimensions before we were in fact able to pick out a particular distinct quality to which we could assign a degree, but the general idea is clear enough. The point is simply that states clearly need not themselves be spatiotemporal in order to be able to encode spatiotemporal information. And thus that if they are themselves spatiotemporal, this is incidental to their information encoding capacities. Resemblance remains irrelevant.

1.1.6 The Reproductive Imagination

I want now to offer an account of the reproductive imagination. This will lead to further complicating the Supplemented Model and will complete my account of the internal structure of sensibility.

The reason an account of the reproductive imagination is important is that this faculty is essential in explaining how it can be that experience does not always represent the world as it actually is, that it can be wrong. In particular, it provides a mechanism that plays a central role in explaining the possibility of *hallucinatory* experience.

For present purposes, I will understand hallucinatory experience in a very rough, though what I take to be intuitive, way: as the experience as of some empirical object that is not really there. A canonical example is Macbeth's seeing a dagger before him, the handle

toward his hand. There are plenty of issues when one gets into the details of this notion, which we will return to in **2.2.2**, but this much will suffice for now.

So far we have been modelling sensibility in isolation, as a self-contained data-processor. But relaxing the level of magnification slightly, the defining role of sensibility is as data-provider to the understanding, making available the input that these faculties will process to produce experience as output. And the initial thought with regard to how sensibility might function to produce hallucinatory experience is that this role in itself dictates nothing about the immediate source of this data. The bare fact that a data-processor needs informational input permits logical room for a certain restricted degree of underdetermination in this regard. I say 'restricted' because I do not mean to introduce sceptical worries about malign supernatural implantation or brains in vats. Let us suppose, for the sake of argument and working as we are from the viewpoint of empirical realism, that we fix the distal origin of our data as genuine causal affection by empirical objects. It would nevertheless remain a possibility that once such data had been originally received – once genuine causal affection had occurred – it could somehow be regurgitated after the fact and then presented for intellectual processing in the normal way. Such presentation would remain the work of sensibility, *understood as data-provider*, and yet would seem to require more than sheer passivity.

This 'active' element to sensibility, I propose, is at least one of the roles Kant intends for the reproductive imagination. Here are two key passages from the *Anthropology*:

Sensibility in the cognitive faculty (the faculty of representations in intuition) contains two parts: *sense* and the *power of imagination*. – The first is the faculty of intuition in the presence of an object, the second is intuition even *without* the presence of an object. (7:153)²⁷

²⁷ Cf. Bxli, B151; *LDW* (24:701, 24:705, 24:753); *Ref* (18:618-19); *MM* (29:881); *MV* (28:449); *ML*₂ (28:585); *MD* (28:672).

The power of imagination (*facultas imaginandi*), as a faculty of intuition even without the presence of the object, is either *productive*, that is, a faculty of the original presentation of the object (*exhibitio originaria*), which thus precedes experience; or *reproductive*, a faculty of the derivative presentation of the object (*exhibitio derivativa*), which brings back to the mind an empirical intuition had previously. (7:167)²⁸

(Note that it does not in fact matter whether Kant, in these passages or the ones that follow, is talking about thick intuitions or thin intuitions; that is, whether he is talking about raw sensations or about the conceptually synthesised manifold of sensation that is experience. It does not matter in the sense that what he says is valid of intuition under both of these conceptions.)

Now the reproductive imagination would normally play its role in cognitive processes that are entirely epistemically legitimate, like memory (7:182-5).²⁹ Indeed, we will see in **2.1.1** that the reproductive imagination even plays a role in experience *per se*, regardless of whether or not it is non-veridical. But there is also space here for an altogether more pernicious function for the reproductive imagination – in hallucination.

Consider the following simple model. When a subject S undergoes at time T an experience E which is as of some empirical object O and E is *veridical*, then O is causally affecting S at T in such a way that S qualifies as sensing O at T, and it is in virtue of this occurrent act of sensing that S undergoes sensations that naturally encode information about O, which information, still in its encoded form, will subsequently be provided to the understanding for the decoding that will produce E. When E is *hallucinatory*, however, then O is not causally affecting S at T in such a way that S qualifies as sensing O at T, for O is not

²⁸ Or as *ML_I* (28:230) has it, apparently forgetting the productive imagination altogether: ‘we differentiate the sensible faculty of cognition into: the faculty of the senses themselves, and the imitated cognition of the senses’.

²⁹ It would be entirely appropriate to be reminded of Hume in observing this connection to memory, as there is much in the following account that parallels the role he attributes to the imagination. This differs significantly from that aspect of the relation between Kant and Hume’s theories of imagination discussed in Strawson (1971). Interestingly, there are also significant similarities on the following reading between Kant’s theory of the imagination and Spinoza’s as portrayed in Renz (2010).

present at T at all. Instead there is at T in S the *imaginative recall* of information about O that was originally acquired through S sensing O at some time $T_{<T}$ previous to T, which information, still in its encoded form, will subsequently be provided to the understanding for the decoding that will produce E. Call this *Imagination Model I*.

Note first of all that, according to Imagination Model I, the information provided by the reproductive imagination to the understanding for producing hallucinatory experience is *recalled* – at some point prior to the hallucinatory experience it has to have been acquired through the normal passive channels of causal affection of outer sense by empirical objects. Thus Kant goes on to point out the ultimately derivative or parasitic nature of the imagination in this very naturalistic guise:

imagination is nevertheless not exactly *creative*, for it is not capable of producing a sense representation that was *never* given to our faculty of sense; one can always furnish evidence of the material of its representations. To one who has never seen *red* among the seven colours, we can never make this sensation comprehensible... the sensations produced by the five senses in their composition cannot be made by means of the power of imagination, but must be drawn originally from the faculty of sense. (7:167-8)³⁰

And once again, although these matters receive their clearest and most extensive presentation in the *Anthropology*, it is important to be clear that this kind of model is no late or incidental addition.³¹ Surely something very much like it is already in the background of the third note to the Refutation of Idealism:³²

From the fact that the existence of outer objects is required for the possibility of a determinate consciousness of our self it does not follow that every intuitive

³⁰ Cf. A770-1/B798-9; *VL* (24:904); *Ref* (18:309, 18:619).

³¹ Busse (2012) effectively claimed this.

³² And even earlier, in the *Dreams* essay of 1766 (2:342-7), Kant talks about ‘the dreamers of *sense*’, whose ‘apparitions are nothing but figments of the imagination’ that ‘delude the senses by presenting themselves as genuine objects’. For Kant, ‘the question here is simply how it happens that they transpose the illusion of their imagination and locate it outside themselves, and do so in relation to their body, of which they are also aware by means of the outer senses’. Here Kant talks about reproduction in terms of copying: ‘This deception can affect any outer sense, for each yields copied images in the imagination’.

representation of outer things includes at the same time their existence, for that may well be the mere effect of the imagination (in dreams as well as delusions); but this is possible merely through the reproduction of previous outer perceptions (B278-9)

(Allais (2010, p. 59) has put some weight on this passage talking about intuitive (*anschauliche*) representation rather than simply intuition. In light of the many passages I have just cited where this distinction is not made, I cannot agree that it is significant. But I postpone this issue for now and return to it at proper length in **2.2.1.2.**)

Note also, however, that this is not to say that there is no room here for a subject to undergo an hallucinatory experience that is as of something she has never come across. It is presumably possible to hallucinate a unicorn, for instance, without ever having encountered one. But then the imagination even in its naturalistic, reproductive manifestation must do something a little more than regurgitate information in exactly the form it was given. In fact, on two conditions, I see no problem in attributing to the reproductive imagination powers of rearrangement, so that it can reorganise previously given information in some relatively novel, gerrymandered way. The first condition is that all the information being worked on in such a process was at some point previously acquired in virtue of the genuine causal affection of outer sense by empirical objects, in this case, horses and horns. The second condition is that any such rearrangement of information is done without decoding it. It is not mysterious how this is possible. Recall once again that sensations encode their information simply by having their properties. So in order to be able to rearrange information without decoding it, the reproductive imagination need only be able to discriminate between sensations on the basis of their properties. One might object that even this counts as decoding in some sense. But what I mean to proscribe here is the reproductive imagination decoding information in the sense that the understanding decodes it. This latter involves understanding the information as

meaning that the world is a certain way. And although what exactly *this* means still demands a lot of explanation – the subject of much of Part II of this thesis – it is already clear that discriminating sensations on the basis of their properties does not require decoding them in *this* way. (This point will also become relevant at various important points in Part II. See 2.1.1, 2.1.3, and 2.1.6.) Call the model that takes account of the possibility of hallucinating unencountered empirical objects by granting the reproductive imagination *non-intellectual, naturalistic* powers of discrimination and rearrangement *Imagination Model II*.

One crucial feature of hallucination with regard to its epistemological significance is the fact that it seems entirely possible that things might go awry in the ways just mooted without us noticing or even being able to notice. Again we need not go as far as entertaining radical sceptical hypotheses. Even from the viewpoint of empirical realism we must concede that there might be nothing intrinsic to the data we process that tells us whether it is the result of current affection or rather of some more surreptitious procedure. Indeed, we might even concede that there *is* always something intrinsic to the data that *could* tell us this much, at least when we take a large enough collection of it. It would still seem entirely possible that this feature is not always accessible to us, and this is enough to motivate the present worry. It is a worry which Kant is clearly well aware of. In the *Anthropology*:

the power of imagination, which puts material under the understanding in order to provide content for its concepts (for cognition), seems to provide a reality to its (invented) intuitions because of the analogy between them and real perceptions.
(7:169)

And in the *Prolegomena*:

The difference between truth and dream, however, is not decided through the quality of the representations that are referred to objects, for they are the same in both (4:290)

At the level at which the output of sensibility is processed, there might, at least under certain circumstances, be no way to tell the proximal origin of the representations that constitute that output. Or to put it another way, the understanding cannot, as it were, reach down into sensibility in order to check whether or not the reproductive imagination was active in a problematic way. It is in this way, as Kant puts it in the *Critique*, that 'the faculty of judgement is misled through the influence of the imagination' (A295/B352).³³

In fact, Kant's model of the mind is not just one on which this problem arises. It is also has the resources to explain a little further why this problem arises. So far I have talked as though the imagination provides information for processing directly, bypassing passivity altogether. But let us suppose that *some* passive part of sensibility is *always* involved, whether the outcome of intellectual processing be veridical or hallucinatory. Thus what distinguishes hallucinatory experience from veridical experience at this level of mental function is not the bypassing of the senses all together. Rather, recalling the way in which we added to the Basic Model in order to yield the Supplemented Model, what distinguishes hallucinatory experience from veridical experience at this level of mental function is whether or not *outer* sense specifically is activated at the time of the experience. In hallucinatory experience, it is not. In hallucinatory experience, it is the reproductive imagination rather than the empirical object that fulfils the role of proximal causal instigator, yet it does so not by providing its regurgitated information directly to the understanding, but rather to inner sense. Call this model, which understands the reproductive imagination in exactly the same way as Imagination Model II, but which

³³ Cf. A294/B350; *LJ* (9:54), *LW* (24:825), *LDW* (24:720). These passages were also cited at the end of 1.1.3.

places it not directly before the understanding but rather between outer and inner sense, Imagination Model III.

According to Imagination Model III, the reproductive imagination fully replaces the object and is attributed similar causal powers. After all, it seems right to say that hallucinatory experience involves actually undergoing sensuous modifications of the mind – sensation – rather than merely a punctiform episode of information recall. And that inner sense is activated as normal, that the understanding receives its input through inner sense in the normal way, explains why this faculty might not be able to tell whether or not it came directly from outer sense. All the data given to the understanding whatsoever – regardless of whether it comes directly from the presence of an empirical object via outer sense or whether it comes from the reproductive imagination without the direct contribution of outer sense – is first being filtered through inner sense.

The addition of this intermediary step has the further benefit of emphasising the important fact that the kind of imaginal activity currently under discussion is very different from intellectual activity. And it also coheres with and even enriches the intuitive alternative role that the Supplemented Model gives to inner sense (see **1.1.2**). In the *Critique* Kant focuses on distinguishing inner sense from apperception and relating this distinction to the epistemic humility of transcendental idealism. But this matter ‘does not really belong to anthropology’ (7:142),³⁴ so in the section of the *Anthropology* devoted to this matter he talks instead about:

taking the appearances of inner sense for external appearances, that is, taking imaginings for sensations... it is mental illness: the tendency to accept the play of representations of inner sense as experiential cognition, although it is only fiction... and accordingly to trick oneself with the intuitions thus formed (dreaming when awake). (7:161)

³⁴ In fact this issue is also dealt with in the *Anthropology*, though only in Kant's handwritten version and not in the published versions.

Indeed, as well as the notion of inner sense being quite readily comprehensible on the Supplemented Model, I think it is also fair to say that the account of the reproductive imagination embodied in Imagination Modell III brings us closer than most to the pre-philosophical idea of imagination many of us would have prior to reading the Transcendental Deduction and Schematism chapters. The primary role of the imagination in those chapters is neither reproductive nor naturalistic. But despite its relative neglect in the literature, this should in no way suggest that the imagination in its reproductive, naturalistic guise is insignificant. For one thing, it provides a mechanism that has significant potential to contribute toward quite a rich, bottom-up explanation of hallucinatory experience. (This will be crucial in my arguments against the naïve realist reading – see especially 2.2.1.3.)

Plugging Imagination Model III into the Supplemented Model yields what we can call the Complex Model, a summary description and diagram of which is found in the next section. This completes my account of the internal structure of sensibility.

1.1.7 The Complex Model: A Summary Description and Diagram

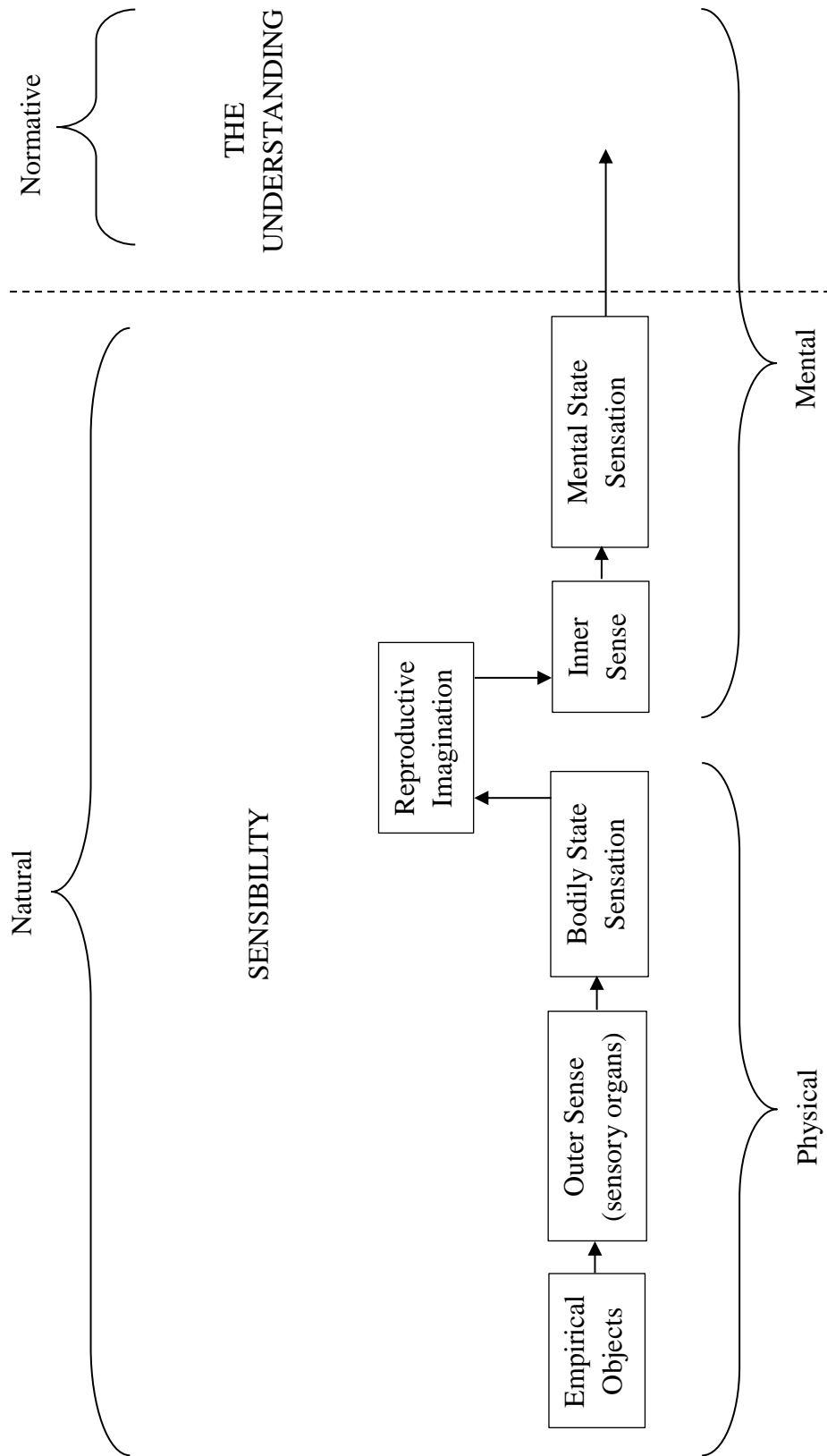
Empirical objects causally affect our sensory organs resulting in bodily state sensations that naturally encode information, both qualitative and quantitative, about those objects. What it is for sensations to naturally encode information is for them to possess properties that regularly correspond to the properties of the objects about which they encode information. The properties of bodily state sensations might resemble the properties of empirical objects in certain ways to – both sets of properties are sets of spatiotemporal properties, for example – but this fact is strictly irrelevant to the fact that they encode

information about them. Kant collectively refers to our bodily sensory capacities as outer sense.

Bodily state sensations are then processed through the reproductive imagination and inner sense before being presented to the understanding for the decoding that will produce experience. This processing is entirely passive, which is to say natural and mechanistic. This means that it does not alter the fundamental representational structure of the states processed – they remain sensational, representing objects only in the sense of standing in for them as cognitive proxies. The process is merely one of recoding information, of converting it from natural bodily state form into natural mental state form.

In the previous section we saw how, according to Kant, the reproductive imagination operates between outer and inner sense to provide information in lieu of current causal affection. It does so by regurgitating (and perhaps mechanistically re-ordering) it. Once information provided in this way has been decoded by the understanding, the result is hallucination. However, as we shall see in **2.1.1**, the reproductive imagination also plays a less deviant role in all cases of experience, be they hallucinatory, illusory, or veridical. In moving from outer to inner sense, information always goes via the reproductive imagination. Anticipatory though it is, this fact is reflected in the diagram that follows on the next page.

The Complex Model:



1.2 Consciousness and Sensibility

This is the second main section of Part I. It is much shorter than the first. Having now completed my account of the internal structure of sensibility, I want to consider what role consciousness might play at this level of cognitive function. Doing so will allow us to properly identify the status of sensations in Kant's theory of experience. As the raw material of experience, sensations are first and foremost *theoretical* posits.³⁵

As I said in **0.5**, sensations are themselves givens in the sense that they are mere causal effects that have not undergone any spontaneous intellectual processing and do not depend on such either for their existence or for their (non-cognitively) representational status. And accordingly, sensation is that through which 'the object is given to us' (A19/B33) in the sense that it is that through which we initially and without any contribution from the understanding receive information (in an encoded form) about empirical objects. By now we have a good grasp of these points. However, sensations are *not* given in the sense that they are what we as normal human adults actually work with – we are not, at least normally, conscious at the level of sensation itself. Sensations are not posited by Kant on the basis of observation but rather on transcendental grounds, as necessary for the possibility of experience. We do not yet have a good enough grasp of this point.

³⁵ In this I am again following Sellars. See e.g. Sellars (1968, p. 9). However, I think his model needs to be augmented again. This is for basically the same reasons that I think Kemp Smith's account is oversimplified – see below.

It is not merely incidental to my account. The following discussion will tell us more about sensation as well as lay some useful groundwork for later sections. But more specifically, the claim that sensations are first and foremost theoretical posits is essential to my core interpretational commitment that Kantian experience, although itself a product of the intellectual activity of the understanding, is nevertheless supposed to be a conception of everyday experience, the kind of experience as of an independent world of empirical objects that we as normal human adults normally undergo (see especially **0.2**).

To begin with, in **1.2.1**, I draw out what the issue is here. I present some evidence that suggests sensations are not, for Kant, *solely* theoretical posits. That is to say, it seems undeniable that Kant allows that sensations *can* be *directly* accompanied by consciousness – this would be what I called thin experience, or thin perception (see **0.2** and **0.5**). And I explain why this might cause a problem for the core interpretational commitment I mentioned in the last paragraph. Then, in **1.2.2**, I give both textual and systematic grounds for thinking that although Kant does indeed allow that sensations *can* be directly accompanied by consciousness, he also holds that such occurrences are of necessity radically abnormal in normal human adults, and hence do not characterise our normal state.

Norman Kemp Smith (2003 [1923], p. xli) writes of the *pre*-Kantian view that:

Sensations, images, feelings... are *states* of consciousness, one might almost say *pieces* of consciousness, *i.e.*, they are conceived as carrying their own consciousness with them... Many present-day thinkers, continuing the tradition of English associationists, hold to this pre-Kantian view. Sensations, feelings, etc., are, it is implied, pieces of consciousness, forms of awareness; through their varying combinations they constitute the complex experiences of the animal and human mind.

And he continues in the next paragraph:

Kant's teaching is developed in direct opposition to all such views. If we discard his antiquated terminology, and state his position in current terms, we find that it amounts to the assertion that *consciousness is in all cases awareness of meaning*. There is no awareness, however rudimentary or primitive, that does not involve the apprehension of meaning.

The interpretation of Kant's theory of experience that I am defending in this thesis is in wholehearted conformity with the spirit of this wonderful sound bite summary. However, we shall see that it simply cannot, strictly speaking, be true. Consciousness is not in quite *all cases awareness of meaning*. There are states of consciousness, and moreover states of consciousness that we as normal human adults can and do occasionally undergo, that do not involve the apprehension of meaning at all. In these terms, the aim of this section is to acknowledge this fact and to complicate matters accordingly, but to do so in such a way as to remain faithful to the general thrust of what Kemp Smith says here.

1.2.1 The Problem: Two Kinds of Consciousness

I think that, for Kant, the kind of cognitional, potentially self-aware consciousness as of empirical objects that we as normal human adults enjoy in our everyday experience as of the objective world around us constitutively involves the conceptually structured intellectual activity of the understanding. However, it seems hard to deny that he also allows for a kind or level of consciousness that does not require the involvement of the understanding at all, namely a consciousness that directly accompanies mere sensation. In the *Critique* Kant talks of 'sensation of which one is conscious' (A225/B272) and 'sensation, as merely subjective representation, by which one can only be conscious that the subject is affected' (B207), culminating in the Stufenleiter taxonomy:

The genus is *representation* in general (*repraesentatio*). Under it stands the representation with consciousness (*perceptio*). A *perception* that refers solely to the subject as a modification of its state is a *sensation* (*sensatio*) (A320/B376)

And these ideas are brought together in the *Anthropology*:

A representation through sense of which one is conscious as such is called *sensation*, especially when the sensation at the same time arouses the subject's attention to his own state. (7:153)

To begin with, note how the account of sensation given in **1.1** has only made this issue more apparent. On the traditional account of sensations as (a) lacking all spatiotemporal extension themselves and (b) unable to encode any quantitative information regarding spatiotemporal extension, it is very hard to understand how they could possibly be objects of consciousness, or states that in a suitable sense are accompanied by consciousness. No such difficulty exists on the current model. It would be entirely natural to presume, for example, that a sensation, as it were on its own, could present to some form of consciousness something like a raw colour-field.³⁶

Of course, given passages such as those just quoted, this fact only furthers the case for the exegetical fidelity of my account of sensation. Kant seems to allow two kinds or levels of consciousness – that of sensation on the one hand and that of experience on the other – and the current model, by making sense of how we might become conscious of mere sensation, does too. So what, one might wonder, is the problem here?

To have some labels, let us call the pre-intellectual, sensational kind of consciousness *thin consciousness* and the intellectual, experiential kind of consciousness to which it stands opposed *thick consciousness*.

³⁶ See, e.g., B44, A169/B211; *Ref* (17:366).

Then the problem is to properly identify the role of thin consciousness in Kant's theory. Thin consciousness, whatever exactly it is and whatever role it plays, cannot be allowed in any way to ground thick consciousness. What I mean is that it cannot be the case that, for Kant, we as normal human adults as it were start with thin consciousness and then somehow work our way up to thick consciousness. For thin consciousness accompanies thin experience, while thick consciousness accompanies thick experience. And so to say that thin consciousness grounds thick consciousness would be as much as to say that thin experience rather than thick experience is Kant's conception of everyday experience. This would be to return to the view of Kant's theory of experience that I rejected back in **0.2**, according to which thick experience, as a product of the understanding, is only experience in some technical, contrived sense; not our everyday experience but rather something more like empirical knowledge.

Fortunately, this is not the role that thin consciousness plays. Quite the opposite, in fact. For Kant, if thin consciousness and thin experience are to occur for normal human adults at all, then they must be situated in wider framework of thick consciousness and thick experience. I will now argue for this claim.

1.2.2 The Solution: The Parasitic Nature of Thin Consciousness

There are both textual and systematic grounds for thinking that thin consciousness does not characterise normal human consciousness. I begin with the textual grounds.

In the *Anthropology*, Kant suggests that thin consciousness is the kind of consciousness that *very young human infants* undergo:

[‘the child’] begins to follow with his eyes shining objects held before him, and this is the crude beginning of the progress of *perception* (apprehension of the representations of sense), which enlarges to *cognition* of objects of sense, that is, *experience*... However, memory... does not reach back to that time; for it was not the time of experiences, but merely of scattered perceptions not yet united under the concept of an object. (7:127)

He does also seem to allow that thin consciousness is a state had *occasionally* by normal human adults. Again from the *Anthropology*:

when the speech of another is so loud that, as we say, the ears hurt from it, or when someone who steps from a dark room into bright sunshine blinks his eyes. The latter will be blind for a few moments because of the too strong or too sudden light..., the former will be deaf for a few moments because of the shrieking voice. That is, both persons are unable to find a concept of the object because of the intensity of the sensations; their attention is fixed merely on the subjective representation, namely the change of the organ. (7:156-7)³⁷

But such states are clearly *not* supposed to be the norm for us. And Kant even has a name for when they become pathological in the human adult:

Amentia is the inability to bring one's representations into even the coherence necessary for the possibility of experience. (7:214)

This is crucial. There is a clear affinity between Kant's characterisation of *amentia* and his talk in the *Critique* of ‘a blind play of representations, i.e., less than a dream’ (A112), and of ‘a rhapsody of perceptions, which would not fit together in any context’ (A156/B195).³⁸ Kant calls disorders such as *amentia* the ‘most profound degradation of humanity’ (7:214), and I do not think he is hyperbolising in this. Kant is saying that states of thin consciousness *must* be quite radically atypical in normal human adults. For to be in a permanent state of thin consciousness, to have nothing but a blind play of representations or a rhapsody of perceptions, would be to fail entirely to have a world in view (veridically

³⁷ The same example occurs in *PL* (24:565).

³⁸ Cf. A121; *Anthr* (7:144); *OP* (22:457); *VL* (24:805).

or otherwise). According to Kant, this would be quite literally to lose one's mind, to become *amential*, and in doing so, thereby lose those features of oneself that for him are defining of our very humanity, namely reason and self-consciousness.

But why would losing the world from view have this consequence? This brings me to the more systematic reason we have for denying that the role of thin consciousness in Kant can be as the normal human consciousness that grounds thick consciousness.

What I have in mind here is a fundamental claim in the Transcendental Deduction which resurfaces in an empirical guise in the Refutation of Idealism, namely that object-consciousness and self-consciousness necessarily come together.³⁹ In Kant's most abstract terms, that the transcendental object and the transcendental unity of apperception are necessary conditions for the possibility of one another. First I will explain this connection and then I will explain how it puts thin consciousness in its place.

In one direction the relation here is relatively clear. Kant thinks that possible self-consciousness (apperception) is a necessary condition for object-consciousness (thick experience and its accompanying thick consciousness) because it is just part of what it is to be an object to be other than the subject, to be 'that which is opposed to our cognitions being determined at pleasure or arbitrarily' (A104). For Kant, being conscious of an object in the relevant *cognitive* sense involves not merely being affected by it and being able to respond to it in various ways, but also at the same time involves being aware that it is an object and understanding what an object is – the consciousness of objects in the relevant sense is a consciousness of objects *as such*. And this, for Kant, requires mobilising the concept of such an object. This is one of the broadly conceptualist premises I introduced in

³⁹ See especially §3 (A103-10) of the A-edition Deduction, §§16-18 (B131-40) of the B-edition Deduction, and the Theorem of the Refutation (B275), though of course this is one of Kant's core doctrines and is ubiquitous throughout his corpus.

0.4. I return to it at length in **2.1**. What is crucial here is that it follows that in being so aware one must also mobilise the concept of a subject, since this concept is part of the concept of an object – among other things, an object is something distinct from the subject. And then the thought is that if one mobilises the concept of a subject in one's object-consciousness, then it is possible to become conscious, again in the cognitively rich sense, of oneself *as* a subject. And this just is to become self-conscious. In this way object-consciousness is a sufficient condition for possible self-consciousness, so possible self-consciousness is a necessary condition for object-consciousness.

In the other direction the relation is a little trickier to appreciate and has been even more roundly criticised.⁴⁰ But this is what is most important here and I think the key to understanding it runs along the following lines. Kant thinks, conversely, that object-consciousness is a necessary condition for possible self-consciousness because he understands self-consciousness as *second-order* consciousness. That is to say, self-consciousness, or apperception, for Kant, is consciousness of one's consciousness of objects as such. Let C(O) stand for the consciousness of an object as an object. Then the general conceptualist commitment in the background of the previous point was that, for there to be consciousness in the proper, cognitive sense, where it is understood what the thing inside the brackets is, a concept of that thing is required. And the current point is accordingly that self-consciousness, as second-order consciousness, which can be represented as C(C(O)), thus requires not only the concept of a subject but also the concept of an object, since this is also one of the things inside the brackets. And if possible self-consciousness requires the concept of an object, then in effect it requires the object-consciousness. Object-consciousness is a necessary condition of possible self-consciousness.

⁴⁰ See, for example, Guyer (1987, p. 117) and Cassam (1987, p. 375).

Given this connection between object-consciousness and self-consciousness, then on the reasonable assumption that normal human adults are possibly self-conscious, it follows that thick consciousness, rather than thin consciousness, is characteristic of our normal state of awareness. According to Kant, having a world in view is necessary if we are to be able to become conscious of ourselves as subjects. And a merely thin consciousness does not provide us with this.

So where does this leave thin consciousness? We saw in the quotations given at the start of the previous section that thin consciousness cannot involve reference to objects as such. As Kant makes especially clear in the following reflection from 1783-4:

the consciousness of perceptions relates all representation only to our self as modifications of our condition; they are in this case separated among themselves, and are especially not cognitions of any things and are related to no object. (18:386):

But we can now see how strong this restriction on thin consciousness really is. For it also proscribes reference *to the subject* as such.

George (1981) contains a fascinating and enlightening discussion of Condillac (1930 [1754]) regarding the former point, saying that ‘in order to avoid reference to an object, he [Condillac] would allow ‘I am green’ to describe a visual analogue to such statements as ‘I am cold’ (George (1981, p. 230)).⁴¹ But Condillac’s subject-centred descriptions would not satisfy Kant as characterisations of thin consciousness. They remain too objective in that they retain reference to an ‘I’. For Kant, the subject does not appear *as a subject* in thin consciousness any more than the object appears *as an object*. Rather than ‘I am green’ as a characterisation of thin consciousness, then, Kant might prefer something more like

⁴¹ It is worth mentioning that certain aspects of Condillac’s view are remarkably suggestive of transcendental idealism. For example: ‘I do not say that there is no extension, I only say that we can only perceive it in our own sensations, whence it follows that we do not see objects in themselves’ (1930 [1754], p. 215).

'sensing greenly is occurring'.⁴² This is why he talks of sensation as 'a representation through sense of which one is conscious *as such*' (7:153, quoted in **1.2.1**). All there is to thin consciousness is the consciousness, as it were. The subject, insofar as it appears in thin consciousness at all, *just is* its modification (A320/B376, quoted in **1.2.1**). Unless, that is, there is already a wider, more stable framework of thick consciousness and thick experience to provide a subject as such in the first place. It is in this way that thin consciousness *as a possible state in the normal human adult* is parasitic on thick consciousness.

⁴² See Sellars (1975) and Westphal (2004, p. 44) for related discussion regarding my use of adverbial phrasing here.

Part II

Understanding and Experience

2.1 The Internal Structure of the Understanding

2.1.1 A Note on Imaginative Synthesis

2.1.2 A Two-Stage Model of Conceptual Synthesis

2.1.3 Kant's Weak Non-Conceptualism

2.1.4 Experience and Reason

2.1.5 Constraint Level I: World-Experience

2.1.6 Constraint Level II: Experience-Thought

2.2 Non-Veridicality

2.2.1 Naïve Realism

2.2.2 Hallucination and Illusion

2.1 The Internal Structure of the Understanding

I will now turn to the understanding and experience.

My account of the understanding as it functions to produce experience will in a sense be another data-processor model to compliment my data-processor model of sensibility. The difference in these terms is that, whereas sensibility functions to *encode* and then *recode* information, the processing of the understanding in producing experience is one of *decoding* information. It is important to bear in mind, however, that I do not mean for this terminology to bring with it any naturalistic connotations. As we have seen, such connotations were entirely apt at the level of sensibility and sensation. But on Kant's theory they become inappropriate at precisely the level of the understanding and experience.

We saw how the fully passive part of sensibility, sense, functions entirely within the natural realm. And we have seen no reason that the introduction of a merely reproductively active part of sensibility would change this, particularly considering how this part itself functions to provide data to the understanding only through inner sense. The representations that constitute the content of sensibility, sensations, remain the immediate results of causal affection, whether this occurs because of the empirical object or because of the reproductive imagination. They remain the *raw* material of experience, mere natural events, in no sense in themselves assessable for correctness. Matters are different,

however, when it comes to the experience that results from the understanding's processing of the raw material provided to it through sensibility.

Let us call the raw material that forms the output of sensibility *the sensible manifold*. This is the manifold of mental state sensations that is provided to the understanding for processing through inner sense, either directly from outer sense or indirectly via the reproductive imagination. And let us call the processing of the sensible manifold by the understanding, its decoding or interpretation of the information encoded in the sensible manifold, *conceptual synthesis*. Then as a first pass we can say that conceptual synthesis consists in an understanding of the sensible manifold that it means that the world is a certain way; slightly more specifically, that it means that the world is such that in the subject's perceptual presence there are such and such empirical objects with such and such empirical properties, arranged and interacting among themselves and with the subject in such and such a way. The result of this finding or making of meaning in the sensible manifold is our everyday experience as of the world being that way. (I say the 'finding or making' of meaning here because, as we shall see, the activity of the understanding is a matter of doing both.) This experience is most certainly assessable for correctness. For one thing, the way the world really is might or might not be the way that it is represented as being in experience.

There is a lot that needs to be unpacked here.

As with Part I, Part II is divided into two main sections. In this first section, I present and defend my account of the internal structure of the understanding.

After a summary note on imaginative synthesis in **2.1.1**, I begin my account in **2.1.2** by outlining what I will call a *two-stage* model of conceptual synthesis. It is important to bear in mind throughout, however, that my talk of distinct stages here is a device in service of

exposition and should not be taken literally. Its primary purpose is to emphasise the difference between pure and empirical concepts.

The first stage of conceptual synthesis consists in a mobilisation of the schematised categories as they collectively articulate the pure concept of an empirical object *in general*. That is, it consists in an understanding of the sensible manifold that it means that the world is such that there is an empirical object in general in the subject's perceptual presence. And accordingly it produces an experience as of such an object. This first stage of conceptual synthesis is essential to all experience whatsoever. It requires an irreducible core of conceptual ability on behalf of the subject and it is what gives experience its core conceptual structure.

The second stage of conceptual synthesis consists in a mobilisation of empirical concepts as they descriptively specify that pure concept of an empirical object in general to produce an empirical concept of an empirical object *of some particular kind possessing some particular properties*. That is, it consists in an understanding of the sensible manifold that it means that the world is such that in the subject's perceptual presence there is an empirical object of such and such a particular kind possessing such and such particular properties. And accordingly it produces an experience as of such an object. Unlike the first stage of conceptual synthesis, this second stage varies with regard to what degree of conceptual ability it involves and thus with regard to what conceptual structure it confers on the experience it produces as its output.

On the basis of this two-stage model and in light of Kant's famous example of the savage, I develop the image of a *spectrum* of experience, such that, although all experience shares a certain core conceptual structure, its degree of conceptual specificity can vary depending on the conceptual abilities of the relevant subject.

In **2.1.3** I explain in a programmatic way how Kant's theory of experience, as a theory based on this two-stage model of conceptual synthesis, integrates elements of non-conceptualism into what nevertheless remains a broadly conceptualist framework.

If this integration means that Kant's theory counts as a non-conceptualist theory by today's lights, then so be it. I think this would be a misleading title for the theory as I interpret it, but in any case, it doesn't much matter what we call the theory. What is important is how good it is at explaining what we need to explain about experience. In particular, I think the theory can provide an explanation of how experience is able to rationally ground our beliefs; and furthermore I think it can do so whilst also being able to account both for the fact that experience is constrained by the world and for the fact that our experience of the world constrains our thought about the world. In **0.4** I called this the well-designedness of Kant's theory. I deal with each of these explanations in turn.

In **2.1.4** I look at how Kant's theory accounts for the fact that our experience can rationally ground belief. It does so by granting experience a conceptual structure, since for Kant, conceptual structure is judgemental structure, and to say that a representation is judgementally structured is just to say that it has propositional content. In this way, our experience can stand in rational relations to beliefs. I look at how this plays out with regard to the spectrum conception of experience developed in **2.1.2** and then I use what I have said about judgemental structure and rational ground to give a fuller picture (than that first introduced in **1.1.3**) of the kind of normativity exhibited by experience. Finally, in what I have called an appendix to this section because of its subsidiary status, I elaborate on the metaphor of the logical space of reasons by presenting a graphic representation of such a space, modelling it on Kant's table of the logical functions of the understanding in judgement.

In **2.1.5**, appealing again to Kant's signal distinction between pure and empirical concepts and his hierarchical-containment conception of the relation between them, I look at how Kant's theory can account for the fact that the world constrains experience. This has to do with what determines how the second stage of conceptual synthesis will run; that is, with what determines exactly which empirical concepts will be mobilised therein. This turns out to be in part the particular details of the informational content of the sensible manifold. Since the particular details of the informational content of the sensible manifold are determined by the world, it follows that the world partially determines how exactly the second stage of conceptual synthesis will run. It is in this way that the world constrains experience. I confirm this point by giving a more formal definition of Kant's notion of conceptual function and then I explain why the activity of the understanding in conceptually synthesising the sensible manifold to produce experience remains in a suitable sense spontaneous.

Finally, in **2.1.6**, I look at how Kant's theory can account for the fact that our experience of the world constrains our thought about the world, and in particular at how Kant, even from within his broadly conceptualist framework, can tell a coherent story of how we learn our empirical concepts *from* experience. Three aspects of the preceding discussion will be crucial here: Kant's spectrum conception of experience (**2.1.2**); Kant's weak non-conceptualism (**2.1.3**); and Kant's demanding conception of conceptual ability (**2.1.4**).

In the second main section of Part II, I return to the topic of non-veridical experience.

2.1.1 A Note on Imaginative Synthesis

I discussed one aspect of Kant's account of the imagination in **1.1.6**. This is the most important aspect for my argument in this thesis. But before I present my two-stage model

of conceptual synthesis, I want to say something about two other aspects of Kant's account of the imagination. These also play significant roles in his theory of experience, but for reasons that I give below, I will not be focusing on them here.

In **1.1.6** I considered the role the imagination plays in hallucinatory experience, but in Kant's theory this wide-ranging faculty is also active in experience more generally, be it veridical or non-veridical. Here is a very rough sketch of what I take to be one plausible interpretation of his view. It is based primarily on the text of the 'subjective' (Axvii-xviii) side of the A-edition Deduction (A98-114), though it finds support elsewhere too. It involves two very different manifestations of the imagination, each of which forms a link in a chain of necessary conditions for the possibility of conceptual synthesis, and thus experience, that bottoms out in transcendental idealism.

The Empirical Level:

Conceptual synthesis is only possible due to the associationistic synthesis of the empirical or reproductive imagination (in a distinct though closely related guise to that described in **1.1.6**). This is the empirical manifestation of 'the synthesis of reproduction in the imagination', which Kant says is 'inseparably combined' with the empirical manifestation of 'the synthesis of apprehension in the intuition'. It precedes the 'synthesis of recognition in the concept', which I am calling conceptual synthesis, and is allegedly necessary because:

Every intuition contains a manifold in itself... Now in order for *unity* of intuition to come from this manifold... it is necessary first to run through and then to take together this manifoldness (A99)

(As in **1.1.6** I can stay neutral on whether 'intuition' here means thin or thick intuition. I discuss why in the next section, but in a nutshell, it is because of the ambiguity in what it could mean for intuition to 'contain a manifold in itself'.)

We can fruitfully understand this empirical manifestation of imaginative synthesis along the lines of perceptual binding as understood in contemporary neurophysiology of perception.¹ Different sensory modalities encode similar information in different ways; vision and touch with regard to information about shape, for example. Moreover, even within a single sensory modality – vision, say – different aspects of that capacity are concerned to encode information about different features of the objects we sense, one with colour, one with shape, and so on. Perceptual binding is concerned with co-ordinating the results of all this so that the sensible manifold as it is presented to the understanding for conceptual synthesis does not just encode information about something coloured as well as information about something shaped but also information about something coloured and shaped. This remains an entirely natural, mechanistic process and accordingly this is a manifestation of the imagination as it 'belongs to sensibility' (B151). Its role is to ensure that the sensible manifold is presented to the understanding with enough unity to be amenable to conceptual synthesis, to ensure that it has an '*empirical* affinity' to concepts (A114). Once again, the *Anthropology* has it brilliantly:

there must always be a theme on which the manifold is strung, so that the understanding can also be effective. However, the play of the imagination here still follows the rules of sensibility, which provide the material whose association is achieved without consciousness of the rule, and this association is *in conformity with* the understanding although not derived *from* it. (7:177)

¹ This has been convincingly argued by Kitcher (1990, pp. 84-6) and Brook (1997, pp. 34-6, 124). See also Van Cleve (1999, pp. 243-4) and Westphal (2004, p. 89). Roskies (1999) is a classic collection on the issue and Treisman (1986) offers a particularly Kantian model.

As I noted in **1.1.6**, we can allow that this kind of imaginal activity in some naturalistic sense involves decoding. All we need to proscribe in order to avoid circularity is that it in any way involves an understanding of the sensible manifold that it means that the world is a certain way, which perceptual binding clearly does not. Our initial bodily state sensations contain a veritable torrent of entirely disassembled information, even after neural filtering (see **1.1.4**), and this needs to be pre-conceptually organised and combined in some way before our intellectual faculties can really get to work understanding what it means.

The Transcendental Level:

However, according to Kant, this empirical manifestation of imaginative synthesis is itself only possible due to the transcendental or figurative synthesis of the pure or productive imagination. This is the imagination not as belonging to sensibility but as 'an effect of the understanding on sensibility and its first application (and at the same time the ground of all others)' (B152). It is the job of this transcendental manifestation of imaginative synthesis to somehow ensure that sensible manifolds *can* be empirically, associationistically synthesised. And this is achieved by somehow ensuring that the *empirical objects* that causally affect us and about which the sensible manifold encodes information *themselves* have what will this time be a '*transcendental* affinity' to concepts (A114, cf. A122). The world must exhibit regularity and patterns and generally have a rule-governed order, which is otherwise not guaranteed. It is worth quoting at length here:

This law of reproduction, however, presupposes that the appearances themselves are actually subject to such a rule, and that in the manifold of their representations an accompaniment or succession takes place according to certain rules; for without that our empirical imagination would never get to do anything suitable to its capacity and would thus remain hidden in the interior of the mind, like a dead and to us unknown faculty. If cinnabar were now red, now black, now light, now heavy... then my empirical imagination would never even get the opportunity to

think of heavy cinnabar on the occasion of the representation of the colour red... without the governance of a certain rule to which the appearances are already subjected in themselves, then no empirical synthesis of reproduction could take place.

There must therefore be something that itself makes possible this reproduction of the appearances by being the *a priori* ground of a necessary synthetic unity of them. One soon comes upon this if one recalls that appearances are not things in themselves, but rather the mere play of our representations... and one must assume a pure transcendental synthesis of this power, which grounds even the possibility of all experience (as that which the reproducibility of the appearances necessarily presupposes)... (A100-1)

It is far from clear exactly how this level is supposed to function. But this difficulty is in part due to one thing that *is* clear. According to Kant, this transcendental manifestation of imaginative synthesis is in turn only possible because empirical objects are (in some sense) mind-dependent appearances rather than things in themselves. Part of the problem, then, concerns how we are to understand transcendental idealism.

This is one reason that I will not attempt to give a fuller account of imaginative synthesis. Working as I am from the viewpoint of empirical reason, I will simply assume that the sensible manifold and, in particular, empirical objects are in a suitable state for conceptual synthesis, and thus experience, to be possible.

Before moving on to discuss a second reason for my focus on conceptual synthesis, it is important to be clear that nothing in this part of Kant's account of the conditions of thick experience (and thick consciousness) is supposed to rule out the possibility of thin experience (and thin consciousness). Kant's concern is to draw out the conditions necessary for the *possibility* of thick experience, not to establish its actuality in every possible case. Thus it remains entirely possible for a subject to acquire a sensible manifold and for this manifold to be (directly) brought to consciousness, even though for some reason she is not in a position to conceptually synthesise it. This might be due to

something in the particular circumstances of sensing, as in Kant's example of 'someone who steps from a dark room into bright sunshine' (7:156). It might be due to something more congenital, as in what Kant calls 'amentia' (7:214), which we can now envisage might arise due to a breakdown in one's capacity for perceptual binding. (Both of these passages from the *Anthropology* were discussed in 1.2.2). Or it might even be due to something more intrinsic to the sensible manifold itself. The only thing Kant's account of imaginative synthesis rules out on this interpretation of it is that any inability to conceptually synthesise be due to something intrinsic to the empirical object itself. For if an empirical object were not possibly an object of possible experience, as this would imply, then it would not be an empirical object at all (see 0.3).

There is another, perhaps more substantial reason that I will not give a fuller account of imaginative synthesis than the sketch I have provided here. This time it is one that is relevant to my relative neglect of the *empirical* level of imaginative synthesis. Some Kant commentators have given a much richer account of the empirical level of imaginative synthesis than the entirely naturalistic, mechanistic one that I have suggested.² In particular, they have taken the productive imagination, and not merely the reproductive imagination, to be operative at the empirical level. The reason I will focus on conceptual synthesis and not imaginative synthesis is that my account of conceptual synthesis will have it do much of the work that the aforementioned commentators have ascribed to imaginative synthesis. I have two things in particular in mind here.

First of all, and most straightforwardly, consider the characterisation Michael Young (1988, p. 145) gives of his proposed reading:

² See Heidegger (1997 [1929]), Strawson (1971), Sellars (2007 [1978]), Young (1988), and, more recently, Thomas (2009).

Kant's view is that perception involves not just being in a certain sensible state but also construing that state as the awareness *of* something. Such interpretation or construal, I maintain, is the characteristic act of imagination.

I think the first sentence here is exactly right (though I have phrased things differently).

But I disagree with the second sentence because I think that such interpretation or construal is characteristic of the understanding and its conceptualising activity.

Second of all, less straightforwardly, take the following passage from Sellars (2007 [1978], pp. 456-7):

Consider the visual perception of a red apple [that has not been cut open]. Apples are red on the outside (have a red skin) but white inside. Other features of apples are relevant, but this will do to begin with. The initial point to be made about the apple is that we see it not only as having a red surface but *as* white inside...

But what of the volume of white apple flesh which the apple is seen *as* containing? Many philosophers would be tempted to say that it is present *in the experience* merely by virtue of being believed in. It has, of course, actual existence as a constituent of the apple, but, they would insist, it is not present in its actuality. Phenomenologists have long insisted that this would be a mistake. As they see it, an actual volume of white is present in the experience in a way which parallels the red. We experience the red *as containing the white*.

Sellars goes on to appeal to the productive imagination in order to explain how it can be that an actual volume of white is present in experience *in a way which parallels the red*. I have italicised the last part of that sentence because it is where my account differs from that of Sellars. I do not think that Kant thinks that an actual volume of white is present in such an experience in a way which parallels the red. This is just too strong. I think Kant leans towards those who would be tempted to say that the volume of white is present in the experience merely by virtue of being believed in. This way of putting it does not tell the whole story either, however, and it is to this task I now turn.

2.1.2 A Two-Stage Model of Conceptual Synthesis

2.1.2.1 Stage I: Schematic Categorisation

Discussions regarding the role of the categories in experience are usually concerned with questions of justification and/or questions concerning conditions of possibility. That this is as it should be is clear from the A-edition Preface (Axvi-xvii), the B-edition Introduction (B19-24), and the introductory sections to the Transcendental Deduction itself (A84-95/B116-129). However, I want rather to look at some oft neglected details of just *how* the categories are supposed to function at this level. We can call this an investigation into the *quid modi*.

To give some initial textual grounds for my reading and to introduce some of the themes of my model of the functional details of conceptual synthesis, here are some choice quotations regarding the role of the categories in experience. (As in **1.1.6** and **2.1.1**, it is again the case that it does not matter whether Kant is talking about thick intuitions (i.e. experience) or thin intuitions (i.e. sensation) in the following passages. It does not matter in the sense that all I need to be committed to in the following quotations is that by the 'manifold' of intuition, Kant is referring to sensations. This does *not* require a commitment on what Kant means by the term 'intuition' itself. Given that by the 'manifold' of intuition Kant is referring to sensations, what he means by 'intuition' would then depend on whether the manifold is supposed to fully constitute intuition or whether it is supposed to make up only intuition's material foundation – in the first case intuition would be sensation, in the second case it would be experience. But this is just an ambiguity in what it could mean to be the manifold of something, and there is no reason for me to commit either way on this here. At the end of this section I will also explain how I can be similarly insouciant regarding the term 'perception' as it appears in the following passages.)

Having introduced his table of categories, Kant says that:

by these concepts alone can it [the understanding] understand something in the manifold of intuition, i.e., think an object for it (A80/B106)

And he goes on to say that:

all empirical cognition of objects is necessarily in accord with such concepts, since without their presupposition nothing is possible as *object of experience*... consequently the objective validity of the categories, as *a priori* concepts, rests on the fact that through them alone is experience possible (A93/B125-6).

In the A-edition Transcendental Deduction he says that:

These grounds of the recognition of the manifold, so far as they concern *merely the form of an experience in general*, are now those *categories* (A125)

And goes on to conclude that:

The pure understanding is thus in the categories the law of the synthetic unity of all appearances, and thereby first and originally makes experience possible as far as its form is concerned (A128)

In the B-edition Transcendental Deduction he says that:

Understanding is, generally speaking, the faculty of *cognitions*. These consist in the determinate relation of given representations to an object. An *object*, however, is that in the concept of which the manifold of a given intuition is *united* (B137)

He goes on to conclude that:

...all synthesis, through which even perception itself becomes possible, stands under the categories, and since experience is cognition through connected perceptions, the categories are conditions of the possibility of experience (B161)

And thus that:

all possible perceptions, hence everything that can ever reach empirical consciousness, i.e. all appearances of nature, as far as their combination is concerned, stand under the categories (B164-5)

How, then, focusing on the actual function of the categories, might we begin to cash out these claims?

I propose that the key is to recognise that the categories articulate the concept of an object *in general* (A93/B126, B128, B158, B159). There are both unschematised and schematised versions of this concept, depending on whether or not it abstracts from our particular forms of sensibility, space and time. The unschematised concept of an object in general is not my concern here. It is something like the concept of a whole with parts that possesses some qualities and which can stand in some kind of ground-consequence relations to other such things. Many things qualify as objects in this sense, including abstracta and things in themselves. Even discursive intellects that do not share our forms of sensibility would ultimately, as we do, have to think in terms of it (though it is a more difficult issue whether non-discursive, intuitive intellects would have to).

The *schematised* concept of an object in general, on the other hand, is more restrictive, though it still allows for various distinctions in kind. Most generally, it is the concept of an appearance – an object of possible human cognition. This would still include both empirical objects and the pure sensible objects of mathematics, however. My focus here is on empirical objects – those appearances which affect our senses and are thereby objects of possible human *empirical* cognition, experience. In this application, then, the schematised categories articulate the concept of an *empirical* object in general, which is something like the concept of a spatiotemporally extended and located, sensible property-possessing, fully causally functioning particular – a material thing.

Empirical objects are spatiotemporal wholes with parts, thus a plurality considered as a unity, which is to say, a totality. Any given empirical object possesses some sensible properties and does not possess others – it has its reality limited by negation. And each is a substance in which accidents inhere and which stands in reciprocal causal relations to the whole unified community of all other such objects in and through one time (B110-13). In this way, the schematised quantitative, qualitative, and relational categories are mobilised *wholesale*, as *collectively* articulating the concept of an empirical object in general.

There is no reference to the modal categories here because ‘The categories of modality have this peculiarity: as a determination of the object they do not augment the concept to which they are ascribed in the least, but rather express only the relation to the faculty of cognition’ (A219/B266; cf. A74/B99-100). Nevertheless, in this relation as it is manifested in experience, the modal categories are likewise mobilised wholesale. For in experience, individual empirical objects are understood as interconnected parts of a unified causal network in which everything that is (empirically) possible is actual and thus (empirically) necessary (A220-35/B267-B287). This unified causal network is the world.

Note that although paradigmatic of empirical objects are things like birds, trees, apples, tables and chairs, what makes the schematised categories in this application a collective articulation of the concept of an empirical object *in general* is that in themselves they say nothing further about any particular empirical determination of quantity, quality or relation – size, shape, colour, particular causal function, and so forth. (And again, note that modality is absent here, as we would now expect, for it does not have particular determinations in this sense). In this way, though schematised to restrict the categories to the cognisable realm of appearances, and then specified further to the *empirically* cognisable realm, the concept of an empirical object *in general* remains pure (or at least a priori – see B2-3).

The basic thought, then, is that the first stage of the conceptual synthesis of the sensible manifold consists in a wholesale mobilisation of the schematised categories in understanding the manifold as meaning that there is in the subject's perceptual presence an empirical object in general. Call this first stage of conceptual synthesis that of *schematic categorisation*. It results in the representation of empirical objects as spatiotemporally extended and located, sensible property-possessing, fully causally functioning particulars, *without*, that is, any further specification of the empirical objects in question as being, for example, birds, trees, apples, tables or chairs.

It is in this way that the categories are necessary for all and any experience (and for all and any thick intuition and thick perception). For whether we experience a bird or a tree or an apple, etc., we experience a spatiotemporally extended and located, sensible property-possessing, fully causally functioning particular. This, to pick one of the quotations with which we started, is what Kant means when he talks about the categories being 'the grounds of the recognition of the manifold, so far as they concern *merely the form of an experience in general*' (A125). Being as of an empirical object in general is the form of all experience. In all experience, we recognise the object of our experience as an empirical object in general.

What we have here is the following argument:

For experience to be *as of* an empirical object in general, for it to involve the representation of an empirical object *as such*, it must involve a mobilisation of the schematised categories in conceptually synthesising the sensible manifold that forms its material foundation; which is to say, it must involve an understanding of that sensible manifold that it means that there is a spatiotemporally extended and

located, sensible property-possessing, fully causally functioning particular in the subject's perceptual presence.

All experience whatsoever, be it as of a bird or a tree or an apple, etc., is as of empirical objects in general.

Therefore all experience must involve a mobilisation of the schematised categories in conceptually synthesising the sensible manifold that forms its material foundation.

This is clearly a recognisably Kantian argument. It could easily be recast to more explicitly resemble a transcendental argument, starting from a premise of there being 'as of' experience and reasoning to the mobilisation of categories as a necessary condition for the possibility of such experience. And as such, it clearly has the potential to do significant anti-empiricist, and perhaps anti-sceptical, work. If, that is, the first premise could be defended, for it is this premise that manifests Kant's commitment to the broadly conceptualist premise that experience as of something requires the concept of that thing. As I said in **0.4**, however, I will not be concerned to defend this premise philosophically. Rather I will be concerned to explore exactly what this premise amounts to for Kant, along with the role it plays in his theory of experience. Insofar as I touch on the issue at all, then, what I say is better understood as an account of what *would* be required to mount a philosophical defence of Kant's version of the premise, rather than itself such a defence. It will turn out that it would require quite a lot, since the strength of the premise is dictated by the strength of one's demands on what it takes to possess a concept, and Kant's demands are strong.

Note also that I am making no claims to this argument being a full-blown transcendental deduction of the categories. It is of course a hugely controversial issue as to what such a

deduction would look like, one that heavily impacts on the issue of who the targets of Kant's arguments are. But for example, suppose we take an answer to the question of justification, and therefore a full-blown transcendental deduction (A84/B116), to require showing that the categories must apply to the objects of experience. All the above argument gets us is the conclusion that we must apply the categories in experience, and it is at the very least not obvious how this might entail that the categories must apply. Perhaps, for example, some appeal to transcendental idealism is required to bridge this gap. Perhaps, that is, in order to make the move from our having to apply the categories in experience to the categories having to apply in the world, we would need to appeal to the idea that the objects of our experience in some sense have the properties they do because they are objects of our experience.³ In any case, I make no claims either way on this point, working as I am from the viewpoint of empirical realism.

And finally, note that the above argument only holds for thick experience – the second premise is only true of this kind of experience. What about *thin* experience? That is, what about sensations directly accompanied by consciousness, or thin perception? Being as of an empirical object in general cannot be the form of thin experience because thin experience is not as of anything – it does not directly involve any conceptual synthesis and does not representation empirical objects as such. Nevertheless, recall (from **1.2**) that the possibility of thin experience occurring in normal human adults depends on it being abnormal and situated in a wider context of thick experience. In short, thick experience is a necessary condition of thin experience (if the latter is to occur in normal human adults). It follows that the mobilisation of the categories that is necessary for thick experience is also thereby necessary for thin experience. The categories remain necessary conditions for the possibility of thin experience, though more indirectly, in virtue of the transitivity of the

³ For relevant presentations of this problem, see Strawson (1966, pp. 72-117) and Stroud (1968), and Van Cleve (1999, pp. 73-104) and Gomes (2011).

'necessary condition for the possibility of' relation. Thus, to take another of the quotations with which we started this section, when Kant says that 'all possible perceptions... stand under the categories' (B164), I can understand him as meaning 'all possible perceptions [*that can be anything to us as normal human adults*]',⁴ rather than having to say that he means only 'all possible [*thick*] perceptions'.

That completes my initial outline of the first stage of conceptual synthesis, the schematic categorisation of the sensible manifold. I will now sketch an initial outline of the second stage of conceptual synthesis.

2.1.2.2 Stage II: Empirical Determination

The conceptual synthesis of the sensible manifold that produces experience does not consist solely in schematic categorisation. For we do not experience empirical objects merely as spatiotemporally located and extended, sensible-property possessing, fully causally functioning particulars; that is, without there being at least *some* more specific determinations of quantity, quality and relation – as being tall, having a trunk, branches, and leaves, for example. This, I propose, is the role of empirical concepts at the current level of cognitive function – to *descriptively specify* the pure concept of an empirical object in general, which specification results in an *empirical* concept of an empirical object *of some particular kind possessing some particular properties*. This is the second stage of conceptual synthesis, empirical determination. Most generally it consists in an understanding of the sensible manifold that it also contains particular information with

⁴ The allusion in my formulation here is to B132, where Kant says that any representation in me that could not be thought of as mine would 'either be impossible or else would be nothing for me'. Cf. A116: 'All intuitions are nothing for us and do not in the least concern us if they cannot be taken up into consciousness'.

regard to particular empirical properties. And it results in the experience as of an empirical object *that is a tree*, for example.

But descriptive or conceptual specificity is not an all or nothing notion. I talked just now in the singular, in terms of empirical determination involving the mobilisation of *an* empirical concept of an empirical object of some particular kind. This is not incorrect. But empirical concepts of empirical objects of some particular kind are generally going to be complex and thus any such concept will contain within itself not only the categories but also other empirical concepts. Trees, for example, are spatiotemporally located and extended, sensible-property possessing, fully causally functioning particulars *that have trunks, branches and leaves*. I will have more to say about this conception of concepts in **2.1.5.1**, but the relevant point at present is that, rather than a single distinct stage of empirical determination, it is perhaps best to think of there being maximal and minimal terminals here.

Maximally, the conceptual synthesis of the sensible manifold would involve the complete specification of all the conceptualisable empirical determinations about which that sensible manifold encodes information – to experience at the maximal terminal would be to *fully* understand what is understandable about the manifold, to grasp its conceptually graspable meaning *entirely*.

Now genuinely maximal terminal experience is, at least practically speaking, an ideal. But note that it is not *this* that Kant thinks is strictly speaking impossible for partially passive, finite cognisers like ourselves. What he thinks impossible is that we might ever fully understand empirical objects themselves, that we might ever completely specify all of *their* properties (A571-3/B599-601). But this is because we can only cognise such objects

through them causing sensible manifolds in us – it is because of a condition on our access to empirical objects, not because of any limitation on our access to sensible manifolds.

One might think that there are other reasons that a full understanding of the sensible manifold would be impossible, where this means its complete *conceptual* synthesis. For instance if it encoded information that for some reason could not possibly be decoded through conceptual synthesis, information that could not possibly be conceptually captured. This worry touches on the issue of whether experience has *essentially* non-conceptual content.⁵ In my characterisation of maximality, however, I have side-stepped this issue by qualifying that we are concerned here with *conceptualisable* empirical determinations and (conceptually) understanding what is (conceptually) understandable about the manifold. According to this characterisation, it is possible to experience at the maximal terminal even if the sensible manifold that is conceptually synthesised therein encodes information that could not possibly be decoded through *conceptual* synthesis.

Of course I do not think that the *entire* manifold could be like this. That is, it should already be clear that my interpretation is *not* going to be compatible with taking Kant to hold that *all* of the content of experience is essentially non-conceptual, and thus that *none* of the information encoded in the sensible manifold can be decoded through conceptual synthesis. Strictly speaking, however, my interpretation will stay neutral with regard to whether or not Kant allows that *some* of the content of experience is essentially non-conceptual. In particular what I have in mind here is the spatiotemporal indexicality of experience – the fact that objects are experienced from a subject-centred point of view and as being here and now. But I say only ‘strictly speaking’ because, first, my neutrality on this matter, such as it is, is not central to my account. It is rather due to limitations of

⁵ See Hanna (2008, p. 48) for the distinction between essentially and contingently non-conceptual content. I go into more depth on the issue of non-conceptualism in the next section.

space. I will not be able to deal with this issue in the detail that would be required to decide either way on it.⁶ And second, my neutrality on this matter is in a sense limited. It is true that, for all I say here, Kant *might* allow that *some* of the content of experience is essentially non-conceptual. But even if this is the case, one thing that is already ruled out by what I have said so far is that Kant allows that such content could exist and be fully objective *independently*; without, that is, being situated within an experience that also has the basic conceptual structure that is conferred by its involvement of schematic categorisation. Schematic categorisation, on my interpretation, is necessary to bring a world into view at all.

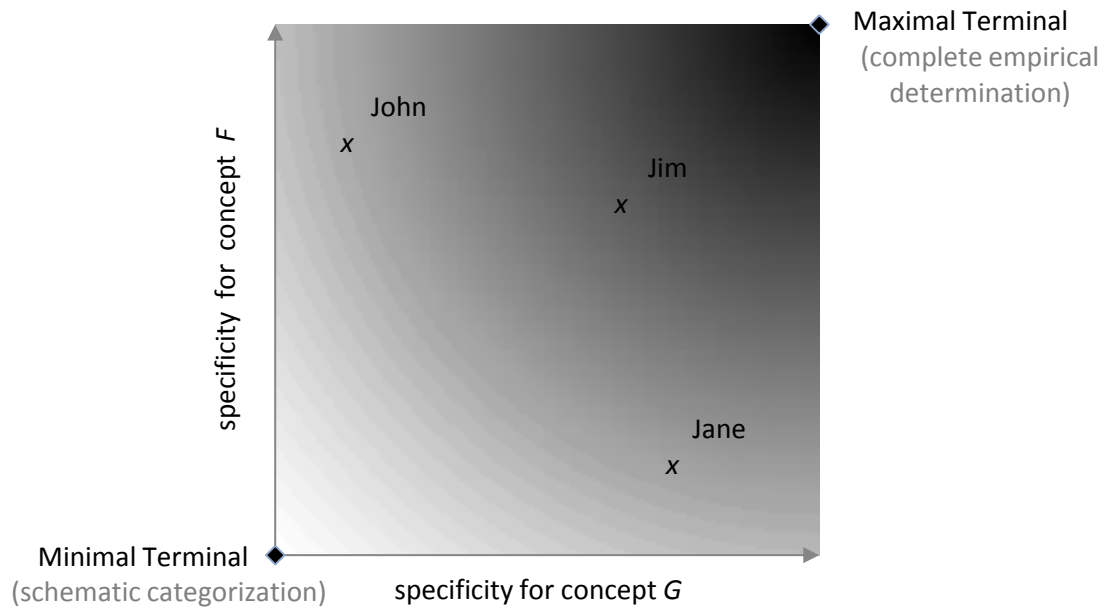
So what about minimal terminal conceptual synthesis? Minimally, conceptual synthesis would only involve schematised categorisation and no empirical determination at all. This would be the empirically barren specification of what *kind* of determinations of quantity, quality and relation the sensible manifold encodes information about, namely empirical ones – an understanding of the sensible manifold that it encodes information about spatiotemporal extension and location, sensible properties, and causal function, *without* a more specific understanding of which particular empirical determinations of these kinds of property the sensible manifold in fact encodes information about.

Again, we can ask whether experience from the minimal terminal is possible – whether it is possible to experience having only schematically categorised the sensible manifold – or whether it is rather the case that *some* empirical determination *must* always take place in conceptual synthesis. Kant's story of how we generate empirical concepts (9:94-5) might seem to suggest that experiencing from the minimal terminal is not only possible but necessary. If generation through comparison, reflection, and abstraction were the *only* way

⁶ See Hanna (2006), Hanna (2008), and Bernecker (2010) for discussions with which I am to some extent sympathetic.

in which we could acquire empirical concepts, and if this in turn required experience, then there would presumably be some early stage in our cognitive development at which we would *have* to experience from the minimal terminal in order to acquire our very first empirical concepts. In fact this argument does not go through, for there are other, less rational ways in which we can come by our empirical concepts. I return to Kant's account of concept learning in **2.1.6**, but the point for now is just that genuinely minimal terminal experience is also, at least practically speaking, an ideal.

Nevertheless, we can utilise these *idealised* notions of maximal and minimal terminals to develop a spectrum conception of experience. Such a spectrum would best be organised ordinally according to conceptual specificity, with the particular degree of conceptual specificity attained by any given experience being determined by the conceptual abilities of the subject undergoing that experience. Hence we would say, for example, that the meteorologist is closer to the maximal terminal when she undergoes an experience as of an altocumulus lenticularis than is a child who undergoes an experience on the basis of similar stimuli having barely grasped the concept of a cloud. Note that such a spectrum would also have to have more than one dimension in order to account for different areas of expertise. John, a tree scientist, and Jane, a colour scientist, might both achieve relatively high conceptual specificity when experiencing a tree, albeit along different dimensions. And one could, of course, achieve a high degree of specificity along more than one dimension. Jim, a dendro-chromaticist, would trump both John and Jane with regards to total conceptual specificity. That is, of the three of them, he would be the closest to the maximal terminal. The case of John, Jane, and Jim is represented in the figure on the next page, where F is the concept of a tree and G that of green. The shading on the graph just emphasises the fact that as proximity to the maximal terminal increases, so does conceptual specificity.



Why, then, might we want to accept that this account of empirical determination and its accompanying spectrum conception of experience is Kant's? We have already seen that it is based on Kant's division between pure and empirical concepts and on his hierarchical-containment conception of concepts (more on which in **2.1.5.1**). And much in the following sections can well be understood as an elaboration, clarification, and further exegetical defence of this model of conceptual synthesis. But to begin with, note how it provides us with a way to assimilate into the current, broadly conceptualist framework – for which we have already seen some textual evidence in the last section – Kant's example of the savage. As the *Jäsche Logic* has it:

In every cognition we must distinguish *matter*, i.e., the object, and form, i.e., *the way in which* we cognise the object. If a savage sees a house from a distance, for example, with whose use he is not acquainted, he admittedly has before him in his representation the very same object as someone else who is acquainted with it determinately as a dwelling established for men. But as to form, this cognition of

one and the same object is different in the two. With one it is *mere intuition*, with the other it is *intuition* and *concept* at the same time. (9:33)⁷

Exegetically put, my proposal is that when Kant says 'mere intuition' in this passage, he means experience without the empirical concept of a house, not necessarily without any empirical concepts at all, and certainly not without the schematised categories. This is still thick intuition, an artificially isolated individual episode of experience, though it is closer to the minimal terminal than the maximal. And accordingly, when he says 'intuition and concept', he means experience with the empirical concept of a house specifically.⁸

(We could also put this point in terms of blindness and Kant's most famous formula: 'Thoughts without content are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind' (A51/B75). On my reading, which steers a middle path between the McDowell-type strong conceptualist readings and the strong non-conceptualist readings of Hanna and Allais, thick intuitions come in degrees of blindness. Blindness increases with proximity to the minimal terminal of experience, though it reaches an upper bound at that terminal.)

More generally, the thought is that the current model can allow that there is an entirely legitimate sense in which savages who lack the concept of a house can be said to experience a house: they simply stand closer to (though probably not quite at) the minimal terminal. A savage experiences a house merely *as* something more like an empirical object *in general*, perhaps as an empirical object that is large and solid and brown. Rather, that is, than experiencing it *as* an empirical object that is a house. Her experiences are not very conceptually specific, though they are all above a certain minimal terminal of conceptual specificity. She still has a world in view, though she could not produce a very rich

⁷ Cf. *VL* (24:904): 'He who wished to have a representation of the colour red first had to see the colour red.' *VL* (24:905): 'He who sees his first tree does not know what it is that he sees.' *VL* (24:909): 'If someone were such that in the case of the expression *house* what occurred to him was always just the *tavern* that he had seen, he would always preserve an *intuitus*.'

⁸ Interestingly, this reading of the savage passage is compatible with the reading given in Hanna (2005, p. 262).

description of it. Thus it remains the case that all experience whatsoever intrinsically involves conceptual ability in the form of the ability to schematically categorise the sensible manifold, to recognise that it means that there is in the subject's perceptual presence an empirical object in general. But experiences can vary with regard to the degree of *empirical* conceptual ability they involve, and thus with regard to the conceptual specificity they attain. They do so according to the particular empirical conceptual abilities of the subject undergoing the experience.

That completes my initial outline of the second stage of conceptual synthesis, the empirical determination of the sensible manifold, and thus of my two-stage model of conceptual synthesis. In the next section, I explain how Kant's theory of experience, as a theory based on this two-stage model and its spectrum conception, integrates aspects of non-conceptualism into what nevertheless remains a broadly conceptualist framework

2.1.3 Kant's Weak Non-Conceptualism

(The contemporary literature on conceptualism and non-conceptualism has, with no small amount of justification, become incredibly intricate and nuanced. The definitions and distinctions that follow are given solely in pursual of my goal in thesis, which is to understand Kant's theory of experience. I follow some coarse contours that are to be found in the contemporary debate, and will provide references accordingly, but in particular what I want to draw attention to is that the options presented here are by no means exhaustive of those that are currently live.)

It has become standard practice in the literature on non-conceptualism to distinguish between state non-conceptualism and content non-conceptualism. And although we will

see that this distinction is less significant on Kant's theory, it will be a useful place to start.⁹

State non-conceptualism says nothing about the content of experience – it is neutral with regard to the structural nature of what is conveyed to us in experience. Rather it is a view about the subject undergoing experience. In particular it is a view about what conceptual abilities the subject needs to have in order to be able to be in a state of experiencing (*whatever* the structural nature of the content of that state turns out to be). We can distinguish a strong and a weak version of state non-conceptualism.

Strong state non-conceptualism says that the subject of experience need not possess *any* concepts whatsoever in order to undergo experience – the subject can be in a state of experiencing without having *any* conceptual ability whatsoever.¹⁰ Kant's theory as I am presenting it is plainly incompatible with strong state non-conceptualism. We saw in **2.1.2.1** that *categorial* ability is required for all and any experience whatsoever – there is no experience below the minimal terminal and those without categorial ability could not possibly undergo experience in the relevant sense.

Weak state non-conceptualism, however, says only that the subject of experience need not possess *all* of the concepts that would enable her to fully articulate what could be conceptually articulated in the content of her experience – the subject can be in a state of

⁹ See Heck (2000), Byrne (2005), and Speaks (2005). Speaks talks about state and content non-conceptualism in terms of relatively and absolutely non-conceptual content respectively.

¹⁰ Allais (2009, p. 386) makes it clear that she is arguing for the attribution of this view to Kant. But it is worth noting that although she also says she is arguing *exclusively* for this, it seems to me that in also attributing naïve realism to Kant, as she does both in this paper and elsewhere (Allais (2010)), she is attributing to Kant a view that is not neutral with regard to the structural nature of what is conveyed to us in experience. See **2.2.1**, but in a nutshell: if the content of experience is the empirical object itself (rather than some representation of it), then surely the content of experience is not conceptually structured, for empirical objects themselves are not conceptually structured. Ultimately, then, I think that naïve realism entails some form of content non-conceptualism. Note, however, that this is not to say that a naïve realist reading of Kant is incompatible with some form of *state* conceptualism, according to which some conceptual *ability* is required for a subject to undergo experience. See Gomes (2012) for an interesting proposal along these lines.

experiencing without having the conceptual resources adequate to a full conceptual understanding of what is conceptually understandable in what her experience is conveying to her about the world.¹¹ Kant's theory as I am presenting it is plainly compatible with weak state non-conceptualism. Indeed, every time a subject experiences at anything less than the maximal terminal, every time the information encoded in the sensible manifold is not fully decoded, she is in a state of experiencing without having the conceptual resources adequate to a full understanding of what is conceptually understandable in what her experience is conveying to her about the world. So Kant's theory of experience is not only compatible with weak state non-conceptualism. Assuming that there are savages – and we will see that for Kant we all start out as savages – the theory entails weak state non-conceptualism.

What about *content* non-conceptualism? Content non-conceptualism is not neutral with regard to the structural nature of what is conveyed to us in experience – it is precisely a view about the content of experience. Again we can distinguish a strong and a weak version of content non-conceptualism, and we can do so along lines similar to those along which we drew a distinction between different versions of state non-conceptualism. Strong content non-conceptualism says that *none* of the content of experience is conceptually structured, while weak content non-conceptualism says that *not all* of the content of experience is conceptually structured.¹²

So far, so good. But what is it for content to be conceptually structured, or for that matter, for it to fail to be conceptually structured? I have already put aside the issue of essentially

¹¹ Note that with the qualifications 'what could be conceptually articulated' and 'what is conceptually understandable', I have defined this view so that it is stronger than what would be entailed by granting that experience has some essentially non-conceptual content (see 2.1.2.2). But in line with its traditional dialectical position, weak state non-conceptualism as I have defined it remains weak enough to be entailed by strong state non-conceptualism and certain other forms of content non-conceptualism, in particular, what I go on to call strong content non-conceptualism.

¹² Byrne (2005, p. 234) talks of the distinction between strong and weak versions of content non-conceptualism in terms of total and partial content non-conceptualism respectively.

non-conceptual content, and in light of this, our data-processor schematic provides us with a natural way to answer this question. According to this schematic, the content of experience is information about empirical objects. This is what is conveyed to us in undergoing experience. We have seen that this information comes in two basic forms, encoded and decoded, and we have also seen that conceptual synthesis is how we get from the former to the latter. Accordingly, as a first pass, we can say that content that is conceptually structured – conceptual content – is information that has been decoded during conceptual synthesis. Content that is not conceptually structured – non-conceptual content – is information that remains encoded after conceptual synthesis.¹³

Now it is true that so far this remains a somewhat programmatic answer, and a lot will be unpacked in the following sections. But we already have enough to begin to see where Kant's theory as I am presenting it stands with regard to strong and weak content non-conceptualism, so understood.

As was the case with strong state non-conceptualism, it is clear that Kant's theory is incompatible with strong content non-conceptualism. We saw in **2.1.2.1** that all experience whatsoever, even that which takes place at the minimal terminal, is as of empirical objects – being as of empirical objects is the essential form of experience. And this requires some decoding – it requires an understanding of the sensible manifold that it means that there is an empirical object in the subject's perceptual presence, which understanding, according to Kant, requires the mobilisation of the concept of an empirical object in general and gives experience its basic conceptual structure.

But what about weak content non-conceptualism? Again, as with weak state non-conceptualism, the key cases are going to be non-maximal terminal experiences; that is,

¹³ See Dretske (1981) for a related proposal.

experiences in which the information encoded in the sensible manifold has not been fully decoded. Clearly, the information that remains encoded after conceptual synthesis is non-conceptual. But the crucial question is whether such information still counts as being conveyed to the subject, or in more Kantian terms, as being accompanied by (thick) consciousness. Is it really *content*?

There is one obvious sense in which information that remains encoded after conceptual synthesis is *not* conveyed to the subject undergoing the experience that is the output of this process. It has not been conveyed to the subject in the same sense that, if I ask a non-English speaker 'Do you know where the train station is?', my query has not been conveyed. But this is just to repeat that the information remains encoded, that it is not understood as meaning what it does.

Is there an alternative but nevertheless suitable sense in which information that remains encoded after conceptual synthesis *is* conveyed to the subject undergoing the experience that is the output of this process? I think so. Consider again the case of my querying a non-English speaker. *Something* has certainly been conveyed to her, for she has heard my words, even if she does not know (and could not articulate) what they mean. And let us suppose further that she understands at least that they were words, albeit in a language she does not know. As well as, say, that her language has a similar question-inflection to English, such that she understands that I have made a query, although she could not say much about what it was or answer it. The point is that she has heard everything I have said and she understands certain general features of what I have said, of what she has heard. I propose that this case is similar to that of non-maximal terminal experience. The information that remains encoded is not being conveyed in the same way as the decoded information. But first, the subject is conscious of it in a way that she was not prior to conceptual synthesis, and second, the subject understands that it is information about an

empirical object in a way that she did not prior to conceptual synthesis. That is, she is now conscious of an empirical object as such, and she is also conscious of its having certain properties – or rather, she understands that it has certain properties – though she still cannot descriptively specify exactly what those properties are.

It might help to put things this way. The partial decoding of the sensible manifold that occurs in non-maximal experience is not partial in the sense that, as it were, certain distinct parts of the sensible manifold get decoded while certain other distinct parts do not. Rather it is partial in the sense that the entire manifold gets partially decoded. Consider another analogy. I look at a portrait photograph of a couple standing side-by-side and holding hands, a man with brown hair on the left and a man with blonde hair on the right. Partial decoding of the sensible manifold is *not* akin to me recognising the man with brown hair as a man with brown hair, but failing to register the man with blonde hair at all, either as a man or as human or even as a shape. To be sure, causal affection from that part of the photograph has been registered on my retina, and perhaps by some downstream bodily or indeed mental apparatus. But it has not been processed sufficiently so that I can properly be said to be (thickly) conscious of what the right side of the picture is depicting at all. To repeat, this is *not* what the partial decoding of the sensible manifold in the case of non-maximal terminal experiences is like. Rather it is more akin to me recognising the brown-haired man and the blonde-haired man as people, say, though neither as men nor as a couple. To borrow a well-known phrase from Wittgenstein (2005 [1953], p. 182), I am not blind to the right half of the photograph; I am blind to these *aspects* of the *entire* photograph.¹⁴

In **2.1.5.1** and **2.1.6** I will give further reasons for thinking that information that remains encoded after conceptual synthesis in non-maximal terminal experience still counts as

¹⁴ Hanna (2005, p. 262) also appropriates this phrase in a similar connection.

content, as being conveyed to the subject in that experience. For now I just want to re-emphasise two features of the view being proffered. First, I am assuming that the information under consideration could in principle be decoded, so what we have here is at most a form of *contingently* non-conceptual content. Second, this content is dependent for its status as content on the conceptual content of experience. On this view, the information encoded in the sensible manifold can play no role in cognitively orientating the subject towards an objective world unless it is at least partially decoded.

These are among the reasons that it seems best to say that what we have here remains a broadly conceptualist theory, albeit in some ways a conciliatory one. Kant makes conceptual ability and conceptually structured and structurable content essential and central to experience, and he denies that whatever non-conceptual content there might be is in any sense more basic than or prior to or able to exist as content without this central core of conceptual content.

With an initial outline of Kant's two-stage model of conceptual synthesis in hand, as well as an initial outline of certain features of the basic nature of the theory of experience that is based on this model, I will now consider what explanatory power the theory has. I will begin by looking at Kant's explanation of how experience can rationally ground belief. The demand for such an explanation is one of the key motivations for conceptualism.¹⁵ And the key to Kant's response to this demand is the fundamental connection he draws between concepts and judgement, for this grounds an equally fundamental connection between experience and reason.

¹⁵ Indeed, claiming (conversely) that *only* conceptualist theories can explain how experience is to play this role is one of the key ways of arguing in favour of such theories. See especially Brewer (1999, pp. 149-83) and Brewer (2005). See Peacocke (1992) and Ayer (2004) for examples of non-conceptualists who accept that experience plays a role as rational ground but argue that it needn't have conceptual content in order to do this, and see Ginsborg (2006b) for a Kant-inspired rebuttal of the latter.

2.1.4 Experience and Reason

2.1.4.1 Judgemental Structure and Rational Ground

At A68-9/B93-4 Kant makes the general connection between conceptual ability and judgemental ability absolutely clear. He says that 'the understanding can make no other use of these concepts than that of judging by means of them', that 'the *understanding* in general can be represented as a *faculty for judging*', and that concepts are 'predicates of possible judgements'. For Kant, the ability to mobilise concepts just is the ability to judge.

It is easy to see how this general connection is manifested in the particular case in which experience, as the result of conceptual synthesis, is thereby judgementally structured. For I have said that in conceptually synthesising the sensible manifold we understand or interpret it as meaning something, specifically as meaning that the world is a certain way. And to say this is effectively to say that in conceptually synthesising the sensible manifold we *represent* it as meaning that the world is a certain way. And this act of *representing the sensible manifold in order to represent the world* will clearly qualify as an act of judgement for Kant. For as he also says at A68/B93:

Judgement is therefore the mediate cognition of an object, hence the representation of a representation of it.¹⁶

Or in slightly different terms, Kant goes on to say a few sentences later that:

All judgements are accordingly functions of unity among our representations, since instead of an immediate representation a higher one, which comprehends this and other immediate representations under itself, is used for the cognition of the object

¹⁶ Cf. *LJ* (9:101). Kant sometimes puts essentially the same point in terms of consciousness: 'Consciousness is really a representation that another representation is in me' *LJ* (9:33); cf. *LDW* (24:702).

Again this applies in a straightforward way to the case of experience. Experience is the judgemental higher representation, the cognition (as) of the object, and the immediate representations Kant talks about here are the manifold of mental state sensations (or thin intuitions) that are unified under it. The conceptual synthesis that produces experience is a function that gives unity to the sensible manifold that is provided to the understanding by sensibility, which it does by interpreting those sensations as *in toto* meaning that the world is a certain way.¹⁷ (I return to the notion of conceptual functions in **2.1.5.1**.)

Now, to say that experience is conceptually-judgementally structured is at least to say that experience has what we nowadays call *propositional content*.¹⁸ For Kant, in experiencing the world *as* being a certain way in virtue of conceptually synthesising the sensible manifold that constitutes experience's material foundation, in undergoing experience *as of* the world being a certain way, it appears to us *that* the world is that way. The content of the that-clause here expresses experience's propositional content (I will refine this expression in the next section).

Propositional contents – conceptual-judgemental contents – are essentially rational. In virtue of their form, propositional contents can play constitutive roles in chains of reasoning. By 'constitutive' here I mean that they can serve as premises and conclusions in arguments. This makes propositional contents essentially rational because these arguments, be they deductive, inductive, or abductive, have standards of correctness, which standards comprise what we call the norms of rationality. I won't try to spell these norms out. They are those rules an inference's coherence with which determines whether or not that inference is reasonable, or rationally permitted. They are what makes an argument valid,

¹⁷ Cf. *LB* (24:236): 'Experience is nothing but reflected sensation, or sensation that is expressed through a judgement'.

¹⁸ In fact it seems that McDowell (2009, pp. 256-74) has recently started to question this connection as he explores ways to moderate his own view. But he does not do so on recognisably Kantian ground and this will not concern me here.

where validity is understood broadly so as to capture any occasion on which one's premises confer some suitable degree or kind of rational obligation or commitment upon one's conclusion. (The norms of rationality will also be propositional in form. Thus propositional contents can also serve a non-constitutive, regulative role in chains of reasoning. But this is not a potential that defines a content as propositional.)

We can now see how experience is able to rationally ground belief on Kant's theory. For beliefs also have propositional content. I believe, for example, *that* the world is a certain way. Thus the thought is that coming to believe that the world is a certain way on the basis of one's experiencing the world to be that way is akin in reasonableness to inferring from a premise to the effect that the world appears a certain way to a conclusion to the effect that the world is that way. I say 'akin in reasonableness' here because the relation between experience and belief is only analogous, or parallel in terms of rationality, to that in which I infer a conclusion from a premise. At least under normal circumstances, I do not actually make a conscious inference from premises about experiential seemings to beliefs about matter-of-fact beings. The point is rather that I could, if pressed on what justification I have for some belief, appeal to some experience with a suitably related propositional content, and doing so would be reasonable in virtue of the structural similarity between this move and giving suitable premises for one's conclusions. It is in this way that in granting experience propositional content, Kant is 'placing it in the logical space of reasons, of justifying and being able to justify what one says' (Sellars (2003 [1956], p. 76)).

Some remarks on this picture.

First note that although experiencing the world to be a certain way is a reason for believing the world to be that way, this relationship is defeasible. My experience that *p* provides me

with a *prima facie* reason to believe that *p* (or some other, suitably related proposition). But this reason could be undercut in various ways. Given a suitably strong background belief that pigs cannot fly, for example, I might not be disposed to believe that the pig is flying on the basis of undergoing an experience as of a flying pig. My experience still gives me a reason for belief, but I also have a reason for disbelief, which in this case proves to be overriding.

Relatedly, note that Kant's conception of judgement, and thus of what it takes for experience to be judgementally structured, is not the modern conception of judgement. The modern conception of judgement is as something like the mental counterpart to a speech-act of assertion.¹⁹ Conceived of in this way, judgement intrinsically involves what Kant would call assent, or more literally, holding-for-true.²⁰ For Kant, however, judgements do not necessarily have assertoric force and do not intrinsically involve assent. They are merely objective conscious thoughts, mental states with propositional content. Kant's theory of judgement is not a theory of assent or assertion. One place this is clear is in his inclusion of the category of 'problematic' in his table of the logical function of the understanding in judgement (A70/B95). Another is in the explicit contrast drawn in the *Jäsche Logic* (9:109) between judgements (Urteile) and propositions (Sätze), only the latter of which are essentially assertoric. I will return to this in **2.1.4.a**. But in order to keep this point firmly in mind throughout, I will generally talk about judgemental structure (and conceptual or propositional content) rather than judgement simpliciter, although on Kant's conception of judgement, experiencing is straightforwardly a kind of judging. What is crucial is that this does not mean that experience intrinsically involves assent for Kant.

¹⁹ This conception of judgement in the analytic tradition can be traced back to Frege, see especially Frege (1984 [1919]).

²⁰ Fürwahrhalten – see A820/B848-A831/B859 and *LJ* (9:65-75). See Chignell (2007a) and Chignell (2007b) for very useful discussion of Kant's notion of assent.

This is crucial because it is necessary for maintaining that Kant's conception of experience is one of everyday experience, rather than, say, one of empirical knowledge.

So I need not assent to what my experience is telling me about how the world is (as I refused to in the above example about flying pigs). But note that this is *not* to say that I have no positive attitude towards the content of my experience in such cases. It is essential that I adopt such an attitude to the content of my experience if that experience is to provide me with a reason for belief at all. Simply entertaining the content won't do – I can entertain the thought that pigs can fly without having any reason to believe that they can. The content of experience is that the world is thus and so, and even if I am disinclined to believe that the world *really is* thus and so on the basis of an experience with this content, I can still believe that the world appears to be thus and so in my experience of it.

The point about non-assent, then, is that I need not adopt the same kind of positive attitude towards a content concerning how the world *is* as I do to a content concerning how the world *appears*. Of course, I generally *will* do so. And experience is by no means neutral in this regard. It tends to present itself as factive, as *correctly* representing the world. Indeed, it does so rather tenaciously. That is, experience presents itself as factive even in the face of all sorts of countervailing evidence. As Kant says observing a similarity between non-veridical experience and transcendental illusion:

This is an *illusion* that cannot be avoided at all, just as little as we can avoid it that the sea appears higher in the middle than at the shores, since we see the former through higher rays of light than the latter, or even better, just as little as the astronomer can prevent the rising moon from appearing larger to him, even when he is not deceived by this illusion. (A297/B354-5)²¹

²¹ Cf. *Anthr* (7:149-50), where Kant even goes so far as define illusion by this characteristic: '*Illusion* is that delusion which persists even though one knows that the supposed object is not real'.

But even so, as Kant's example implies, the astronomer, in undergoing her self-aware non-veridical experience, would still not judge, in the sense of assert, that the rising moon *is* larger than the zenith moon.

And finally, note that there is another way in which Kant's conception of experience makes sense of the need for my experience to provide *me* with rational ground. The propositional content of my experience is a product of conceptual synthesis, which proceeds according to *my* conceptual abilities. This assures that I am able to grasp what my experience is telling me about the world. If this were not the case, then it could not provide *me* with reasons.

2.1.4.2 Rational Ground and the Spectrum Conception of Experience

So how does all this talk of the propositional content/conceptual-judgemental structure of experience and its role as rational ground get parsed in Kant's two-stage model of conceptual synthesis and the spectrum conception of experience?

In **2.1.2.1** I said that the first stage of conceptual synthesis, schematic categorisation, consists in an understanding of the sensible manifold that it means that there is a spatiotemporally extended and located, sensible property-possessing, fully causally functioning particular in the subject's perceptual presence. This provides experience with its basic judgemental structure, its basic propositional content, which, I propose, is something like the following: that here and now there is an empirical object in general. And accordingly, the second stage of conceptual synthesis, empirical determination, specifies this to something with roughly the following structure: that here and now there is an empirical object of some particular kind possessing some particular properties. For

example, upon sensing a green tree, if I possess the concepts of being a tree and being green, the content of my experience would be that here and now there is a green tree.

Suppose that I believe that there are some green trees. My belief could not be rationally grounded on a minimal terminal experience. That it experientially appears to me that here and now there is an empirical object in general does not give me reason to believe that there are some green trees. Too many empirical objects are not green trees and minimal terminal experience does not specify whether or not this is the case with regard to the object being experienced. Undergoing a minimal terminal experience does not provide a reason for forming any beliefs about trees at all. It is just not specific enough. My belief could, however, be rationally grounded on a non-minimal terminal experience as of a green tree. Such an experience tells me that here and now there is a green tree and of course this *does* give me reason to believe that there are some green trees – I'm looking at one right now.

The relationship between my experience and the belief I form on the basis of it does not need to be as close as in this last example, where the propositional content of my experience deductively entails that of my belief. But it does have to be closer than in the first example. Where exactly we draw the line depends on our norms of rationality. Recall, however, that these norms are being construed very broadly, to cover not just deductive inferences but also other kinds of inferences, such as inductive and abductive ones. If I see lightning striking in the distance, for example, we can suppose that it would be rationally appropriate for me to form the belief that I will soon hear thunder, even though there is no analytic relation here.²²

²² See Sellars (1968, p. 117). And also more generally Sellars (1953b) on the distinction between formal and material rules of inference.

Call those beliefs that an experience can rationally ground in virtue of its content the experience's *inferential matrix*. Then the basic thought regarding Kant's spectrum conception of experience is that the closer to the maximal terminal an experience, the more conceptually specific it is, then the richer its judgemental structure and therefore the more complex its inferential matrix. And the closer to the minimal terminal an experience, the less conceptually specific it is, then the more impoverished its judgemental structure and therefore the less complex its inferential matrix.

In this way, those with minimal empirical conceptual abilities will be restricted in the rational use they can make of their experiences. A savage would not, for example, upon seeing a house, though merely *as* an empirical object that is large and solid and brown, thereby have a reason to believe, say, that there are some houses. Of course, not possessing the concept of a house, she *couldn't* form such a belief. But while the problem here stems from the same source, it is more basic. It is that, in an important sense, her experience tells her nothing whatsoever about houses. Nor, then, could the savage reasonably form the belief that here and now there is a dwelling established for men, and so on.

However, not only could the savage understand, for example, that if she walked around the object, her perspective on it would change while the object itself would not. She could also reasonably infer that if another such object fell out of the sky onto the one she is experiencing, then *some* causal interaction would occur. These beliefs *are* rationally grounded by her experience.

Even in the extreme case of bare minimal terminal experience (which is practically speaking only an ideal), this takes place in the logical space of reasons. The inferential matrix it forms within that space is relatively basic, determined solely by the implications of something being an empirical object in general, but it resides in that space nonetheless.

And moreover, even if the savage could not, supposing she also lacked the concepts of being made of wood and of being made of concrete, specify her general beliefs about causal interaction to the belief that, if the currently perceived object were made of wood and the falling object of concrete, then the wooden object would be severely damaged, she could nevertheless *learn* how to do so. Savages are, after all, *rational* animals, even if they are not *yet* quite so rational as us. As Kant is recorded in the *Dohna-Wundlacken* notes as saying, 'The savage would ask, What is a house?' (24:702).

In what remains of this section I pause to return to this issue of what we are to make of Kant's savage (first broached in **2.1.2.2**).

As it was not written, let alone published, by Kant himself, we cannot place too much weight on the above remark. But *if* it is an accurate record of what Kant once said in his lectures on logic, it would suggest that one potential way of reading the corresponding remark about the savage found in the *Jäsche Logic* cannot be quite right. (The relevant passage was quoted in **2.1.2.2**.) According to the strong state non-conceptualist reading I have in mind, Kant's intention in that remark is to draw attention to the possibility of undergoing experience without possessing *any* conceptual ability. The savage, he says, has 'mere intuition'. And he means just that. The savage has *no* concepts active in her seeing of the house.

If this is right, then Kant could just as well have talked about a lower animal – a dog, say – seeing a house. For his point is in all essentials the same as that made in the standard overlap argument for strong state non-conceptualism. Very roughly: that while we want to

say that non-human animals undergo experience, we don't want to say that they possess conceptual abilities, so conceptual abilities cannot be necessary for experience.²³

But of course a dog would not and could not ask 'What is a house?'. There is, then, if we take into account the remark from the *Dohna-Wundlacken* notes, something wrong with the proposed substitution of savage for dog. The point here is not one about language (at least not one about language narrowly construed). Rather the point is that Kant is clearly still thinking of savages as *rational* animals, as animals that can *learn* concepts they don't yet have, and this is *not* something they have in common with lower animals.

And it is also worth mentioning here that there is further, more direct support for the claim that Kant is not thinking of human experience as essentially alike in kind to that of the lower animals, as the strong state non-conceptualist reader would have it (and perhaps others too). The most explicit of these is to be found in the *Blomberg* notes to logic lectures that Kant gave in the early 1770s:

Non-rational animals have no experience, then, but instead only sensations. (24:236)²⁴

Now, these are also just student notes, and as such cannot be entirely relied upon to accurately represent Kant's own view. But the eminently plausible thought is this. Perhaps, then, Kant's example of the savage is *not* intended to draw attention to the possibility of undergoing experience without possessing any conceptual ability; that is, experience below the minimal terminal. Perhaps it is rather, as my *weak* non-conceptualist reading suggests,

²³ This is sometimes also known as the continuity argument. It makes its fledgling appearance in Evans (1982, p. 124). See especially Peacocke (2001a) and Peacocke (2001b). For an early rebuttal, see Sellars (1981) and for a more recent and very different one, see Byrne (2005).

²⁴ Cf. *Anthr* (7:141): 'The irrational animal perhaps has something similar to what we call representations (because it has *effects* [i.e. sensations] that are very similar to the representations in the human being)' (italics mine).

intended to draw attention to the possibility of experience with *limited* conceptual ability; that is, experience below the maximal terminal but *not* below the minimal terminal.

If this is right, then one natural question would be: why might Kant want to draw attention to this? My reading has an answer to this question too: Because it is part of what allows him to be able to tell a coherent story about how we learn our empirical concepts from experience, and this is crucial because it allows his theory to account for the fact that our experience of the world informs the way we think about the world, even though, as a conceptualist theory, the converse also holds.

We will come to this story in **2.1.6**, but now I want to connect what I have said in this section and the last about conceptual and judgemental structure to the idea that experience exhibits a minimal kind of normativity. For in part this will involve expanding on the key thought that has been introduced in these sections, namely that not only is there for Kant an intrinsic connection between our conceptual and judgemental abilities but also between these and our rational abilities. And although it certainly plays other roles as well, this will be another feature of his theory that is required for Kant to be able to tell a coherent story about how we learn our empirical concepts from experience.

2.1.4.3 Semantic Normativity Again

In **1.1.3** I introduced the idea that experience exhibits a kind of normativity in a very rough way, saying that in experience we represent the world as being a certain way, and that in doing so, we can at least be right or wrong. I called this kind of normativity 'semantic normativity' and said that a representation exhibits semantic normativity if and only if it has truth-conditions. This was enough to contrast the kind of 'as such' representation of the world involved in experience with the kind of 'standing in for' representation of the

world involved in the entirely natural, mere causal-effect, information-*encoding* raw material of sensation. And we can now put this in terms of judgement, for attributing truth-conditions to experience is of course what Kant does in attributing experience a judgemental structure (propositional content). To cite yet another apparent definition of judgement, Kant says it is 'a relation that is objectively valid' (B142), and for present purposes we can assume that, whatever else this means, it means at least that judgements, and thus judgementally structured experiences, have truth-conditions.²⁵ So what more is there to this than being able to be right or wrong, veridical or non-veridical?

To begin with, what I have said about empirical determination shows that experience is also assessable for correctness in the more fine-grained sense that it can be more or less accurate. This takes us beyond merely being able to distinguish veridical from non-veridical experience. For example, it is accuracy and not veridicality that distinguishes the experiences of John, Jane, and Jim (see the figure on page 106, **2.1.2.2**). John, having particularly fine conceptual abilities when it comes to trees but not colours, and Jane, having particularly fine conceptual abilities when it comes to colours but not trees, undergo experiences that are less accurate than that of Jim, who has particularly fine conceptual abilities when it comes to both trees and colours. Although these experiences are all materially founded on similar sensible manifolds, the judgemental structure of Jim's experience is richer than that of John and Jane.

More importantly, experience is also assessable for correctness with regards to what I called its inferential matrix. And here we return to the connection between conceptual-judgemental ability and the ability to reason.

²⁵ Prauss (1971, pp. 86-7), Longuenesse (1998, p. 82), and Allison (2004, p. 88) think that having truth-conditions is *all* objective validity amounts to here, whereas Hanna (2001, pp. 83-95) and Westphal (2004, pp. 36-7, 43) give much more demanding accounts that are based on other key texts (e.g. Bxxvi). I think that Hanna and Westphal are right (although their accounts do give rise to a problem concerning certain analytic judgements). But for my purposes here it is sufficient to adopt the minimal reading.

In order to explore this connection further, it will be useful to consider Kant's conception of concepts as rules. He says, with an order of exposition that has been mirrored here (though I will be returning to spontaneity in **2.1.5.2**):

We have above explained the *understanding* in various ways – through a spontaneity of cognition (in contrast to the receptivity of the sensibility), through a faculty for thinking, or a faculty of concepts, or also of judgements – which explanations, if one looks at them properly, come down to the same thing. Now we can characterise it as the *faculty of rules*. This designation is more fruitful, and comes closer to its essence. (A126)²⁶

And a little earlier he gives an example:

Thus the concept of body serves as the rule for our cognition of outer appearances by means of the unity of the manifold that is thought through it. However, it can be a rule of intuitions only if it represents the necessary reproduction of the manifold of given intuitions, hence the synthetic unity in the consciousness of them. Thus in the case of the perception of something outside us the concept of body makes necessary the representation of extension, and with it that of impenetrability, of shape, etc. (A106)

Kant is not saying in this second passage that whenever the concept of body is mobilised, either in abstract thought or in the conceptual synthesis of the sensible manifold that produces experience, the concepts of extension, impenetrability, shape, and so forth, must also be mobilised. This would be a merely psychological speculation regarding the associative tendencies of the human mind, more of a Humean move than a Kantian one. And thus to read Kant's position in this way would, I think, be to conflate the kind of activity manifested by the understanding with that manifested by the reproductive imagination.

Rather, I propose, Kant is saying that in judging something to be a body (or experiencing something as such), given what is contained in my concept of body, there is *in this very* act

²⁶ Cf. A132/B172; *Anthr* (7:144, 197, 199).

an implicit commitment to the rational legitimacy of the inference from its being a body to its being extended (etc.). It is in this normative-logical sense that 'the concept of body *makes necessary* the representation of extension'. Concepts, for Kant, provide us with rules of inference. And in this way, just which beliefs experience provides reasons for is in crucial part a matter of what concepts have been mobilised in its production. For example, in virtue of the structure of my concept of body, my experiencing a body is a reason for me to believe that here and now there is something with extension.

Now rules of inference are assessable for correctness, and thus so is the structure of my concepts. Suppose, for example, that, for whatever reason, my concept of body contained not only the concepts of extension, impenetrability, and shape, but also the concept of being blue. Then my concept of body would be defective in that it provides me with an incorrect inferential rule. In mobilising my concept of body there would be an implicit commitment to the legitimacy of the inference from a thing's being a body to its being blue. But such an inference is not legitimate. Some bodies are not blue, and it is not essential to bodies that they be blue, as my (defective) concept suggests.

The thought, then, is that this sense in which the structure of my concepts is assessable for correctness infects experience. If, for example, my experiencing a body provides me with reason to believe that here and now there is something that is blue in virtue of a defect in the concept that has been mobilised in producing that experience, then my experience is in a sense incorrect. It is incorrect in its implicit commitment to an incorrect inferential rule.

And note that matters would not be affected – my experience would not be rendered correct in this respect – even if the body I was experiencing happened to in fact be blue. In this case, if I inferred from my experience as of a body that here and now there is something that is blue, the conclusion of my inference would be true. But that is not

sufficient to render my inference legitimate. It would remain the case that the rule I followed in making my inference – that *all* bodies are blue – is an incorrect rule.

This can all also be captured in the more Kantian terms of analytic judgement. For these provide another way in which to articulate the structure of a concept, or as Kant might say, to explicate or analyse it (A7/B11).²⁷ The propositional content of my experience as of a body is something to the following effect: that here and now there is a body. This is a *singular synthetic* judgement. But in the mobilisation of my concept of body in such an experience – which contains or makes necessary the concepts of extension, impenetrability, shape – there is an implicit commitment to the truth of the following *universal analytic* judgements: all bodies are extended; all bodies are impenetrable; all bodies have a shape. In the *Prolegomena* and in the context of analytic judgements, Kant talks about this implicit commitment in the following way:

Analytic judgements say nothing in the predicate except what was actually [wirklich] thought already in the concept of the subject, though not so clearly or with the same consciousness. If I say: All bodies are extended, then I have not in the least amplified my concept of body, but have merely resolved it, since extension, although not explicitly said of the former concept prior to the judgement, nevertheless was actually thought of it; the judgement is therefore analytic. (4:266)

(It might at first seem that Kant is precisely *not* talking about *implicit* commitment here, since he talks about ‘actually’ (‘wirklich’) being thought of. But note that ‘actually’ here cannot mean ‘explicitly’. For then actually being thought of would not be compatible with not being thought of ‘with the same consciousness’, ‘so clearly’, or ‘explicitly’.)

Experience, for Kant, effectively involves making particular claims, and whether or not these claims are true and accurate is part of what makes experience assessable for

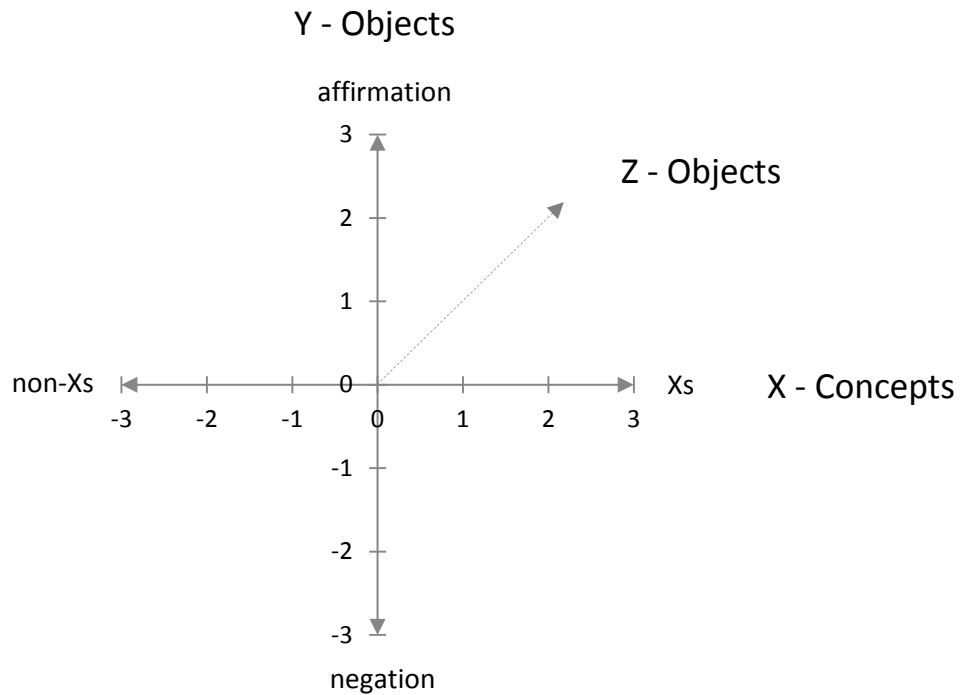
²⁷ Cf. *Prolog* (4:266, 269, 272, 294); *LJ* (9:142).

correctness. But experience for Kant also effectively involves being committed to general claims, claims that are manifested in the structure of our concepts and the inferential rules they provide, articulable by analytic judgements, and whether or not these claims are true is also part of what makes experience, in itself, assessable for correctness.

2.1.4.α Section Appendix: The Logical Space of Reasons

This section is subsidiary. As a final piece of elaboration/confirmation of the internal and external connections I have been exploring between experience and reason in the last three sections, I will now elaborate on the metaphor of the logical space of reasons using Kant's table of the logical functions of the understanding in judgement (A70-6/B95-101). My primary concern is with the nature of the *modality* that Kant attributes to all judgements as part of their logical form. But for completeness I will model the entire table. The idea in this is just to give a more literal visual picture of the logical space of reasons, the space into which Kant brings experience. Thus the key thought to bear in mind in the following discussion is that what holds for judgement also holds for experience, since experience too involves mobilising concepts and is judgementally structured.

We can think of mobilising a concept to make a judgement, or undergoing a judgementally structured experience, as plotting a co-ordinate in logical space. The logical functions of the understanding in judgement determine the fundamental structure of this space.



The units along the X-axis represent concepts (pure and empirical). The positive units stand for concepts like F, G, and H, while each corresponding negative unit stands for a mutually exclusive and exhaustive counterpart, concepts like *non-F*, *non-G*, and *non-H*. The units along the Y-axis represent objects, *a*, *b*, *c*, and so on. Corresponding positive and negative units along the Y-axis, say +1 and -1, stand for the same object. But plotting an X-co-ordinate to a positive Y-co-ordinate is affirming that an object instantiates a concept, whereas plotting an X-co-ordinate to a negative Y-co-ordinate is denying that an object instantiates a concept. In this way we can produce schemata for Kant's moments of quality in judgement:

$(+x,+y)$ is an affirmative judgement – upper right quadrant

$(+x,-y)$ is a negative judgement – lower right quadrant

$(-x,+y)$ is an infinite judgement – upper left quadrant

$(-x, -y)$ is the schemata for a negative infinite judgement, but these are equivalent to affirmative judgements through double negation elimination. In the terms of our graph, since each positive and negative pair of units along the X-axis, say +1 and -1, are mutually exclusive and exhaustive, and since each positive and negative pair of units along the Y-axis, say +1 and -1, stand for the same object, the lower left quadrant is equivalent to the upper right quadrant: $\forall xy [(-x,-y) \equiv (+x,+y)]$.

To account for Kant's moments of relation in judgement, we can say that points represent categorical judgements; ordered pairs of points represent hypothetical judgements; and sets of mutually exclusive and exhaustive points represent disjunctive judgements, paradigmatic of which would be instantiations of the law of excluded middle, for example $\{(1,1),(1,-1)\}$ and $\{(1,1),(-1,1)\}$. In this way, categorical judgements constitute the matter of hypothetical and disjunctive judgements (*Jäsche* (9:105)).

The Z-axis is needed to account for Kant's moments of quantity in judgement: a single plotting somewhere along the Z-axis represents a singular judgement; a line through the whole of the Z-axis (where the X and Y values remain constant) represents a universal judgement; and a line or lines through parts but not the whole of the Z-axis (where the X and Y values remain constant) represent particular judgements.

(Note that in what Kant calls general logic, there is no difference between affirmative and infinite judgements (A72/B97). In the terms of our graph, this means that the lower right and upper left quadrants would also be equivalent – $\forall xy [(+x,-y) \equiv (-x,+y)]$. Given the equivalence we already noted between the upper right and lower left quadrants, this in turn means that, in general logic, there is no need for the negative part of the X-axis at all. Nor is there a difference between singular and universal judgements in general logic (A71/B96) – in general logic, there are no points on the Z-axis, only lines. And presumably a similar

reduction is supposed to be available for disjunctive judgements, but Kant does not expand on this and it is not clear how it is supposed to go if it could not also be available for transcendental logic – it cannot, for example, consist in a definition of disjunction in terms of negation and implication.)

Finally, then, to modality. Modality is not so straightforward, not least because it is a matter of controversy as to what the modality of judgements amounts to in this context.²⁸

Yet Kant took his inclusion of modality as one of the fundamental logical functions of the understanding in judgement to be a key distinguishing feature of his theory of judgement (B140-1), so it is clearly of central importance. And it is what is crucial here, too. In a nutshell, I want to claim that by the modality of judgements, Kant means their place in inferences or chains of reasoning.²⁹

In order to lead into this issue, consider that we already have enough to see how the ability to reason is implicit in the act of applying or mobilising a concept in judgement (and thus of conceptually synthesising a sensible manifold to produce a judgementally structured experience). Plotting a co-ordinate is not a stand-alone act – it has intrinsic inferential consequences.

Let us say that 1 and 2 on the X-axis stand respectively my concepts F and G, that 1 on the Y-axis stands for some object, *a*, and thus that 1 on the Z-axis stands for *a* too. So that

²⁸ To my mind Matthey (1986) shows convincingly that Kant's modalities of judgement cannot be aligned to any form of alethic modality, be it logical, metaphysical, or physical, for example. The fundamental problem is that this would violate Kant's dictum that the modality of judgements does not concern their content (A74/B99-100) or the thing about which we judge (9:109). However, I am not convinced by Matthey's own alternative proposal of aligning Kant's modalities to epistemic or doxastic modality, which is to say, to a taxonomy of propositional attitudes. One problem in particular that I have with this proposal is that Kant already has a theory of propositional attitudes in his doctrine of opinion, belief, and knowledge (A820-31/B848-59; *LJ* (9:65-75) – see Stevenson (2003) and Chignell (2007a) for dedicated discussions of this doctrine). In what follows I offer my own alternative proposal. (For different criticisms of Matthey's proposal, see Leech (2010)).

²⁹ In this I take my lead from Leech (2010). Her article is largely negative, but it ends with the skeleton of an intriguing positive proposal that 'the modality of a judgement is determined by the role a judgement plays in a given course of reasoning' (p. 281). In what follows I effectively conditionalise this and put some flesh on it.

plotting the co-ordinate (1,1,1), for example, represents making the singular, affirmative, categorical judgement that a is F. Now suppose that my concept F contains or makes necessary my concept of G, such that in grasping F I thereby implicitly commit to the truth of the judgement that all Fs are Gs, or as it will be useful to express it, that if a is F then a is G. The structure of this particular logical space – one in which F contains G – pairs each (1,1, n) co-ordinate with some (1,2, n) co-ordinate. This kind of pairing is supposed to be similar to that we already saw between each point in the upper right quadrant and its negative counterpart in the lower left quadrant. But this time, instead of pairing in virtue of double negation elimination, we can see it as an instance of modus ponens:

If a is F, then a is G

a is F

Therefore a is G

Grasping my concept of F when it contains G involves an implicit commitment to the conditional that is the first premise – it is built in to the structure of the logical space I enter when mobilising F. Plotting (1,1,1) is like adding the second premise, which in turns allows us to reason to the conclusion.

In this way, the structure of the logical space we enter when we mobilise a concept in judgement (and experience) does not just consist of relations between units on the axes, which relations determine points and thereby categorical judgements, and relations between points, which relations determine ordered pairs of points and sets of mutually exclusive and exhaustive points and thereby hypothetical and disjunctive judgements. It also consists in relations between points and relations between points, and in relations between relations between points and relations between points, and so on. And these

relations don't determine categorial, hypothetical, or disjunctive judgements, but rather arguments constructed out of such. This is what I called experience's inferential matrix; its network of potential rational relations, determined in crucial part by the structure of the concepts mobilised in producing it.

More specifically with regard to the moments of modality in a judgement, then, my proposal is that we should understand assertoric judgements as premises, problematic judgements as proper parts of premises, and apodictic judgements as conclusions.

To begin with, consider what Kant says about modality in connection with why we need to distinguish the three moments of relation:

Some believe it is easy to transform a hypothetical proposition into a categorial. But this will not do, because the two are wholly different from one another as to their nature. In categorial judgements nothing is problematic, rather everything is assertoric, but in hypotheticals only the *consequentia*^[30] is assertoric (9:105)

The peculiar character of all disjunctive judgements, whereby their specific difference from others, in particular from categorial judgements, is determined as to the moment of relation, consists in this: that the members of the disjunction are all problematic judgements (9:107)

Then consider the following pair of inferences:

A	B
(1) $p \rightarrow q$	(4) $r \vee s$ (' \vee ' is exclusive disjunction)
(2) p	(5) $\neg r$
(3) q	(6) s

³⁰ '*consequentia*' refers to the consequential itself as a whole, not the consequent, which would be *consequens*.

The thought is that in such chains of reasoning, the premises are being asserted, including the hypothetical in (1) and the disjunction in (4) *as wholes*. The proper parts of those premises, however, are being considered merely as problematic. This is especially clear if we consider that two different inferences can be made from the same starting points:

A*	B*
(1) $p \rightarrow q$	(4) $r \vee s$
(7) $\neg q$ (i.e., $\neg(3)$)	(9) r (i.e., $\neg(5)$)
(8) $\neg p$ (i.e., $\neg(2)$)	(10) $\neg s$ (i.e., $\neg(6)$)

Note that *reductio ad absurdum* does not cause a problem for this proposal. If we prove $\neg p$ by deriving a contradiction from p , we do not *premise* p , thus giving us a premise it would surely be more correct to call problematic rather than assertoric. Rather we *assume* p and assumptions, unlike premises, have to be discharged. In effect what we have in cases of *reductio ad absurdum* is a *modus tollens* with p as the antecedent in a hypothetical. That is, p , as a *proper part* of a premise, is indeed taken problematically, with only the premised hypothetical itself being taken assertorically.

The conclusions are apodictic in the sense that (3), for example, follows with logical necessity from (1) and (2) – (3) cannot be false when (1) and (2) are true. Thus it is in this sense also *a priori* – if we know (1) and (2) (even if only a posteriori), then we can know (3) without (further) recourse to the information provided though sensibility. As Kant says:

the apodictic proposition thinks of the assertoric one as determined through these laws of the understanding itself, and as thus asserting *a priori*, and in this way expresses logical necessity. (A76/B101)

(Note how understanding the modality of judgement in this way also provides an explanation for why Kant does not include conjunction as one of his fundamental logical functions. For, as we can see from the classical elimination rules for conjunction, any conjunction of propositions can be dissolved into separate premises. And in light of the fact that Kant seems to confuse material and strict implication by connecting his hypothetical form to the ground-consequence relation (A73/B98), finding at least an implicit place for conjunction is important for securing the expressive adequacy of Kant's logic, in which the only other operator deemed necessary is negation.³¹)

Before moving on I want to use what we have seen here to return briefly cases of self-aware non-veridicality, mentioned already in **2.1.4.1**. Experiential judgements will be singular or particular, affirmative, and categorical. What about their modality? Because experience does not intrinsically involve assent, and because we can come to doubt the evidence of our senses – because, to invert a phrase, seeing is *not* believing, even for Kant – experiential judgements can be assertoric *or* problematic.

Above I used an example of an assertoric judgement – '*a is F*' played a role as a premise in an argument. This is the role that experiential judgements will typically play. But they might also play other roles in chains of reasoning. Recall my experience as of a flying pig. I know full well that pigs cannot fly, so I reason as follows:

If there is here and now a flying pig, then some pigs fly

No pigs fly

³¹ Hanna (2009) makes a similar move when he suggests that Kant was at least implicitly aware of inclusive disjunction, which along with negation would of course also be sufficient for expressive adequacy. I do not find the evidence he cites for this at A73/B98-99 convincing, but even if it were, my method of securing the expressive adequacy of Kant's logic is surely more satisfying from a systematic point of view. On my account, Kant's logic is already internally expressively adequate, and we need not amend it with external considerations concerning other aspects of his view.

Therefore it is not the case that there is here and now a flying pig

This is an instance of modus tollens rather than of modus ponens. The first premise still in effect unpacks one of the (analytic) implications of my experience. But note that this time the second premise is not an affirmation of the antecedent and my experiential judgement is only mobilized problematically – it is at no point asserted. Instead the second premise mobilises my background (synthetic) knowledge. And the conclusion that follows straightforwardly implies that my experience as of a flying pig is non-veridical. In this way, due to my background knowledge and the rational relations that hold between this knowledge and my experience in virtue of the latter's conceptual-judgemental structure, I might come to believe that my experience is non-veridical, that although things appear to me to be thus and so there are in fact not thus and so. Having to choose between what my experience tells me and what my background knowledge tells me, I choose in favour of my background knowledge and against my experience. I choose not to assent to the way my experience is telling me the world is.

2.1.5 Constraint Level I: World-Experience

2.1.5.1 Conceptual Functions

I have been considering how Kant's theory of experience can explain the fact that our experience provides us with rational ground for our beliefs. Let us now turn to what else Kant's theory can explain. For it has been a standard worry about Kant's kind of theory – a broadly conceptualist one – that although it rather usefully brings experience into the space of reasons without having to expand this space beyond the logical-conceptual-judgemental-propositional, in doing so, it leaves us floating free from the world. As McDowell (1996, p. 11) often puts it, one might worry that Kant's theory condemns us to

a 'frictionless spinning in a void'. In this section and the rest of **2.1** I allay this worry by explaining how Kant can indeed explain both how the world constrains experience and how our experience of the world in turn constrains our thought about the world. I take the first question first. How does the world constrain experience?

In answering this question, the first thing to be clear on is what it is a question about. For it is not just a question about any old sense in which the world constrains experience. For example, it is clear that the world constrains experience in the sense that how the world is is a contributing factor in how it feels to experience that world. What it is like for me to see a tree, for example, surely has something to do with the tree. How the world is at least partially determines the *phenomenal* properties of experience. But this sense in which the world constrains experience will not in itself suffice for our purposes. We are looking for a way in which the world constrains what is *conceptual-judgemental* about experience, a way in which it partially determines the (cognitively) *representational* properties of experience. For it is *this* aspect of experience that functions within the logical space of reasons, that enables experience to justify belief in a way straightforwardly analogous to the way that judgements justify one another. And what we need here is a way in which the world constrains experience that informs exactly what justificational roles experience plays. In a nutshell, what we are looking for is a way in which the world constrains *conceptual synthesis*. So our question was how the world constrains experience. And our initial answer has to be: by constraining the conceptual synthesis of the sensible manifold. Our question now is: how does it do this?

I propose that the world constrains conceptual synthesis by partially determining the second stage of that synthesis, empirical determination. For how the world happens to be determines the particular contingent details of the sensible manifold. And while the particular contingent details of the sensible manifold play no role in determining the first

stage of conceptual synthesis, schematic categorisation, they do partially determine empirical determination.

I take it that the first premise of this argument – that how the world happens to be determines the particular contingent details of the sensible manifold – has been established and explained in Part I. So here I will focus on the second premise – that the particular contingent details of the sensible manifold partially determine empirical determination.

First a note on why I say '*partially* determine'. How exactly empirical determination will run is determined by *two* factors. One of these is the particular contingent details of the sensible manifold being conceptually synthesised. The other is the particular conceptual abilities of the subject undergoing the experience. Each of these factors determines a distinct set of empirical concepts that might possibly be mobilised at the stage of empirical determination. The intersection of these two sets is (at least paradigmatically³²) the set of empirical concepts that will in fact be mobilised in the stage of empirical determination. Or in the terms of the spectrum of experience represented in the figure in **2.1.2.2** on page 109, the particular contingent details of the sensible manifold determines certain structural features of the graph, which and how many dimensions it has and so forth, while (at least paradigmatically) the particular conceptual abilities of the subject determine where on that graph their experience will in fact be plotted. For if Jane does not possess the concept of a tree, for example, then this concept cannot be mobilised in the conceptual synthesis that produces her experience, even if the sensible manifold synthesised therein could in principle be synthesised using this concept. I return to this second determining factor in the stage of empirical determination in the next section. Here my concern is with how the first

³² I say 'at least paradigmatically' here because for all I have said so far it might well be possible that a subject passes the test for possessing some concept F without for whatever reason in fact being able to mobilise F at the time of experiencing, although the manifold therein is indeed one to which F is applicable. That is, one of the possession conditions of concepts might not be an uninterrupted capacity to mobilise them where appropriate.

determining factor works. How do the particular contingent details of the sensible manifold determine a set of empirical concepts that might possibly be mobilised in the stage of empirical determination, thereby partially determining how this stage will in fact run?

Sellars (1968, p. 16), citing Wittgenstein (2005 [1953], pp. 59-61) as inspiration, talks rather vaguely about 'guidance from without' at this point. But to see more precisely how this works we can turn to Kant's own characterisation of concepts as resting on functions (A68/B93).³³

In the current context, where we are concerned with concepts as they are mobilised in the conceptual synthesis of the sensible manifold, that concepts rest on functions means that they take sensible manifolds as their input and produce experiences as their output. And what is crucial here is that, in the same way as certain mathematical functions – unlike addition, for example, division cannot take negative numbers as inputs – conceptual functions specify what they can take as input.

Certain concepts, namely the pure concept of an empirical object in general, collectively articulated by the schematised categories, can take any sensible manifold whatsoever as input. (Supposing, that is, that the manifold in question is in a suitable state to be conceptually synthesised – see **2.1.1.**) This is why I said above that the particular contingent details of the sensible manifold play no role in determining the first stage of conceptual synthesis, schematic categorisation. For whatever the particular contingent details of the sensible manifold, it can be processed by the concept of an empirical object in general – whether a sensible manifold encodes information about a bird or a tree, it encodes information about a spatiotemporally located and extended, sensible property

³³ In what follows I am heavily indebted to the basic strategy set out in Watkins (2008), recently developed in Watkins (2012).

possessing, fully causally functioning particular. This fact is of a piece with this concept being pure and necessary, with it providing the form of all experience whatsoever.

And accordingly, matters are different when it comes to empirical concepts. Empirical concepts cannot take any sensible manifold whatsoever as input. Unlike the pure concept of an empirical object in general, empirical concepts have restricted domains. This fact is of a piece with these concepts being empirical and not necessary, with them not providing the form of all experience whatsoever.

From this basic thought we can derive a hierarchy that not only divides pure from empirical concepts but that also, crucially, orders empirical concepts amongst themselves. The *Jäsche Logic* (9:95-8) has Kant talking about this ordering relation in several different ways – among others in terms of higher and lower, genus and species, broadness and narrowness, in terms of content, and in terms of extension.³⁴ But it is also clear that although they allow of different locutions, these are all supposed to be equivalent, and what is important here is the relation described in the following passage:

The content and extension of a concept stand in inverse relation to one another. The more concept contains *under* itself, namely, the less it contains *in* itself, and conversely. (9:95)

Or as I will put it, bearing in mind that I am talking in terms of conceptual functions: the broader a concept, the less restricted its domain.

For example, the concept of being coloured is much broader than that of being green, so it has a much less restricted domain than that of the concept of being green. The concept of being coloured can take any sensible manifolds as input that the concept of being green can take, but it can also take those manifolds that the concept of being red can take, as well

³⁴ Cf. *LB* (24:258-60); *LW* (24:910-12); *LDW* (24:754-6), where there are yet other terms.

as all those manifolds that the concept of being blue can take, and so on. Yet even the concept of being coloured has a much more restricted domain than the yet broader concept of sensible quality in general (part of the pure concept of an empirical object in general). This latter concept can take any of the manifolds that the previously mentioned concepts can take, but it can also take those manifolds that the concept of being hard can take, or those that the concept of being made of wood can take, and so on.

It is this straightforward fact about concepts that means that the particular contingent details of the sensible manifold partially determine the second stage of conceptual synthesis by circumscribing the possibilities of this stage. For not all sensible manifolds fall within the domains of all empirical concepts, and it is only if a sensible manifold falls within the domain of a concept that that concept can be mobilised in the conceptual synthesis of that manifold. This is how the world constrains experience on Kant's theory.

It will be useful to give a more formal definition of Kant's notion of a conceptual function. I propose that conceptual functions are such that identity of input in conjunction with identity of function is equivalent to identity of output. Unlike logical and mathematical functions, which merely map objects onto one another, conceptual functions are genuinely procedural, actually turning their input into their output. Nevertheless, suppose that we think of conceptual functions as binary relations that hold between sensible manifolds and experiences (and for the sake of simplicity we allow second-order quantification over these relations as well as first-order quantification over the relata). Then we can say that for all conceptual functions X and Y , sensible manifolds x and z , and experiences y and w such that Xxy and Yzw , X is identical to Y and x is identical to z if and only if y is identical to w :

$$(1) \forall XYxyzw [Xxy \wedge Yzw \rightarrow (X=Y \wedge x=z \equiv y=w)]$$

Conceptual functions thus share with other binary relations that qualify as functions the fact that identity of function in conjunction with identity of input entails identity of output.

That is, (1) entails the following:

$$(2) \forall XY_{xyzw} [Xxy \wedge Yzw \rightarrow (X=Y \wedge x=z \rightarrow y=w)]$$

But because the entailment also runs in the other direction in the case of conceptual functions – because identity of output also entails identity of function and identity of input – conceptual functions go beyond this standard condition on functions in two crucial ways.

First because in the case of conceptual functions non-identity of function is sufficient to ensure non-identity of output. Second because in the case of conceptual functions non-identity of input is likewise sufficient to ensure non-identity of output. That is, (1) also entails the following:

$$(3) \forall XY_{xyzw} [Xxy \wedge Yzw \rightarrow (\neg X=Y \rightarrow \neg y=w)]$$

$$(4) \forall XY_{xyzw} [Xxy \wedge Yzw \rightarrow (\neg x=z \rightarrow \neg y=w)]$$

(1) is equivalent to the conjunction of (2), (3), and (4).

Both (3) and (4) are crucial for how Kant's theory of experience, although broadly speaking a conceptualist one, does not leave us frictionlessly spinning in a void. (3) describes the feature of conceptual functions that has been crucial in this section, for the sense in which the world constrains experience through constraining conceptual synthesis. This feature of conceptual functions can be contrasted to one exhibited by certain mathematical functions, like addition, multiplication, division, and quaddition. These functions can produce the same output as each other. For example, $1 \times 5 = 2 + 3 = 5/1 = 68 \oplus 57$.³⁵ (3) rules this is out. That is, it says that the ranges of conceptual functions do not

³⁵ '⊕' is Kripke's (2004) quus function, defined as: $x \oplus y = x+y$ if $x, y < 57$, and 5 if $x, y \geq 57$.

overlap – its contrapositive says that identity of output entails identity of function – which is not the case for those mathematical functions. And given that the experiential output depends on conceptual function in this way, then if the world constrains conceptual function, as we have seen it does via the sensible manifold and the fact that empirical conceptual functions have restricted domains, then it follows that the world also thereby constrains the experiential output.

(4) does not hold for the aforementioned mathematical functions either. These functions each have more than one route to any given output. For example, $2 \times 2 = 1 \times 4$, $1 + 4 = 2 + 3$, $2/2 = 3/3$, and $68 \oplus 57 = 100 \oplus 100 = 2 \oplus 3$. That is, (4) says that for any given output in the range of a conceptual function, there is a unique input in that function's domain that can produce it, which is not the case for these mathematical functions. This will be crucial when I come to discuss the other level of constraint – that at which our experience constrains our thought (in 2.1.6). But in what I called Kant's weak non-conceptualism (2.1.3) we have already seen one of the features of conceptual functions that (4) captures.

In effect (4) says that even if the information encoded in the sensible manifold is not fully decoded through conceptual synthesis, all of that information remains present in the experience of which it forms the material foundation. The point can be put intuitively. Will the differences between any two sensible manifolds that are identically conceptually synthesised be *entirely* flattened out in this process? The propositional contents will certainly look very similar. But is there really no difference between an experience as of a coloured empirical object that is based on a sensible manifold encoding information about something green and an experience as of a coloured empirical object that is based on a sensible manifold encoding information about something red? This seems implausible, and Kant's theory can account for that.

Note, however, that in itself this would only be a sense in which the world constrains the phenomenal properties of experience. In focusing on (3) in this section, we have seen that there is also a sense in which the world constrains the propositional content of experience on Kant's theory, a way in which it partially determines the (cognitively) representational properties of experience, what it says about the world.

2.1.5.2 Spontaneity Again

By way of further elaboration and defence of this account of how the world constrains experience, I will now consider an objection to it. Kant says that the understanding is a spontaneous faculty. In what sense is this still the case on this account of how the world constrains experience? More specifically: I am conceiving of the conceptual synthesis of the sensible manifold as the understanding that it means that the world is a certain way. So what I am effectively saying here is that the sensible manifold (and through it, the world) circumscribes the possibilities for how it is to be understood. But doesn't this undermine the spontaneity/freedom that I said in **1.1.4** needs to be present at this level of cognitive function in order for it to exhibit semantic normativity?

My response to this objection is to accept a principled restriction to the kind of spontaneity that can be manifested at the level of experience, but to maintain that there nevertheless remains room for the manifestation of a spontaneity adequate to produce semantic normativity. I will explain.

On the one hand, I fully accept that this account of how the particular contingent details of the sensible manifold partially determine conceptual synthesis *limits* the spontaneity that can be expressed at the level of the understanding and experience. After all, if it did not, it surely could not provide us with a suitable sense in which the world *constrains* experience.

Moreover, it is entirely to be expected that the spontaneity that can be expressed at this level of cognitive function is limited, given my main interpretative commitment that Kant's central conception of experience is a conception of everyday experience. Some take Kant's talk of spontaneity to amount to talk of agential action.³⁶ According to this reading, the understanding is active in experience in the sense that we somehow freely choose what concepts to apply, what judgements to make, and so forth. This makes it very hard to think of Kantian experience as everyday experience. We are surely not in control of everyday experience in anything like this sense. In no sense do we actively choose what concepts to apply in experiencing trees. In taking Kantian experience to be everyday experience, then, I should fully expect that the understanding's spontaneity amounts to something less than *this*.

And accordingly, although what I have said so far does not strictly rule it out, nor does it actively make any room for it. Nowhere in my sketch of the mechanisms of conceptual synthesis is there any sense in which *the subject herself* is expressing *her* freedom. She does not actively guide conceptual synthesis and neither the schematic categorisation nor the empirical determination of the sensible manifold qualify as actions that she has somehow freely and intentionally performed. She does not and could not *choose* whether or not to mobilise any of the concepts that are mobilised in the conceptual synthesis that produces her experience. If she possesses a concept and the sensible manifold being processed falls within the domain of this concept, *then it will be mobilised automatically* (assuming there is no temporary cognitive impairment such that this concept cannot currently be mobilised, though the subject in question still meets possession conditions for it – see footnote 32 in the previous section).

³⁶ See, for example, Bennett (1974, p. 19). Many considerations tell against this reading of spontaneity. Perhaps the clearest is the fact of Kant's extended discussion in the *Anthropology* of 'the involuntary course of one's thoughts and feelings' (7:133).

On my interpretation, then, there are essentially three distinct cognitive levels in Kant's model of the human mind: that of sensibility, the level at which we passively intake information about the world; that of the understanding in experience, the level at which we conceptually and rationally organise this information in comprehending the world as such; and that of the responsible agent and her free action, the level at which we as self-aware subjects consciously make decisions, freely act accordingly, and are thereby responsible for such. In terms of normativity, *semantic* normativity does not amount to normativity in *this* sense.

In a different context in the *Religion*, Kant identifies what are essentially the same three levels as the three 'elements of the determination of the human being':

The predisposition to the *animality* of the human being, as a *living being*;
 To the *humanity* in him, as a living and at the same time *rational being*;
 To his *personality*, as a rational and at the same time *responsible being*. (6:26)

I have not been able to explore the third level in this thesis. The only point I need to secure here is that it is just this – a *third* level.

So the spontaneity manifest in experience is strictly limited. However, there is in fact still plenty of room at this level of cognitive function for manifestations of a spontaneity adequate to semantic normativity. I will describe three distinct senses in which the understanding on the current interpretation remains spontaneous. The last is the most important, I think.

We can surely still view the *first* stage of conceptual synthesis, schematic categorisation, as spontaneous. For it takes place irrespective of the particular contingent details of the sensible manifold. It does of course require *some* input in order to prompt it into operation at all, and this input has to have some basic order (see **2.1.1**), but anything more specific

than this regarding what particular properties that input displays is at this stage irrelevant. Once again this is connected to the purity of the concept of an empirical object in general. And it is also thereby connected to the fact that further work would be required to actually *justify* the categories, to transcendently deduce them, to show not only that we must apply them, but also that they must apply (as I mentioned in **2.1.2.1**). In a different but related context, H. H. Price (1932, pp. 168-9) puts it well:

[Experiences] include concepts which are not exemplified in the intuited data at all and cannot be abstracted from them – namely, those concepts which make up the notion ‘material thinghood’.

What about the second stage of conceptual synthesis, empirical determination? This, after all, is the stage through which the world constrains experience on my account. Well here we have the fact that the contingent details of the sensible manifold do not fully determine how it will be empirically determined. This also depends on the particular conceptual abilities of the subject. Empirical determination, although it involves a constraint from below in a way that schematic categorisation does not, depending not merely on the bare fact of input but on the specific content of the input, nevertheless remains strictly under-determined. And this provides a sense in which it manifests spontaneity. In producing our experience through conceptual synthesis, structured as it is in part by the empirical concepts we happen to possess, we are in a sense free in what we make of the world – free in what we understand the sensible manifold to mean. For if we had developed different empirical concepts, either naturally or due to scientific artifice, then the way we experience the world, how we took that world to be, would be different – we would understand the sensible manifold differently.

Finally, however, and most importantly, there is a further sense in which the current level of cognitive function manifests a kind of spontaneity. This time it is one that stems from

the very nature of conceptual activity itself, and thus one which does not track the distinction between the two stages of conceptual synthesis and the two kinds of concepts. Concepts, says Kant, are general representations (A320/B377; *Jäsche* (9:91)). One thing this means is that concepts can in principle refer to more than one object, that the extensions of concepts necessarily possibly have more than one member. But this is not all that the intrinsic generality of conceptual activity consists in. We saw a different aspect of generality in the way concepts provide us with general inferential rules (2.1.4.3) and what is at present relevant in this regard is closely related to this.

Not only is it the case that many different empirical objects can be trees. Empirical objects can also be trees in many different ways. Empirical objects can be trees in a spruce-way, a willow-way, a linden-way, and so forth. This is another part of what it means for concepts to be general – they are generalisations. And so applying the concept of being a tree to an empirical object – mobilising the concept of being a tree to synthesise the sensible manifold caused in a subject by that empirical object – does not amount to judging of that object that it is the particular kind of tree that it is. Otherwise, sensible manifolds that encode information about spruces and sensible manifolds that encode information about willows could not be synthesised into output with similar propositional contents – that there is here and now a tree. Rather, then, applying the concept of being a tree to an empirical object amounts to judging of that object that its particular way of being a tree is one way of being a tree, and thus that although other empirical objects may have different particular ways of being trees, this empirical object nevertheless has something in common with them. More generally, applying a concept to an object places that object in various relations to other objects. To mobilise the concept of being a tree in the conceptual synthesis of a sensible manifold is not merely to recognise the cause of that sensible manifold, the empirical object, as being a tree. It is also, *in that very act*, to recognise the

potential repercussions of the object's being a tree. For instance for its relations to other objects both of the same kind and of different kinds, but also for how the object might be in the future and was in the past, and so forth. It is, in short, to understand something of the structure of the inferential matrix in which judgements like 'there is here and now a tree' lie; it is to understand, for example, that one is licensed to infer from the object's being a tree that it is not a bird.

Thus we return again to the fundamental connection Kant sees between experience, as involving concepts, and reason. And what is of particular relevance in considering the current objection is that this connection brings with it a further sense in which the understanding manifests a kind of spontaneity at the current level of cognitive function. For in this way, the conceptual synthesis of the sensible manifold brings to the product of its synthesis a content that goes beyond what is strictly contained in the manifold itself. All that is strictly contained in the manifold itself is particular information about a particular empirical object. The sensible manifold does not contain information about trees generally, nor about birds, nor about relations between birds and trees. Yet such information *is* contained in the output of the conceptual synthesis of such manifolds, and it must therefore be being brought to the table by the concepts involved therein. *This* is what Kant calls the 'spontaneity of concepts' (A50/B74, cf. A68/B93, A126).

2.1.6 Constraint Level II: Experience-Thought

2.1.6.1 Learning Concepts From Experience

I now move on to the next demand for constraint that any plausible theory of experience must satisfy. How can Kant's theory account for the fact that our experience of the world

constrains our thought about the world? In particular, how can this theory, as a broadly conceptualist theory, account for the fact that we learn our empirical concepts *from* experience? The problem is that, on the current model, these concepts are already involved in producing experience, and we cannot learn a concept from experience if that concept was required to produce experience in the first place.

Several aspects of the preceding discussion will help us in seeing how Kant solves this problem.³⁷

The first and most basic element in this is the spectrum conception of experience that was introduced in 2.1.2.2. For this spectrum conception allows that it is not *always* the case that *empirical* concepts are already involved in experience, that the extent to which this is the case varies according to the conceptual ability of the subject undergoing the experience (Kant's weak state non-conceptualism).

Suppose we sense trees but do so without yet possessing all of the empirical concepts that could be mobilised in the conceptual synthesis of the resultant sensible manifolds. In particular, suppose we do not yet possess the concept of a tree. On the current model, we would *not* thereby undergo experiences as of trees – the propositional content of our experiences would not be that there is here and now a tree. Rather we would undergo experiences closer to the minimal terminal, which is to say that we would experience these trees not as trees but merely as spatiotemporally extended and located, sensible property possessing, fully causally functioning particulars (likely with other of their empirical properties specified, but this extreme case will do for the purposes of exposition). Then the basic thought is this. If we can tell a coherent story about how, on the basis of such non-

³⁷ Two of these aspects are interpretive theses that McDowell's strong conceptualist reading of Kant does not share. And accordingly, in McDowell (1998, p. 462), he seems to deny that Kant had the abstractionist picture of concept learning that I go on to attribute to him. Apart from being a very difficult exegetical claim to maintain in the face of the evidence, this leaves McDowell's Kant seemingly unable to provide a sense in which the world constrains thought.

maximal-terminal experiences, we could learn the concept of a tree, then we have accounted for the fact that our experience of the world constrains our thought about the world *even if* the concepts we learn in this way would *subsequently* feed back down into experience to structure it (either in future cases but also perhaps retrospectively, in acts of remembering previously enjoyed non-maximal terminal experiences).

Exegetically put, the thought is that just as the current model, with its spectrum conception of experience, allowed us to accommodate into a broadly conceptualist interpretation Kant's remarks about the savage, so it allows us to accommodate into this picture his story of how we learn empirical concepts from experience. Here is how the *Jäsche Logic* has this story:

To make concepts out of representations one must be able *to compare*, *to reflect*, and *to abstract*, for these three logical operations of the understanding are the essential and universal conditions for generation of every concept whatsoever. I see, e.g., a spruce, a willow, and a linden. By first comparing these objects with one another I note that they are different from one another in regard to the trunk, the branches, the leaves, etc.; but next I reflect on that which they have in common among themselves, namely trunk, branches, and leaves themselves, and I abstract from the quantity, the figure, etc., of these; thus I acquire a concept of a tree. (9:94-5)

And it is also worth quoting the following less well-known passages from the *Vienna* notes, since these were taken at the logic lectures that Kant gave around 1780:³⁸

When he compared the colour red in the red of cinnabar, carmoisin, and ponceau, however, he became aware that there is something general in the colour red that is contained along with other things in other representations of the colour red, and he thought by red that which was common to many objects, and this was a concept. (24:904-5)

In one consciousness I grasp many representations, in which I compare what is only a repetition of the other. From reflection, then, one cognises that which many things have in common; afterward one takes away through abstraction that in

³⁸ Cf. A85/B117; *FI* (20:220); *DWL* (24:753-4).

which they do not agree, and then a *repraesentatio communis* remains. No concept comes to be, then, without comparison, without perception of an agreement, or without abstraction. (24:909)

Call the process of learning empirical concepts from experience through comparison, reflection, and abstraction *analysis*. What, then, are we to make of analysis as an account of concept acquisition? To begin with, what Kant says here should not be taken too literally or be regarded as too rigid.

First of all, there is no suggestion the *process* of comparison, reflection, and abstraction need be carried out consciously. Analysis could perhaps be carried out consciously, but it certainly does not need to be. When Kant talks about consciousness here he is talking about the need for consciousness of the *representations* that are to be compared, reflected upon, and abstracted. Note, then, that what we have here is further confirmation that the information encoded in the sensible manifold which remains encoded after conceptual synthesis still qualifies as content (see **2.1.3**). Information about the colour of the cinnabar is in some suitably robust sense being conveyed to the subject even though he does not yet have the concept of redness and therefore the cinnabar is not yet being seen and understood *as* red. I also talked about this at the end of **2.1.5.1** with regard to Kant's definition of conceptual functions being such that difference in input ensures difference in output, even in the face of identity of function. The phenomenal character of non-maximal terminal experiences outstrips their conceptual, (cognitively) representational content. This is the second aspect of the preceding discussion that is needed to explain how Kant can account for the fact that experience constrains thought. The information that remains encoded after conceptual synthesis in a non-maximal terminal experience needs to still qualify as being conveyed to the subject in some way if she is to be able to generate new

empirical concepts on the basis of such experience, and Kant clearly thinks it does. (Kant's weak content non-conceptualism.)

Second of all, we need not conceive of the three operations, and in particular comparison and reflection, as altogether sharply distinct from one another. And although analysis will presumably be temporally extended, it need not proceed in one uninterrupted succession from comparison to abstraction and concept generation, nor is there any principled reason why several analyses cannot go on simultaneously.³⁹ In short, Kant's claim is again not a psychological but a logical one. It is supposed to follow simply because of the kind of thing a concept is, namely a *general* representation. Here what is crucial is that other aspect of the inherent generality of conceptual activity than the one focused on at the end of the last section (2.1.5.2). It is in virtue of the fact that a concept is 'a representation of what is common to several objects' (*Jäsche* (9:91)) that *something like* comparison, reflection, and abstraction is required in order to generate one. For the marks that compose an empirical concept do so precisely because, upon reflection, they were found to be common among the distinct individuals that were initially compared.

However, even granting all this, there remains a significant problem. Analysis is not obviously a coherent account of concept learning. The problem is that, even if we do not take Kant's description of this process too literally, it is not obvious that comparison, reflection and abstraction do not already presuppose possession of the very concept that is to be generated in this way. How are we supposed to be able to perceptually pick out trees for comparison without already understanding what a tree is, which is to say, without already having the concept of a tree? For this seems like it would require the ability to reliably identify trees, as well as the ability to register, identify as such, and respond to

³⁹ This point suggests how Kant's account could incorporate Sellars' (2003 [1956], p. 44) important claim that empirical concepts are acquired in batteries.

similarities and differences between trees. And these abilities look like they might require possession of the concept of a tree. Kant's story about the generation of empirical concepts looks in danger of being circular, and if it is circular, then it is not really explaining the fact that we think about the world in the way we do because we experience it in the way we do.⁴⁰

It is in finding the solution to this problem that a third and final aspect of the preceding discussion becomes relevant. That is that Kant's conception of conceptual ability is a demanding one, for he takes it to be intrinsically connected to rational ability. Ultimately, this saves from circularity Kant's account of the generation of empirical concepts through analysis, of how we learn concepts from experience.

First of all, note that while it might seem relatively uncontroversial today that there is an intrinsic connection between conceptual and rational ability, it was not so in Kant's time.⁴¹ He was responding to a live issue in emphasising this connection, as the following passage from the *False Subtlety* essay of 1762 shows:

The higher faculty of cognition rests absolutely and simply on the capacity to judge. Accordingly, if a being can judge, then it possesses the higher faculty of cognition. If one has cause to deny of this being that it possesses this faculty, then that being is incapable of judgement. The failure to reflect on these matters has induced a man of renown and learning to attribute distinct concepts to animals. The argument runs like this: an ox's representation of its stall includes the clear representation of its characteristic mark of having a door; therefore, the ox has a distinct concept of its stall. It is easy to prevent the confusion here. The distinctness of a concept does not consist in the fact that that which is a characteristic mark of the thing is clearly represented, but rather in the fact that it is *recognised as* a characteristic mark of the thing. The door is something which does, it is true,

⁴⁰ For alternative articulations of, and in some cases alternative responses to, this problem, see Schrader (1967), Pippin (1982, pp. 112-4), Ginsborg (1997, p. 53ff.), Longuenesse (1998, pp. 115-22), Allison (2001, pp. 21-30), and Allison (2004, p. 80). Fodor (1975) contains probably the most influential articulation (and defence) of this problem beyond the Kant literature.

⁴¹ This seems to me to be one of the positive things to have come out of the conceptualism/non-conceptualism debate. See, e.g., Crane (1992, p. 147) and Martin (1992, p. 763). And it would of course be a reasonable conjecture that the prevalence of this view today stems ultimately from Kant.

belong to the stall and can serve as a characteristic mark of it. But only the being who forms the judgement: 'this door belongs to this stable' has a distinct concept of the building, and that is certainly beyond the powers of animals. (2:59, my italics)

The man of 'renown and learning' to whom Kant refers in this passage is his contemporary Meier, none other than the author of the text on which Kant based his logic lectures for the entire forty years that he gave them.⁴²

The thought, then, is that for Kant, being able to reliably identify trees (etc.) does *not* amount to already having the concept of a tree. Having the concept of a tree and mobilising that concept in experience requires being able to do much more than this. It requires being able to *reason* about trees, and it requires being able to bring this reasoning to bear in the act of recognising a tree as such in one's experience. As Kant goes on to make the distinction in a passage directly following on from the one quoted above:

it is one thing *to differentiate* things from each other, and quite another thing *to recognise* the difference between them. The latter is only possible by means of judgements and cannot occur in the case of animals, who are not endowed with reason... The dog differentiates the roast from the loaf, and it does so because the way in which it is affected by the roast is different from the way in which it is affected by the loaf (for different things cause different sensations) (2:59-60)

Generally, being able to perceptually pick out (etc.) objects that are similar in their empirical determinations does not suffice for the possession of the concepts of those empirical determinations because such abilities do not amount to the judgemental, and therefore *inferential* abilities that, according to Kant, are involved in possessing a concept.

Now this not to say that *no* conceptual-judgemental-inferential abilities will be required for the process of comparison, reflection, and abstraction, even if it is clear from Kant's remarks about animals that he does not think such abilities are required for the initial

⁴² For the claim in the first clause of this sentence, see the Factual Notes in Kant (2002, p. 427); for the claim in the second clause, see the Translator's Introduction in Kant (1992, p. xxiii).

perceptual discrimination. In particular, Kant can certainly allow that both categorial and reflective thinking are involved in analysis. That is, he can allow that such a process depends upon the possession of the categories as well as possession of what he calls in the *Amphiboly* the concepts of reflection: identity and difference, agreement and opposition, inner and outer, and matter and form (A260-8/B316-24).⁴³ But this does not render the account circular. Rather it is just part of what keeps Kant's theory a conceptualist one and part of what keeps the schematised categories pure.⁴⁴

Because of his demanding and stratified conception of concept possession, Kant can allow that quite sophisticated natural and even normative processes are at work in learning concepts. Without, that is, begging the question of how our experience of the world constrains the way in which we think about the world.

2.1.6.2 Arguments From Nurture and From Nature

In the last section I argued that analysis – the process of learning empirical concepts from experience through comparison, reflection, and abstraction – plays a role in enabling Kant's theory of experience to accommodate a sense in which experience constrains thought. Before moving on, I want to say something brief about how this compares to the role that Béatrice Longuenesse grants to analysis.

⁴³ Cf. *FI* (20:211-13). For detailed discussion of both the role of the concepts of reflection in the generation of empirical concepts and their connection to the categories, see Longuenesse (1998, pp. 131-66). My interpretation could agree with much of what she says about the first of these topics, but as I go on to discuss in the next section, we disagree about the exact role of the categories in all of this.

⁴⁴ See Bennett (1966, p. 98) and Cassam (2007, pp. 145-6). The latter contains more detailed discussion of how the quantitative, relational, and modal categories in particular are required for analysis.

Longuenesse (1998, pp. 11-12, 107-30) argues that analysis plays a key role in the transcendental deduction of the categories. In outline, her argument takes the following form:⁴⁵

The categories are necessary for analysis

Analysis is necessary for empirical concepts

Empirical concepts are necessary for empirical cognition

Therefore the categories are necessary for empirical cognition

The argument I presented in the previous section has something in common with Longuenesse's argument. That is, I agree with the first premise that the categories are necessary for analysis. First of all, indirectly, because the non-maximal terminal experience on the basis of which analysis proceeds has a core categorial structure. Second of all, directly, because categorial thinking is involved in the process of analysis itself. So the role that the categories themselves play on my interpretation is substantial and multi-layered. However, the role that analysis itself plays on my interpretation is quite modest. And so it should be, for while I have shown that Kant's story of how we learn empirical concepts from experience is coherent and not obviously implausible, I have not shown that it is the only possible one, that analysis is the only way in which we might come to possess empirical concepts. That is, my interpretation of Kant does not commit him to the *second* premise in Longuenesse's argument, that analysis is *necessary* for empirical concepts. And this is crucial, because this is where her argument goes wrong.

We can call Longuenesse's argument an argument from nurture – it attempts to derive justification for the categories from the role they play in our acquisition of the tools we

⁴⁵ See Cassam (2007, pp. 141-4) and Cassam (2008, p. 529) for useful summaries.

need for empirical cognition. Let us put aside issues concerning whether such an argument, even if successful, would amount to a full-blown transcendental deduction. (Would showing that the categories are necessary for empirical cognition really *justify* them? See 2.1.2.1.) There remains a fundamental problem with arguments from nurture. They appeal to conditions on the acquisition of empirical concepts. But such conditions are notoriously weak. As Jonathan Bennett (1966, p. 97) puts it, 'Nothing is logically prerequisite to a concept's having been acquired except its being not possessed and then later possessed'. So even if we concede that empirical concepts *can* be acquired through a rational, reflective process like analysis, it seems entirely conceivable that we might come to possess such concepts through brute causal means. Such is the nativist or rationalist model of concept acquisition – sensory stimuli merely activate already existing, or innate, conceptual structures. But even the empiricist-minded theorist who takes some process like analysis to be the *normal* route to concept acquisition must surely accept the *possibility* of developing conceptual ability on account of futuristic brain surgery, say, or even a bump on the head.⁴⁶ The second premise in Longuenesse's argument is not plausible. Analysis is not necessary for empirical concepts, and this causes a break in the chain of necessary conditions that Longuenesse constructs between the categories and empirical cognition.

The point, then, is that this is a flaw that my argument does not share. First of all, the role granted to analysis on my interpretation is entirely compatible with both the possibility of there being other ways to learn empirical concepts than from experience⁴⁷ and the possibility of there being ways of acquiring empirical concepts that do not involve rational

⁴⁶ See Bennett (1966, p. 97), Fodor (1981, p. 273ff.) and Cassam (2007, pp. 147-8). Note that in branding Kant an empiricist-minded theorist regarding the issue of concept acquisition, I do not mean to align analysis to the traditional abstractionist models of concept acquisition found in Locke or Hume (see Locke (1975 [1989], p. 159) and Hume (1978 [1739-40], pp. 17-25)). Analysis is in some ways similar to these, but it is crucial to bear in mind that the output of such a process on Kant's model is very different indeed.

⁴⁷ For Kantian discussions of testimonial learning, as well as what to say about empirical concepts that we seemingly could not learn directly from experience – concepts of unobservable posits in scientific theories, e.g., such as that of a neutrino – see Cassam (2003) and Gomes (forthcoming, pp. 7-8).

learning at all. So long as analysis remains one basic, primary way in which we come to possess our empirical concepts, then it remains the case that, on Kant's broadly conceptualist theory of experience, the way we think about the world is constrained by the way we experience it. And second of all, regardless of what role categorial thinking plays in Kant's story of how we *acquire* empirical concepts, my argument has been that, for Kant, categorial thinking also plays a role in the *possession* and *application* of empirical concepts. For the schematized categories are themselves contained within our empirical concepts. It is just part of what it is to be a tree to be an empirical object in general, a spatiotemporally located and extended, sensible quality possessing, fully causally functioning particular. And so thinking of something as a tree, or undergoing an experience as of a tree, directly involves the categories through that fact alone. Rather than an argument from nurture, this is an argument from *nature*. The necessity of the categories on my interpretation derives from the very nature of conceptual activity, one basic manifestation of which occurs in experience.⁴⁸

⁴⁸ For a closely related argument from nature, see Cassam (2007, pp. 148-52) and also Bennett (1966, p. 96), who writes: 'what we need here is a Kantian theory of concepts as intellectual skills the proof of whose possession lies in their exercise'.

2.2 Non-Veridicality

Having presented Kant's theory of experience and explained how it is a well-designed theory, it is finally time to return to the issue of non-veridical experience. As was the case in Part I, the second main section of Part II is much shorter than the first main section.

Apart from those who take Kant's conception of thick experience to be a conception of a kind of empirical knowledge rather than a conception of everyday experience, one of my main stalking horses in this thesis has been those who attribute to Kant a form of naïve realism. In **2.2.1** I focus in on this more directly. I begin in **2.2.1.1** by defining naïve realism in such a way as to make clear its relevance for the topic of non-veridical experience. This central connection has been somewhat lacking in discussions of naïve realism in the Kant literature. In **2.2.1.2** I look at the most evident point of contention between my own reading of Kant and the naïve realist reading. This concerns intuition, and I take myself to conclusively refute certain key textual claims that are made by the naïve realist readers in this regard. I concede, however, that this does not in itself conclusively settle the dispute, and in **2.2.1.3** I turn to some considerations that undermine the naïve realist reading in a more systematic way.

Up to this point I have focused on hallucination and have not yet said anything about what Kant makes of that other canonical class of non-veridical experience, illusion. To this end, in **2.2.2**, I explore what resources Kant has for drawing a principled distinction between

hallucination and illusion. First I consider one option based once again on his distinction between pure and empirical concepts and the two-stage model of conceptual synthesis. This option initially looks viable but in the end it seems to misclassify some cases. I then consider an alternative option based on what role is played by the reproductive imagination in engendering the non-veridicality of the experience. This option is better.

2.2.1 Naïve Realism

2.2.1.1 Defining the View

There are several ways to approach naïve realism. It will be useful for my purposes to describe three. It is important to bear in mind that these are just different ways of approaching the same theory – they give extensionally equivalent results. The point in describing three approaches is just to bring out all of the aspects of naïve realism that will be relevant in my discussion of it.⁴⁹

One common way to approach naïve realism is as a theory about the phenomenal character of veridical experience. The phenomenal character of an experience consists of its phenomenal properties, those properties of an experience which determine what it is like for a subject to undergo it. Naïve realism is then the view that the phenomenal character of veridical experience consists of *relations* to empirical objects. This stands opposed to a view on which the phenomenal character of veridical experience (and indeed experience more generally) consists of *representations* of empirical objects.

⁴⁹ The dialectic that follows is in all essentials taken from Nudds (2009), as is the account of naïve realism's commitments regarding hallucination that will be discussed in **2.2.1.3**.

Another common way to approach naïve realism is as a theory about what kind of thing veridical experience *is*. Consider why the naïve realist theory of phenomenal character qualifies as naïve. Suppose that I am seeing a tree and attending to its various features, the number and length of its branches, the colours of its leaves, their shape, and so forth. Now suppose that I introspectively attend to the experience itself. What would this involve? It might involve becoming more aware of the limitations of my eyesight and thus of my discriminatory abilities, or it might even involve the feeling of my pupils contracting and dilating in response to changes in brightness. But surely it would still involve attending to the tree.⁵⁰ And since attending to my experience as of a tree involves attending to the tree, the tree itself seems to me to be literally a part of my experience, a metaphysical constituent of it. *Naïve* realism, then, says that sometimes, namely with veridical experience, what *seems* to be the case here *is* the case: veridical experiences have empirical objects as metaphysical constituents. This way of approaching naïve realism has it as a theory of what kind of thing veridical experience is. For if experience has empirical objects as literal constituents, as naïve realism says on this approach, then it must *itself* be a relation to empirical objects, rather, that is, than a representation of them.⁵¹ Naïve

⁵⁰ Melnick (2009, pp. 111-30) proposes that this is what Kant's distinction between inner and outer sense amounts to – a distinction between focusing on the object and focusing on one's experience of the object. There are many interesting and plausible aspects to Melnick's account. It is, for example, one way to make sense of Kant's claim that inner sense has no manifold of its own (B67 – see 1.1.2). But ultimately I think Melnick's interpretation conflates Kant's conception of the line between inner and outer with the contemporary philosopher of mind's conception of that line, according to which it lies, say, at the skin. The latter is a line drawn *within* space and time, the former *between* space and time.

⁵¹ There is perhaps some sense in which those who think that experiential representations (and demonstrative thoughts generally) constitutively depend on the existence of their objects are thereby claiming that such representations have empirical objects as literal constituents. See McDowell (1996), Brewer (1999), and Soteriou (2000). But it is important to distinguish such views from naïve realism – they do not maintain that experience is a relation.

realism is then the view that experiences *are* relations between empirical objects and experiencing subjects.⁵²

So far, so good. But we can make the relevance of naïve realism still more salient by going one step further and connecting naïve realism directly to the issue of non-veridical experience. After all, this is the context in which most contemporary discussions of naïve realism take place.

Before I do this it is worth pausing to draw attention to this fact. For this has *not* been the case with naïve realism as it has been appropriated by interpreters of Kant. As I noted back in **0.2**, very little has been written that explicitly aims to expound Kant's views on non-veridical experience. And this remains true even in those discussions in which Kant is attributed a naïve realist theory of experience. There is an odd disconnect in this, and I return to exploit it in **2.2.1.3**.

So how are we to connect naïve realism – understood as a theory about what kind of thing veridical experience is, namely a relation between subject and empirical object – to the issue of non-veridical experience? The key is what gets called disjunctivism about experience. Disjunctivism, most generally, is the view that veridical experience and (at least some kinds of) non-veridical experience are of fundamentally different kinds, that their basic natures are different. Now presumably, hallucinations are not relations to empirical objects (and do not have empirical objects as metaphysical constituents), since the empirical objects that hallucinations are as of need not exist. So we can also approach naïve realism as a specific form of disjunctivism, and thus as a theory that directly concerns non-veridical experience. Approached in this way, naïve realism is the view that

⁵² In fact, Campbell (2009, pp. 657-9) and now Brewer (2011, pp. 96-7) take veridical experience to be a *three*-place relation, between subject, object, *and* 'standpoint' or 'spatiotemporal point of view'. I can ignore this complication here as it is not considered by Hanna or Allais.

veridical experience and hallucinatory experience are of fundamentally different kinds *because* the former and not the latter is a relation to empirical objects. (And a similar (extensionally equivalent) move could be made on the phenomenal character approach to naïve realism, supposing it is just as reasonable to type experiences by phenomenal character as it is to do so by metaphysical constitution.)

Before I move on to consider what we are to make of Kant's relation to such a view, it is worth noting that a lot rides here on how we type experiences. Might we also find good motivation to type experiences in a different way? For example, according to whether or not they involve cognitive malfunction, or according to whether or not they could be fully incorporated into a cognitively unified view on a nomologically unified world. If so, then despite the internal similarities between veridical and hallucinatory experience with regard to representational structure and constituent on the view I am attributing to Kant, this view could nevertheless qualify as a (much weaker) form of disjunctivism. Disjunctivism's defining criterion of fundamental difference is open to interpretation.⁵³ For my purposes in this thesis, however, I will only be concerned with the very strong, naïve realist form of disjunctivism.

2.2.1.2 Intuition Again

Robert Hanna and Lucy Allais attribute to Kant a naïve realist theory of experience.⁵⁴ As can be seen from the following quotations, however, their accounts proceed in terms of intuition. That is, they take 'intuition' to be Kant's term of art for everyday, visual

⁵³ See Soteriou (2009), and for a collection that include some markedly different approaches, see Haddock and Macpherson (2008).

⁵⁴ See also Warren (1998, p. 221), Setiya (2004, p. 66) and Buroker (2006, p. 37). They all maintain that intuition is relational, but they do not develop the connection to naïve realism. A very different approach is taken by Melnick (2009, p. 171), who proposes that there are significant similarities between naïve realism and transcendental idealism. Melnick's talk of 'envelopment' is perhaps most suggestive of the 'digestive' form of naïve realism developed by Johnston (2006).

perceptual experience (and can thus agree with the tradition that with the term 'experience' itself Kant denotes a kind of empirical knowledge). I accept that 'intuition' *sometimes* has this meaning (though not always – see **0.5**), and accordingly I will conduct the following discussion on their terms. Here are some clear statements of their views:

an intuition is essentially relational and existential. It is relational in the sense that its structure is dyadic – it always contains places for both the intuiting subject and the intuited object. And it is existential in the sense that the place for the intuited object is always filled (Hanna (2001, p. 210))

intuition is essentially a *relational* form of cognition, in that the existence of the object of intuition is a necessary condition of both the objective validity or cognitive significance of the intuition and also the existence of the intuition itself: if the putative object of an intuition fails to exist, then it is not only not an objectively valid intuition, it is not even authentically an intuition (Hanna (2005, p. 259))

intuitions represent objects *immediately* because they *present* the particular object itself, as opposed to being representations that enable us to think about it whether it is present or not (Allais (2009, p. 389))

intuitions represent objects immediately because they present the object itself, as opposed to referring to an object through the mediation of further representations (which enable us to think about the object whether it is present or not). Immediacy says that an intuition is not simply a representation which is caused by a particular thing, but that it is in fact a *presentation to consciousness of that thing*. (Allais (2010, p. 59))

My view is that Kant's concern is not just with causal origin (provided by sensation) but with the actual presence of the object: the contrast is between a representationalist version of externalism, which says that what mental states represent is essentially linked to their causes, and a relational view, which sees perceptual states as involving their objects as constituents (Allais (2010, p. 60))

I will begin by considering how we are to assess these claims on straightforwardly textual grounds. Does Kant actually say that intuition is a relation that requires the existence of its object?

Although I did not mark it as such at the time, in **1.1.6** we saw strong evidence to suggest that, contra Hanna and Allais, Kant is not thinking of intuition as a relation. That is, we

saw that Kant is clearly thinking of intuition as something that can occur with *or without* the current, actual presence of its object, and therefore without its current, actual existence. This evidence is not sufficiently acknowledged by Hanna or Allais and it bears repeating in this new context. Here are the passages I quoted from the *Anthropology*:

Sensibility in the cognitive faculty (the faculty of representations in intuition) contains two parts: *sense* and the *power of imagination*. – The first is the faculty of intuition in the presence of an object, the second is intuition even *without* the presence of an object. (7:153)

The power of imagination (*facultas imaginandi*), as a faculty of intuition even without the presence of the object, is either *productive*, that is, a faculty of the original presentation of the object (*exhibitio originaria*), which thus precedes experience; or *reproductive*, a faculty of the derivative presentation of the object (*exhibitio derivativa*), which brings back to the mind an empirical intuition had previously. (7:167)

the power of imagination, which puts material under the understanding in order to provide content for its concepts (for cognition), seems to provide a reality to its (invented) intuitions because of the analogy between them and real perceptions. (7:169)

And bearing in mind the phenomenal character approach to naïve realism, it is also worth repeating the following passage from the *Prolegomena* (also first quoted in **1.1.6**):

The difference between truth and dream, however, is not decided through the quality of the representations that are referred to objects, for they are the same in both (4:290))

On the face of it this too seems like evidence against the naïve realist reading. Kant seems to be saying, contra naïve realism, that veridical and hallucinatory experiences have something fundamental in common, namely their phenomenal character. Things are not quite as straightforward as this, however. As we shall see in **2.2.1.3**, naïve realists can allow that veridical and hallucinatory experiences are ‘introspectively indiscriminable’ whilst denying that they share the same kind of phenomenal character. And Kant’s talk of

the 'quality' of representations is simply not precise enough for us to be able to make a decision as regards which of these he might mean – real or apparent quality.

Nevertheless, the passages just quoted are compelling. What, then, are we to make of the direct textual evidence that Hanna and Allais marshal in support of their naïve realist readings. Is Kant perhaps simply inconsistent. In fact that evidence seems to me to be both sparse and misleadingly selective.

Both Hanna and Allais appeal to the following passage from the *Prolegomena*, though in doing so neither quote the second sentence:⁵⁵

An intuition is a representation of the sort which would depend immediately on the presence of an object. It therefore seems impossible *originally* to intuit *a priori*, since then the intuition would have to occur without an object being present, *either previously or now*, to which it could refer, and so it could not be an intuition. (4:281-2, last italics mine)

In light of those passages from the *Anthropology* (and there are several more like them which were cited in 1.1.6), I suggest that here we should observe both the subjunctive tone and in particular the fact that Kant goes on to talk about the presence of the object 'either previously or now'. Rather than the strong existential dependence of naïve realism, this seems to suggest precisely the model that I have presented in this thesis. There is a *general* dependence on causal affection by empirical objects to provide sensibility with information about empirical objects in the first place. Without such, we could not represent empirical objects in experience at all, either accurately or inaccurately. But once this information has been initially acquired, it remains available to the reproductive imagination for the clandestine use in hallucinatory experiences, which is to say, intuitions whose objects do not really exist.

⁵⁵ Allais (2010, pp. 62, 64) does quote the second sentence in a different context, but in doing so she does not acknowledge that it seems to tell against her reading of the first sentence.

Hanna (in Hanna (2001, pp. 209-10) and Hanna (2005, p. 259)) also cites a passage from towards the end of the Transcendental Aesthetic in support of his reading of intuition. In both cases the quotation appears as follows: 'our mode of intuition is dependent upon the existence (*Dasein*) of the object'. But again it is worth paying attention to the context from which this sentence fragment is mined. Here is the sentence in full:⁵⁶

If one will not make them [i.e. space and time] into objective forms of all things, then no alternative remains but to make them into subjective forms of our kind of outer as well as inner intuition, which is called sensible because it is *not original*, i.e., one through which the existence of the object of intuition is itself given (and that, so far as we can have insight, can only pertain to the original being); rather it is dependent on the existence of the object, thus it is possible only insofar as the representational capacity of the subject is affected through that. (B72)

Consideration of the wider point that Kant is making in this passage shows us that it does not support the naïve realist reading.

Kant's concern is to contrast the divine mode of intuition with the human mode of intuition. For the naïve realist reader, this contrast *cannot* be that between a mode of intuition that entails the existence of what is intuited and a mode of intuition that does not entail the existence of what is intuited. The divine mode of intuition is surely of the former kind, but according to the naïve realist reader, so is the human mode of intuition. (For note that I have said 'intuition that *entails* existence', and not 'intuition that *is itself the ground of* existence'.) Even for the naïve realist reader, the contrast must therefore be that between a mode of intuition that does not depend on causal affection by what is intuited and a mode of intuition that does depend on causal affection by what is intuited. The divine mode of intuition is of the former kind and the human mode of intuition is of the latter kind. And this reading of the contrast is reinforced by the conclusion Kant actually ends on in this

⁵⁶ In fact quoting the sentence in full makes it clear that Hanna's quotation is not only a sentence fragment, but a rather disfigured one at that.

passage – ‘thus [human intuition] is possible only insofar as the representational capacity of the subject is affected’.

But if this is what Kant's contrast is, then my reading can again make just as good sense of it. The dependence of the human mode of intuition on causal affection is manifested both in the reliance of the understanding on sensibility for the information it provides, and also in taking seriously the receptive, passive nature of sensibility itself. Once again, on my reading, we could not intuit (i.e. undergo experiences as of) empirical objects if we never underwent causal affection by them. And this in turn leads to a *general* dependence on the existence of empirical objects, though *not* necessarily at the time of the intuition.

The point is that if Kant's aim in the above passage is to mark the distinction between divine and human modes of intuition, and if we are to mark this distinction in the way described, then we should read his talk of existential dependence weakly, in a way that is captured by my interpretation and does not require a naïve realist interpretation.

By way of confirmation of this point, consider the contrast between divine and human cognition as it appears in the following passage from the *Critique of Judgement*:

It is indispensably necessary for the human understanding to distinguish between the possibility and the actuality of things, and this fact has its basis in the subject and in the nature of his cognitive powers. For if the exercise of these powers did not require two quite heterogeneous components, understanding to provide concepts and sensible intuition to provide objects corresponding to these, then there would be no such distinction (between the possible and the actual)... An understanding to which this distinction did not apply would mean: all objects cognised by me *are* (exist). (5:401)

The clear implication here is that my human mode of cognition is such that *not* all objects cognised by me are. Now this might simply mean that humans can think about empirical objects that do not exist. This kind of thought would qualify as cognition simply because it

is about empirical objects. But as we know, Kant also defined experience itself as a kind of cognition, and it seems more natural to include it here too. In which case, we can well read Kant as saying that the possibility of intuitions whose objects do not currently exist (hallucinatory experiences) is built into the very nature of the human mind and the way it represents the world, for it is a direct consequence of the nature of our sensible faculty. The direct opposite is true of divine intellects – their mode of cognition, in contrast to ours, is such that they simply cannot *misrepresent*. Now the naïve realist reader would surely want to accommodate much of this, but it is just not clear how she can whilst maintaining that there is a fundamental difference in kind between cognition that misrepresents the world and cognition that does not.

So where does this leave us? I take the passages I have cited from the *Anthropology* and elsewhere to show conclusively that Kant does not always reserve the term 'intuition' for something relational that requires the concurrent existence of its object. More generally, I take the preceding discussion to have significantly undermined the direct textual support that Hanna and Allais marshal in support of their naïve realist reading of Kant. This is significant work against the naïve realist reading. Unfortunately, however, it does not settle matters. Kant does not mark a consistent terminological distinction between intuitions and imaginings, between veridical and hallucinatory experience. But perhaps he *ought* to. That is, it is open to those who wish to attribute to Kant a naïve realist theory of experience to concede what I have said about intuition, but to contend that all it shows is that Kant used the same term for what he nonetheless thinks are two fundamentally different kinds of thing. Of course I do not think that this is right, but the point is that the debate is not merely terminological, so a debate about terminology will not suffice to settle it.

In the next section I will present two considerations of a more systematic kind that tell strongly against the naïve realist reading. In the remainder of this section I want to say

something about an argument put forth by Allais (2010) that can be viewed as a systematic consideration in favour of her reading.

Consider the following canonical worry. In the Transcendental Aesthetic Kant appears to take his arguments for the apriority of our intuitions of space and time as arguments for the transcendental ideality of space and time themselves. Isn't there a gap here? Even granting that our intuitions of space and time are a priori or pure, could it not be the case that space and time themselves are transcendentally real, that they subsist in themselves and attach to things in themselves as objective determinations? This is the infamous neglected alternative objection.⁵⁷

Now, Allais proposes that the missing premise in Kant's arguments might be provided by appealing to a naïve realist reading of the nature of intuition.⁵⁸ For suppose that intuitions are relations such that they are dependent for their existence on the existence of their objects (the naïve realist reading of intuition). Then the existence of an intuition guarantees the existence of its object. The existence of pure intuitions can be guaranteed without appeal to experience. This is what it is for an intuition to be pure. Therefore the existence of the objects of pure intuitions can likewise be guaranteed without appeal to experience. But any object whose existence can be guaranteed without appeal to experience cannot be a mind-independent object. Therefore the objects of our pure intuitions must (in some sense) be mind-dependent.

The thought, then, is that the naïve realist reading is required to make sense of certain of Kant's arguments for transcendental idealism and that this provides systematic support for such a reading.

⁵⁷ See, e.g., Trendelenburg (1862), Vaihinger (1892, pp. 290-313), Kemp Smith (2003 [1923], pp. 113-14), Guyer (1987, pp. 362-8), Westphal (2004, pp. 118-23). Hatfield (2006, p. 76), and Guyer (2006, pp. 58, 63).

⁵⁸ Warren (1998, p. 221) and Setiya (2004) prefigure this point. See Allison (2004, pp. 128-32) for a different proposal as to how to solve the problem.

I do not want to quibble about the details of Allais' argument or the reading of Kant's arguments on which it is based. What I want to explain is why it does not in itself provide support for the naïve realist reading of Kant's theory of experience. The basic problem is that Allais' argument does not directly concern *empirical* intuition. The premise that Allais has Kant appeal to in his inference from the apriority of our intuitions of space and time to the transcendental ideality of space and time themselves is that *pure* intuitions are such that they only exist when their objects exist. In order for her argument to support her reading of empirical intuition as similarly relational, therefore, she needs an additional premise to the effect that we ought to have a unified account of intuition. This premise is required to sanction the inference from the claim that pure intuition must be relational to the claim that empirical intuitions must be relational too.

But must we accept this premise? It is not obvious. Pure and empirical intuitions are, after all, very different. For one thing, empirical intuitions are essentially connected to receptivity and sensation. This is something they have in common with imaginings (hallucinatory experiences). And this commonality would hold even if we granted that empirical intuitions and imaginings are in some (other) way fundamentally different in kind. But as Kant makes clear in the first section of the Aesthetic, the connection to receptivity and sensation is not something empirical intuitions have in common with pure intuitions (A19-22/B33-6). Even if Allais' analysis of Kant's arguments in the Aesthetic is correct, it just leaves us with a choice: either we view empirical intuition and pure intuition as fundamentally the same kind of thing, or we view empirical intuition and imagining as fundamentally the same kind of thing. Nothing within her account tells either way on which option to take. And in light of the state in which we left the textual dispute, I am inclined to think that the burden of proof is on her to show that we ought to take the first.

2.2.1.3 More Systematic Problems

In this section I present two systematic considerations that I think tell quite strongly against the naïve realist reading of Kant's theory of experience. (I return to talking in terms of experience, rather than intuition.) The general theme of both of my objections, a theme that already began to appear above, is that naïve realist readers have not paid enough attention to the motivations and commitments that attend a theory on which experience is relational, and that once one does so, such a theory starts to look quite alien to Kant's.

First I consider how one of Kant's core doctrines undermines one of the central motivations for naïve realism. The basic thought is that those who wish to attribute naïve realism to Kant owe us an explanation of *why* he would have held such a view, and what I have to say here blocks one central way in which this might be done.

John Campbell, upon whom Allais in particular relies for her formulations of naïve realism, presents an argument for naïve realism from its ability to account for what he calls 'the explanatory role of experience'. What exactly does he think experience should be able to explain? Sometimes Campbell makes the demand look quite general, saying that 'concepts of individual physical objects and concepts of the observable characteristics of such objects are made available by our experience of the world' (2002a, p. 128). As we first saw in 2.1.2.2, Kant classifies such concepts as empirical concepts. And if experience making these 'available' means that we learn such concepts from experience, then Kant would agree that experience plays this explanatory role (see 2.1.6).

However, Campbell's concern with the explanatory role of experience insofar as he takes it to provide the basis for an argument for naïve realism is in fact much more specific than this. As he elaborates elsewhere, he thinks that 'Experience of objects has to explain how it is that we can have the conception of objects *as mind-independent*' (2002b, p. 121 my

italics). If we grant this, Campbell argues, then we ought to adopt naïve realism, because only naïve realism can account for it.⁵⁹ I will not go into the details of Campbell's argument. I will just point out that I am concerned here with a *motivation* for naïve realism, rather than an *argument* for it. So even if Campbell is wrong that naïve realism is the *only* way to explain how experience could play this specific explanatory role, it suffices for my purposes if he is right that naïve realism is *one* way to explain how experience could play this specific explanatory role. The claim that our experience of objects has to explain how it is that we can have the conception of objects as mind-independent would still thereby provide a key motivation for naïve realism.

My objection, then, is that Kant would not agree to such a claim. Kant does not think that we derive our conception of empirical objects as mind-independent from experience. Now even from the viewpoint of empirical realism, it is a complex matter as to just what mind-independence amounts to for Kant. But suppose that an empirical object's mind-independence is entailed by its having a spatiotemporal extension and location and its being a fully causally functioning particular, which seems highly plausible. Then we saw in **2.1.2.1** that for Kant this is a concept, articulated as it is by the schematised categories, that is precisely *not* derived *from* experience. Rather it is spontaneously mobilised as a necessary and constitutive condition of experience. As Kant observes in the second note to the Refutation of Idealism:

we do not even have anything persistent on which we could base the concept of a substance, as intuition, except merely *matter*, and even this persistence is not drawn from outer experience, but rather presupposed *a priori* as the necessary condition of all time-determination (B278)

⁵⁹ See also McDowell (1986, p. 152) and Child (1994, pp. 146-7). McDowell and Child are using this argument to motivate a different form of disjunctivism to naïve realism, one according to which experience depends on the existence of its objects but is nonetheless representational rather than relational (see footnote 50 in **2.2.1.1**). Campbell argues that not even their object-dependent form of representational theory will do, and that a relational theory is required.

According to Kant, our conception of mind-independence is part of the *pure* concept of an empirical object *in general*. And as the *Jäsche Logic* has it:

A *pure* concept is one that is not abstracted from experience but arises rather from the understanding even *as to content*. (9:92)⁶⁰

The point can be put like this. Campbell's naïve realism is a response to what he calls 'Berkeley's puzzle': 'that it is hard to see how our concepts of mind-independent objects could have been made available by experience of them' (Campbell (2002a, p. 128)). Berkeley's own response to his puzzle is to concede that in fact we do not have concepts of mind-independent objects at all. Campbell finds this response unacceptable. His alternative response is to reconfigure the conception of experience and the mind within which Berkeley's puzzle was formulated, and to do so in such a way as to undercut its force. Campbell intends to make it *easy* to see how our concepts of mind-independent objects could have been made available by experience of them.

Now Kant, like Campbell, takes Berkeley's puzzle seriously. Kant, like Campbell, finds Berkeley's own response unacceptable. And Kant, like Campbell, responds instead by reconfiguring the conception of experience and the mind within which the original puzzle was formulated, which he does in such a way as to undercut its force. *However*, Kant does this *in the opposite direction* to Campbell, namely by accommodating a strictly limited degree of *rationalism* into his conception of experience and the mind. For Kant, *unlike* for Campbell, it remains the case that it is hard to see how our concept of mind-independence is made available by experience. But that's fine, because it isn't – it's a priori. While Campbell's response is anti-Cartesian, Kant's is anti-empiricist (to a strictly qualified

⁶⁰ Cf. A137/B176: 'Now pure concepts of the understanding, however, in comparison with empirical (indeed in general sensible) intuitions, are entirely unhomogenous, and can never be countered in any intuition.'

extent). As he states both the problem and his rationalist solution in the Second Analogy, in phrasing that does not look naïve realist at all:

We have representations in us, of which we can also become conscious. But let this consciousness reach as far and be as exact and precise as one wants, still there always remains only representations, i.e., inner determinations of our mind in this or that temporal relation. Now, how do we come to posit an object for these representations, or ascribe to their subjective reality, as modifications, some sort of objective reality? Objective significance cannot consist in the relation to another representation (of that which one would call the object), for that would simply raise anew the question: How does this representation in turn go beyond itself and acquire objective significance in addition to the subjective significance that is proper to it as a determination of the state of the mind? If we investigate what new characteristic is given to our representations by *reference to an object*, and what is the dignity that they thereby receive, we find that it does nothing beyond making the combination of representations necessary in a certain way, and subjecting them to a rule (A197/B242)

This rule is not learned from experience. Rather it is necessary for experience even to take place at all. It is the pure concept of an object in general, articulated by the schematized categories. With resources like these to hand, Kant simply does not share what is at heart the empiricist motivation of naïve realism.

My second more systematic consideration regarding the attribution of naïve realism to Kant concerns his account of the reproductive imagination. In **1.1.6** we saw how Kant thinks this faculty functions in hallucination, providing regurgitated information to the understanding for processing, via inner sense in the normal way but in lieu of the current causal affection of outer sense by empirical objects. What we have here is quite a rich bottom-up explanation of hallucination, and in particular an explanation of the phenomenal character of hallucination, of why things seem the way they do to a subject undergoing hallucination, which is to say, potentially identical to the way in which things seem to a subject undergoing veridical experience.

Now the point I want to make is that this displays an explanatory grain that goes against that of contemporary naïve realist theories. Such theories do not give a rich, bottom-up explanation of hallucination. On the contrary, hallucination is given an extremely austere characterisation, merely as that which is 'introspectively indiscriminable' from veridical experience (though nevertheless fundamentally different in kind on account of a fundamental difference in metaphysical constitution). And this reticence is by no means laziness on behalf of the contemporary naïve realist. Their account of hallucination *must* be this minimal. As Matthew Nudds (2009, p. 344) puts it:

[the naïve realist] must deny that there is anything in common to all experiences that purport to present the same thing that could explain their doing so: all that can be said about hallucinatory experiences that purportedly present objects is that they are introspectively indiscriminable from experiences that actually present objects.

And a little earlier (2009, pp. 339-40):

[the naïve realist] claims, therefore, that there is nothing more to the phenomenal character of a hallucinatory experience than having the 'indiscriminability property' of being not introspectively knowably not a veridical perception

The details of the complex dialectic that leads to this conclusion again fall beyond the scope of this thesis, but in a nutshell it runs as follows.⁶¹ Veridical experiences *seem* to have empirical objects as literal parts. Naïve realism claims that the best explanation of this seeming is that veridical experiences *do* have empirical objects as literal parts, that veridical experience is a relation. Now hallucinatory experiences also seem to have empirical objects as literal parts. They are, after all, introspectively indiscriminable from veridical experiences. But this time the explanation for hallucinatory experiences seeming this way cannot be that they are this way. Now suppose we allow an alternative explanation for the phenomenal character of hallucinatory experience, for the fact that it

⁶¹ For further discussion see Martin (2004), Siegel (2004), Martin (2006), Farkas (2006), Hawthorne and Kovakovich (2006), Siegel (2008), and Sturgeon (2008).

too seems to have empirical objects as literal parts. Then what's to stop such an explanation also serving for veridical experience? The problem is that any positive account of the phenomenal character of hallucinatory experience threatens to render superfluous the naïve realist's appeal to veridical experience's relational status as an explanation of its phenomenal character.

So where does this leave those who wish to attribute naïve realism to Kant? It will not do to simply claim that Kant thinks that veridical experience (or intuition) is relational. Suppose we disregard the textual evidence I presented in **2.2.1.2** that tells directly against this claim, as well as my destabilisation of the textual evidence in favour of the claim. Independently of this, I have also argued that, for Kant, there are fundamental similarities between veridical and hallucinatory experiences. Not only do both involve the presentation to the understanding of sensational information that has been filtered through inner sense. Both also involve the prior manipulation of this information by the reproductive imagination. In hallucinatory experience this involves the regurgitation of information not currently being provided through outer sense, but even in veridical experience it involves pre-conceptual organisation, or binding (see **2.1.1**). That is, I have argued that there are very good grounds, apart from direct textual ones, to expect that, for Kant, what determines what it is like for a subject to undergo an experience is significantly similar in veridical cases as in hallucinatory ones.

And while the naïve realist readers certainly do *not* need to deny that, for Kant, veridical experience involves cognitive processing, they *do* need to deny that any such processing be both shared by hallucinatory experience and contribute in any significant way to the phenomenal character of veridical experience, to what makes veridical experience what it is. In particular, they need to deny that any cognitive processing that might explain the fact that hallucinatory experience too *seems* to have empirical objects as metaphysical

constituents is cognitive processing that is shared by veridical experience. Allais (2009, p. 394) is quite right when she says that 'The relational view of perception is not undermined by the existence of cognitive processing'. But the relational view *is* undermined if this cognitive processing is taken to play a certain role that it could also play in hallucination. This is exactly the role that I have argued Kant takes it to play, and because they have not adequately addressed Kant's views on non-veridical experience, the naïve realist readers have not yet said anything against this.

These considerations, like the previous textual discussion, have not been intended to be entirely decisive. My aim has been to shift and compound the burden of proof, and to call attention to the fact that the naïve realist readers of Kant have not yet said enough about Kant's relation to the key claim of that theory, that *hallucinatory* experience is of a fundamentally different kind to veridical experience.

Representational theories of experience developed partly in response to problems presented by hallucination. Naïve realism developed partly as a way to return veridical experience to centre stage. Representationalists have since pressed naïve realists to nonetheless say what they think about hallucination, with some surprising and significant results. It is therefore unsurprising to demand of those who wish to attribute to Kant a form of naïve realism an account of what he says about hallucination. Yet unsurprising as it is, this demand has not yet been met.

2.2.2 Hallucination and Illusion

So far I have focused exclusively on hallucination, and for the most part on one canonical case thereof. In this final section I will say something about other kinds of hallucination and also about illusion.

Recall from **1.1.6** that I gave an initial characterisation of hallucination as the experience as of some empirical object that is not really there, with a canonical example being Macbeth's seeing a dagger before him, the handle toward his hand. Suppose we add to this an initial characterisation of illusion as cases in which an empirical object is experienced as possessing empirical properties it does not as a matter of fact possess. A canonical example of illusion is seeing a straight stick half submerged in water and its looking bent.⁶²

Then in light of my account of the mechanisms of conceptual synthesis, it would seem natural to try to build into Kant's theory of experience a principled distinction between hallucination and illusion in the following way.

In hallucination, misrepresentation occurs already at the level of schematic categorisation. For in such cases there is not here and now a spatiotemporally extended and located, sensible property possessing, fully causally functioning particular. In illusion, on the other hand, there is such a thing here and now, and thus the schematised categories, bare as they are, are entirely appropriate. Unlike hallucination, so the proposal goes, in illusion there is in the subject's perceptual presence something that instantiates the concept of an empirical object *in general*. Illusion rather goes awry at the level of empirical determination.

Consider some of Kant's own examples of non-veridical experience in the *Anthropology*:

the human being often mistakes what is subjective in his way of representation for objective (the distant tower, on which he sees no corners, seems to be round; the sea, whose distant part strikes his eyes through higher light rays, seems to be higher than the shore (*altum mare*); the full moon, which he sees ascending near the horizon through a hazy air, seems to be further away, and also larger, than when it

⁶² Kant himself uses this term (the Germanic '*Schein*' and the Latinate '*Illusion*') much more broadly and in various more or less technical senses, often connected to transcendental idealism. See in particular how he distinguishes it from appearance (for example at B69-71) and its transcendental sense as that to which the dialectical inferences of pure reason can lead (A293/B349ff.). See, e.g., Grier (2001) for a study of illusion in this sense.

is high in the heavens, although he catches sight of it from the same visual angle).
(7:146)⁶³

Illusion, then, errs in its application of empirical concepts like roundness, highness, farness, and largeness.

First of all note that according to this proposal it is still not empirical determination *per se* that causes the error in illusion. When I experience a straight stick as bent, it is correct to apply the concept of an empirical object *that is a stick*. This empirical concept, like the pure concept of an empirical object in general, remains generic enough to be instantiated by the object instigating the illusory experience. What it is not correct to apply is the still more specific concept of an empirical object that is a *straight* stick.

And note also that the proposal is *not* to mark the distinction between hallucination and illusion as that between 'there exists an *x*' and 'there exists an *x* such that *x* is F' respectively. For all this dictates, 'F' could be a schematised-categorial predicate like 'causally functioning' or 'sensible property possessing' rather than an empirical one like 'round' or 'high' or 'far' or 'large'. Even prior to its empirical determination, the pure concept of an empirical object in general is descriptively predicative. This is just a defining feature of concepts *per se* (see **2.1.4.1**). If anything plays an analogous role to that of the variable here, it is the empirical object itself, the appearance as 'the undetermined object of an empirical intuition' (A20/B34).

Sticking with the simple formulation in terms of error at the level of schematic categorisation and error at the level of empirical determination, then, on the face of it this proposal might look quite plausible.

⁶³ A little earlier (*Anthr* (7:137)), Kant gives other examples of illusions, which include the observation that 'white stockings present fuller calves than do black ones'! Cf. A295-7/B351-4.

But so far we have only considered one canonical case of hallucination and one canonical case of illusion. Let us look at some more complicated cases of non-veridical objective perception.

To begin with, take cases of radical misconceptualisation. One might worry that the current proposal would incorrectly classify such cases. If a subject is looking at a chair but seeing an elephant, intuitively it would be correct to say that she is hallucinating. This kind of case seems radically different from that in which someone sees a straight stick as bent due to differences in the refractive indexes of water and air, or indeed to a case in which someone sees a white chair as red due to nonstandard light conditions. But the schematised categories might appear to remain applicable. Should it then be classified as mere illusion on the current proposal? This does not seem correct.

Or take cases of what we might call coincident hallucination. Suppose that what I hallucinate just so happens to coincide with the actual state of my environment, that the data my reproductive imagination surreptitiously provides just so happens to be exactly the same as the data my outer sense would have provided had sensibility been functioning normally. Something has clearly gone wrong, and my experience will likely not be a suitable basis for knowledge, but concepts are instantiated and propositional contents come out true.

These problems are not insurmountable. The current proposal can assimilate them if we take into account what we saw in **2.1.5** about how empirical determination is partially determined by the particular contingent details of the informational content of the sensible manifold. In the kinds of cases just proffered, this bottom-up constraint on empirical determination is clearly missing, and this indicates that there has indeed been some mental malfunction, that there has been a break in the mechanistic chain that leads to inner sense

providing its data to the understanding. So the thought is that a good explanation of such cases would require positing the surreptitious working of the reproductive imagination in order to account for the way in which empirical determination is constrained by the sensible manifold. For the fact that there is a chair present (in the first case) and the facts about the actual state of my environment (in the second case) are all explanatorily irrelevant to what the experiences are as of, to their propositional contents.

In this way, then, it might be open to the current proposal to argue that both of the above cases count, correctly, as hallucination. For the schematised categories in fact do *not* remain applicable in a suitable sense – they have not been mobilised in the synthesis of a sensible manifold caused by any empirical object that is perceptually present. When it comes to experience, the applicability of concepts does not consist solely in their application producing a state with a true propositional content. Rather the applicability of concepts when it comes to experience consists in them processing a sensible manifold that was caused by an empirical object that instantiates them.

This sounds alright as far as it goes. But consider what is really doing all the work here. What is at core distinguishing hallucination is no longer whether or not the schematised categories are being appropriately applied, but rather whether or not mental malfunction in the guise of the surreptitious procedure of the reproductive imagination must be posited in a satisfactory explanation of the experience in question.

In both hallucination and illusion it is ultimately the natural realm that determines whether or not error has occurred – the question of whether or not our experience is non-veridical ultimately depends on how the world is. But in hallucination, and crucially *only* in hallucination, there is a cause that we can locate more specifically in sensibility. For in hallucination, sensibility is not functioning normally in the sense that outer sense is not

activated – there is no occurrent and relevantly hooked-up act of outer sensing – and precisely *this* is the reason misrepresentation occurs. In illusion, on the other hand, sensibility is functioning as usual and we are sensing in exactly the same way as we do when we veridically experience. Thus illusion does not occur because of a malfunction in the cognitive system itself but rather because of various general features of nature – such as the fact that air and water have different refractive indexes – in conjunction with various quite general features of the constitution of our sense organs. Unlike Macbeth with his heat-oppressed brain seeing a dagger, there is nothing whatsoever *wrong* with the subject who sees a stick looking bent when half submerged in water. Quite the contrary – the stick ought to *look* bent.

Marking the distinction between hallucination and illusion as that between error at the level of schematic categorisation and error at the level of empirical determination either predicts false classifications for certain cases or, at best, is dependent on an explanation in terms of whether or not the reproductive imagination or outer sense is the proximal originator of the sensible manifold that is to be conceptually synthesised.

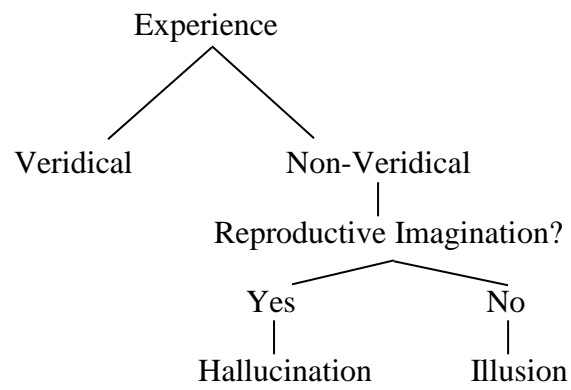
In fact things are even worse than this for the current proposal.

Consider a further variation of the theme of non-veridical experience. Suppose that I am seeing a twinkling in the night sky and thus undergoing an experience as of a distant star. In fact, the star no longer exists at the time of my experience, although the energy it emitted millennia ago, back when it existed, is only now reaching my eye. The problem is that distinguishing hallucination and illusion in terms of whether or not error occurs at the categorial level or at the level of empirical determination suggests that we should classify this case as an hallucination, for the object I am experiencing is no longer there and so even the concept of an empirical object in general does not apply. But intuitively this

seems wrong. To my mind, such cases should be qualified as illusions. Sometimes, even without the reproductive imagination, it can seem as if there is an empirical object in my perceptual presence when there is not, when all that is here and now are the causal effects of an empirical object that no longer exists. As with the case of sticks looking bent, nothing has gone wrong in the subject in such cases – the misrepresentation is simply due to the fact that energy dispersal takes time. In this case, then, the problem is not that we are in danger of misclassifying hallucination as illusion, rather that we are misclassifying illusion as hallucination. And thus our previous solution of appealing to the surreptitious procedure of the reproductive imagination is not available – no such surreptitious procedure is taking place, and yet still the schematised categories are not correctly applied.

Note that this is not just a problem with distinguishing between hallucination and illusion by appealing to the distinction between schematic categorisation and empirical determination. If this case is indeed better classified as illusion than as hallucination, then our original characterisation of illusion was flawed. Illusions are not always cases in which an empirical object is experienced as possessing empirical properties it does not as a matter of fact possess.

Instead, then, Kant's theory of experience ought to distinguish hallucination from illusion in terms of whether or not the experience in question is non-veridical because of surreptitious activity on behalf of the reproductive imagination in presenting a sensible manifold to the understanding without that manifold being the result of an occurrent act of outer sensing. Like so:



Conclusion

I have argued that, for Kant, our everyday, visual perceptual experience as of empirical objects consists of mental state representations that, at least in part, display a conceptual structure. A representation displays a conceptual structure if and only if it has propositional, or judgemental, content. This kind of content is essentially rational in the sense that it is of a form that enables it to serve a constitutive role in rational inferences, or chains of reasoning – propositional contents can serve as premises and conclusions in arguments. What inferences qualify as rational is to be understood broadly, to include not only deductive inferences, but also other kinds of inference, such as inductive and abductive inferences – any form of argument in which we would be happy to say that the premises in some suitable sense make the conclusion appropriate or permitted.

I have explored two consequences of this view of experience as they play out in Kant's theory.

First, our experience as of empirical objects can *rationally* ground our beliefs about empirical objects. For our beliefs about empirical objects are mental states that display a conceptual structure. And insofar as this is also true of experience, experience and belief are exactly the same kinds of thing – mental states with propositional content. In this way, to form a belief on the basis of an experience is precisely analogous as regards reasonableness to drawing a conclusion from a premise.

Does this mean that experiencing an object is just one way of thinking about it, and thus that there is nothing special about experience, that it does not anchor us to the world in any unique way? Yes and no. For Kant, there is indeed a sense in which experiencing an object is structurally akin to thinking about an object, but on his theory, it does not follow from this that there is nothing special about experience. For Kant, experience is uniquely, phenomenologically immediate, and it anchors us to the world in a unique way. This is for two reasons.

First, because of the way it comes about. Experience, according to Kant, is the product of the co-operation of sensibility and the understanding. Sensibility is our passive receptive faculty. It is divided into three sub-faculties: outer sense, inner sense, and the reproductive imagination that stands between outer and inner sense. Outer sense is the collection of our bodily sensory capacities. Empirical objects causally impinge on our sense organs, resulting in bodily state sensations that representation objects in a non-cognitional way by naturally encoding (both qualitative and quantitative) information about them. For a state to naturally encode information about an empirical object is for it to have properties that regularly correspond to the properties of the object about which it encodes information (and any resemblance between these two sets of properties is strictly incidental to this relation).

Information gathered in this way is then mechanistically ordered by the reproductive imagination (which, we will see below, also plays a more pernicious role), before being processed through inner sense and presented to the understanding for decoding. To be processed through inner sense essentially just means to be converted from bodily state sensation into mental state sensation. This processing, like that of the reproductive imagination before it, is entirely passive in the sense that it is mechanistic and thus does not instigate a fundamental structural change. The mental state sensations that form the

output of sensibility, like the bodily state sensations that form its input, represent empirical objects only in the non-cognitive sense that they naturally encode information about empirical objects simply by having their properties – they stand *in* for their objects as cognitive proxies.

It is the decoding activity that the understanding performs on the information it receives from sensibility in this way that gives the output of this activity – experience – its conceptual structure. Decoding essentially involves an understanding of sensations that they indicate that the world is a certain way. And crucially, although exactly what they are to be understood as indicating is not entirely determined by sensations, it is partially so determined. And since sensations are themselves in turn determined by the world – they are mere causal effects – it follows by the transitivity of the determination relation that just how experience turns out to be conceptually structured is partially determined by the world. What exactly the propositional content of experience is depends in part on information that has been gathered through acts of sensing. This is the first way in which experience anchors us to the world, according to Kant.

The second way in which experience anchors us to the world on Kant's theory is by being that from which we can learn empirical concepts. Here we come to the reason I have said that the mental state representations that comprise experience display a conceptual structure *at least in part*.

For Kant, all experience whatsoever involves an a priori stage of conceptual synthesis which is governed by the schematized categories and which endows experience with a basic core of propositional content something to the effect that there is here and now an empirical object in general. This synthesis is what endows experience with its fundamental objectivity; it is what orientates experience out beyond the subject to meet a world.

Moreover, all such experience also involves an empirical stage of conceptual synthesis at which that basic core of propositional content is descriptively specified in various ways according to the particular conceptual abilities of the relevant subject and the perceived sensible properties of the relevant object.

However, according to Kant, any full characterisation of this the conceptual structure of experience might not amount to a full characterisation of what about the world is being conveyed to the subject undergoing such a state. The mental state representations that comprise experience need not be *fully* conceptually structured. In this case, the phenomenal character of experience would outstrip its propositional content. This happens when the subject undergoing the experience does not have conceptual resources adequate to a full understanding of what her sensations mean – the information encoded therein is not fully decoded in the process that produces experience. But on Kant's theory of experience, this information still contributes to the phenomenal character of experience and is thereby still conveyed to the subject in a suitable sense.

By contributing to the phenomenal character of experience, sensed information that remains encoded after conceptual synthesis is conveyed to the subject in such a way that the subject is able to register and respond to the features of her experience that are grounded on it. And on this basis she is in turn able to discriminate and even re-identify empirical objects according to properties the concepts of which she does not possess. For such abilities remain by and large natural abilities. In this way, we learn our concepts of these properties from experience, specifically through a process of comparison, reflection, and abstraction. And it is only once such a process has been carried out that these properties will subsequently be experienced as the properties they are, and thereby the objects possessive of them experienced as possessive of them.

Kant's theory of experience brings it into the logical space of reasons. But it also has the resources to explain how its role in that space is fundamental relative to the other conceptually structured mental state representations that are its co-inhabitants. For it operates in that space in a peculiarly phenomenological way, providing us with a unique anchor to the world.

Experience provides a unique and by no means insignificant anchor, which we might call very *semantically* secure. But we cannot necessarily call its mode of anchorage very *epistemically* secure. This brings me to the second consequence of Kant's view of experience that I have explored in this thesis.

For Kant, I have argued, hallucinating and undergoing illusions are kinds of experience. Hallucination is particularly important and this is the case I have focused on here. On Kant's account of the mechanisms of perceptual experience, the reproductive imagination functions in hallucination in an additional, and altogether more surreptitious guise to the one we saw above. Still operating between outer sense and inner sense, instead of merely pre-intellectually arranging information it is currently receiving from outer sense, it regurgitates information that was received at some previous time, which information is then presented to the understanding through the normal channels. What we have found in Kant's theory of experience are the resources to explain several key features of hallucination, including its potential for introspective indiscriminability and its potential for being as of empirical objects we have never sensed (while remaining merely reproductive). And apart from this general explanatory grain, what Kant's explanations of these phenomena have in common is that they all have hallucinatory experience coming out as fundamentally the same kind of thing as veridical experience.

Like veridical experience, hallucination (and illusion) are mental state representations that, at least in part, display conceptual structure. The key difference is just that, unlike veridical experience, the propositional contents of hallucination (and illusion) are false – they *misrepresent* the world. But the falseness of premises does not affect the validity of arguments. Non-veridical experience takes place in the logical space of reasons just as well as veridical experience does. More than this, however, my claim has been that, for Kant, the possibility of our experientially misrepresenting the world is a basic feature of the way in which the finite human mind is situated in a world that is not of its making. It is not an idle nuisance, to be side-lined or even ignored. It is part of what it is to be human and as such, it fundamentally informs how we are to understand ourselves.

In this thesis I have explored Kant's theory of experience, and I have done so almost exclusively from the point of view of his empirical realism. It remains to explore what implications my account might have for how we are to understand transcendental idealism, as well as Kant's arguments regarding causality and substance, his refutations of empirical idealism, and even his views on rationalist metaphysics. That is, it remains to explore how what I have said might impact our understanding of how Kant actually proceeds in the *Critique*. For now, I can at least proffer an answer to Lewis White Beck's famous question. Did the sage of Königsberg have no dreams? He did.

Citations Index

Critique (A/B)

A7/B11.....	132
A15-6/B29-30	26
A19/B33.....	25, 26, 36, 52, 75
A19/B34.....	15
A19-20/B33-4	46
A19-22/B33-6	177
A20/B34.....	37, 187
A22/B37.....	42
A28/B44.....	1
A33-4/B49-50	46
A34/B50.....	13, 45
A35/B52.....	1, 58
A42/B60.....	35
A45-6/B62-3	1
A50/B74.....	13, 35, 55, 154
A50-1/B74-5	26, 52
A51/B75.....	42, 110
A58/B83.....	6
A59/B84.....	6
A68/B93.....	25, 26, 118, 144, 154
A68-9/B93-4	118
A70/B95.....	121
A70-6/B95-101	133
A71/B96.....	135
A72/B97.....	135
A73/B98.....	140
A73/B98-99	140
A74/B99-100	100, 136
A76/B101.....	139
A80/B106.....	98
A84/B116.....	103
A84-95/B116-129	97
A85/B117.....	156
A86/B118.....	35
A89-90/B122-3	26
A89-91/B122-3	27
A93/B125-6	98
A93/B126.....	26, 99
A132/B172.....	130
A137/B176.....	180
A143/B182	37
A146/B185	31
A156/B195	80
A161-6/B200-7.....	62
A165-76/B207-18.....	63
A167/B208-9.....	35
A167/B209	57, 59, 60
A168/B209	37
A169/B211	78
A170/B211-12.....	37
A183/B227	1
A197/B242	13, 181
A213/B260	40
A219/B266	100
A220-35/B267-B287	100
A225/B272	31, 77
A226/B273	40
A226/B274	10, 53
A229-30/B282	31
A230/B282	31
A232/B284	31
A258/B314	55
A260-8/B316-24.....	161
A267/B323	35
A277/B333	35
A293/B349	185
A293/B350	50
A293-8/B349-54.....	1
A294/B350	51, 70
A295/B352	70
A295-7/B351-4.....	186
A297/B354-5	122
A320/B376	78, 84
A320/B376-7	17, 24
A320/B377	6, 25, 153
A537/B565	42
A571-3/B599-601.....	105
A581/B609	37
A709/B737	6
A723/B751	37
A770-1/B798-9.....	67
A778-8/B806-7.....	44
A820/B848-A831/B859	121
A820-31/B848-59.....	136

Critique (A)

Axvi-xvii	97
Axvii-xviii	91
A28	40
A97	55
A98-114.....	91
A98-9.....	45
A99	42, 91
A101.....	42
A103-10.....	81
A104	42, 81
A106	130
A108.....	13, 14
A110	31
A112.....	5, 80
A114.....	92, 93
A116.....	104
A121.....	80
A122.....	93
A125.....	98, 101
A126.....	130, 154
A128.....	98
A166.....	37
A250.....	42
A341-405.....	44
A367-80.....	1
A371-2.....	42
A375.....	1, 58

Critique (B)

Bxxvi	17, 129
Bxxxix-xli.....	1
Bxli.....	26, 31, 65
B1.....	9, 11, 15, 35, 37
B2-3	100
B19-24.....	97
B44	40, 78
B67	45, 167
B67-8.....	45
B69	1

B69-71	1, 185
B72.....	54, 173
B110-13	100
B128.....	99
B129.....	26
B131-40	81
B132.....	27, 104
B132-5	26
B137.....	98
B137-8	26
B140-1	136
B142.....	129
B143.....	26
B145.....	27
B146.....	17, 26, 44
B147.....	6
B149.....	54
B151.....	26, 65, 92
B152.....	93
B153.....	51
B153-6	45
B158.....	99
B159.....	99
B161.....	98
B164.....	104
B164-5	99
B165.....	26
B165-6	6
B207.....	37, 77
B218.....	6
B234.....	6
B274-9	1, 44
B275.....	81
B277.....	6
B278.....	180
B278-9	68
B307.....	54
B399-432	44
Living Forces	
1:1-181	48
False Subtlety	
2:59.....	160
2:59-60	160
Dreams	
2:342-7	67
2:344-5	13
2:344-6	vii
2:345	13
2:363	25
2:366	25
2:368	10
Inaugral Dissertaion	
2:393	37
2:396	51
2:397	54
2:402	25
2:405	25
Prologomena	
4:266	132
4:269	132
4:272	132
4:281-2.....	172
4:289	1
4:290	37, 70, 171
4:290-1.....	1, 51
4:292	31
4:292-4.....	1
4:294	132
4:302	6
4:309	57, 59, 61
4:320	31
4:374	2
4:374-5.....	1
4:375	1
Metaphysical Foundations	
4:472	6
Critique of Judgement	
5:158	51
5:189	15
5:205-6.....	15
5:292	51
5:401	174
5:401-6.....	54
Religion	
6:26.....	151
Anthropology	
7:127	80
7:128	6
7:133	150
7:137	186
7:140	51
7:141	6, 127
7:142	71
7:144	6, 39, 51, 80, 130
7:146	51, 186
7:149-50.....	122
7:153 .. 15, 41, 65, 78, 84, 171	
7:153-60.....	41
7:153-61.....	13
7:156	95
7:156-7	80
7:161	71
7:165-6	40, 53
7:167	66, 171
7:167-8.....	67
7:169	69, 171
7:177	92
7:182-5	66
7:197	130
7:199	130
7:214	80, 95
Orientation	
8:133-146.....	44
Jäsche	
9:33	110, 118
9:36	35, 55
9:50-1	6
9:53	51
9:54	6, 51, 70
9:65-75	121, 136
9:91	17, 25, 153, 158
9:92	180
9:94-5	107, 156
9:95	145
9:95-8	145
9:101	118
9:105	135, 138
9:107	138
9:109	121, 136
9:142	132
Correspondence	
10:125	39
10:130	54
Reflexionen	
15:268	35, 51
16:145	51
16:77	13

17:366.....	78	22:405.....	45	24:806.....	25, 35
17:466.....	51	22:408.....	54	24:824.....	35
17:496.....	13	22:434.....	41	24:825.....	51, 70
18:309.....	67	22:450.....	45	24:833.....	51
18:386.....	83	22:457.....	31, 80	24:84-7.....	51
18:618-19.....	65	22:460.....	54	24:856.....	51
18:619.....	67	22:463-5.....	45	24:86.....	51
First Introduction					
20:203.....	6	22:478-9.....	45	24:904.....	67, 110
20:211-13.....	161	22:502.....	45	24:904-5.....	156
20:220.....	156	22:508.....	45	24:905.....	25, 110
Progress					
20:268-9.....	1	22:548.....	41	24:909.....	110, 157
Opus Postumum					
21:186.....	41	22:550.....	31	24:910-12.....	145
21:583.....	40	22:551.....	40	Metaphysics Lectures	
21:601.....	54	22:552.....	31, 54	28:224-5.....	43
21:79.....	41	22:611.....	31	28:230.....	66
21:85.....	31	22:78.....	45	28:231.....	43
22:300.....	45	22:85.....	45	28:449.....	65
22:320.....	1	Logic Lectures			
22:320-1.....	45	24:236.....	35, 119, 127	28:585.....	43, 65
22:325.....	45	24:258-60.....	145	28:672.....	65
22:33.....	45	24:565.....	80	28:673.....	43
22:353.....	31	24:701.....	65	28:738.....	43
22:358.....	45	24:702.....	118, 126	29:759.....	51
22:37.....	45	24:705.....	65	29:881.....	65
22:376.....	45	24:706.....	51	29:882.....	43
22:377.....	54	24:720.....	51, 70	29:883.....	40, 53
		24:753.....	65		
		24:753-4.....	156		
		24:754-6.....	145		
		24:805.....	80		

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