

Pleasure, suffering and the experience of value

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Abstract:

This dissertation explores a number of interrelated metaphysical and epistemological issues regarding pleasure, suffering and their apparent value and disvalue, thematically tied together by the broad idea that pleasant and unpleasant experiences are, respectively, experienced as good and bad.

More specifically, I try, firstly, to advance the debate regarding the nature of pleasure by arguing for what I shall call the “Self-Experiential View” – the view that pleasant experiences are pleasant in virtue of being experienced as good. Secondly, I assess the merits of the “Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis” – the natural conjecture, expressed by a number of authors, that our especially intimate experiential relationship (“acquaintance”) with the evaluative features of our hedonic experiences grounds a particularly robust kind of epistemic status enjoyed by our hedonic-evaluative beliefs, which makes them less vulnerable to sceptical doubt.

In chapter 1, I lay some groundwork for the ensuing discussion, by introducing a number of background claims which help to motivate these two theses. Moreover, I isolate two specific important ways of unpacking the Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis and clarify some central concepts which feature prominently in the subsequent chapters.

In chapter 2, I defend the “Self-Experiential View.” I proceed by addressing a number of objections which have been levelled against the view in the literature, and locate it in relation to the views which currently dominate the debate regarding the nature of pleasure.

In chapter 3, I assess and ultimately reject the first important version of the Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis singled out in chapter 1, the “Naïve Realist Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis,” which states that Naïve Realist acquaintance with pleasure’s evaluative nature grounds a distinctive, especially robust kind of epistemic status enjoyed by our hedonic-evaluative beliefs.

In chapter 4, I assess the “Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis”, the attempt to vindicate the Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis by extending an acquaintance account of phenomenal introspective justification to the hedonic-evaluative case. By carefully unpacking a range of different candidate conceptions of introspective acquaintance, I home in on what I consider the most appealing acquaintance account of phenomenal introspection, and argue that it should not be extended to the hedonic-evaluative case, which means that this proposal also fails.

A brief concluding chapter summarises the key conclusions of the dissertation and highlights some questions raised in the course of my discussion which would seem to warrant further investigation.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

0. Introduction

This dissertation explores a number of interrelated metaphysical and epistemological issues regarding pleasure, suffering and their apparent value and disvalue. The common theme which ties together the different chapters of this thesis is the idea that pleasant and unpleasant experiences are, respectively, experienced as good and bad.

One area in which this idea could be expected to have interesting implications is the metaphysics of pleasure and suffering. In fact, I shall argue in chapter 2 that we can significantly advance the contemporary debate on this topic by properly appreciating the merits of

the Self-Experiential View: Experiences are pleasant or unpleasant in virtue of being experienced as good or bad.

A second area on which the idea that pleasant experiences are experienced as good promises to shed light is the field of evaluative epistemology. It is often asserted that the belief in pleasure's value and suffering's disvalue constitutes, or at least comes close to constituting, a sort of normative-epistemological bedrock – however plausible one may find it that various other commonly held positive evaluative beliefs could ultimately turn out to be mistaken, error theory about pleasure's value seems very difficult to entertain as a live theoretical possibility.¹ A natural thought here is that this is precisely because of the way in which a pleasant experience lays bare or presents its evident value to the experiencing subject.² As one might put it, on this suggestion, experiencing subjects enjoy an especially intimate experiential contact with the evaluative features of our hedonic experiences – the sort of relationship which in other philosophical contexts has gone

¹ This view is echoed e.g. by Lewis (1946, 433), Rachels (1986, 46), Goldstein (1989, 255), Kagan (1998, 29) and Huemer (2005, 250).

² In what follows, I'll often drop the explicit mention of suffering and its disvalue in characterising and discussing views about hedonic experience and its evaluative properties. Unless explicitly flagged, this will merely be for the sake of expository convenience.

under the label of “acquaintance” or “direct awareness” – and this is what makes the belief in their instantiation less vulnerable to sceptical doubt.

I shall gloss this proposal, the assessment of which will be the primary focus of chapters 3 and 4, as

the *Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis*: One’s belief in the value (disvalue) of one’s occurrent pleasant (unpleasant) experiences enjoys a distinctive, particularly robust kind of foundational epistemic support which obtains in virtue of an especially intimate experiential relationship – “acquaintance” – that holds between experiencing subjects and these evaluative features.

This basic idea strikes me as a very intuitive one. Yet whilst a number of authors have gestured at and endorsed theses in its vicinity,³ it appears that, to date, its plausibility has not yet been investigated with sufficient rigour. The second aim of my dissertation will therefore be to remedy this by offering a thorough assessment of this thesis. Although I shall ultimately express pessimism about its prospects, I hope to thereby contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the epistemology of pleasure’s value.

The remainder of this introductory chapter will be structured as follows. In sections 1-4, I lay some of the groundwork for the subsequent discussion. More specifically, in section 1, I defend the idea that when we experience hedonic experiences as good or bad in the way we typically do, this evaluative awareness is not merely of a mundane doxastic kind,

³ To name some examples: Epicurus asserted that that mere attention to one’s pleasures and pains suffices to justify the belief in the desirability of pleasure and undesirability of pain, since a sort of direct perceptual warrant for these beliefs makes supporting arguments superfluous (Cicero 2001, 1.30). C.I. Lewis (1946, bk. 3) believed that hedonic experience involved the “presentation” of value-qualities of one’s experiences and the “direct apprehension” of these value-qualities which, “like seen redness or felt hardness”, are “immediately found or findable and unmistakable when disclosed”. In a similar vein, Goldstein (1989) endorses the view that the conviction that pain is intrinsically bad is “well-founded”, on the grounds that “direct acquaintance with the sensation grounds and confirms this evaluation.” Mendola (1990) argues that pleasure consists in the experience of value, which is a matter of this value being “given” to its experiencing subject. Sprigge (2000) asserts that pleasant experiences “present themselves as good.” More recently, Lazari-Radek and Singer (2014, 267-8) have endorsed Lerner’s (ms) and Sinhababu’s (ms) suggestions that etiological debunking arguments lack force in the context of our hedonic-evaluative beliefs, since these beliefs result from episodes of “direct acquaintance.”

but rather nonconceptual in nature. In section 2, I discuss one salient reason for thinking that experiential contact with evaluative properties may play a distinctive role in the justification of hedonic-evaluative belief which it does not play in the case of most other positive evaluative beliefs. In section 3, I distinguish two salient ways of starting to unpack the notion of “acquaintance” invoked in my earlier gloss of the Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance and isolate two corresponding versions of the thesis for further investigation. In section 4, I clarify the specific conception of value which will feature in my subsequent discussion. Finally, in section 5, I offer a brief synopsis of the subsequent chapters of this dissertation.

1. The case for nonconceptual awareness of pleasure’s value

The thought that an intensely pleasant experience will typically be experienced as good, in the sense of striking its subject as valuable, and can hence be said to involve the awareness of this apparent evaluative feature seems like a truism. There are, however, different candidate conceptions of the nature of this kind of awareness, and as I shall shortly explain, the choice between these impacts the prospects of both the Self-Experiential View and the Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis.

On one kind of view, the kind of awareness which typically accompanies pleasure – let’s call this our “hedonic-evaluative awareness” – is, in a very broad sense, doxastic; it consists in something like a belief or judgement that one’s experience is good, an inclination or disposition to form such a belief or judgement, the acquisition of such a doxastic attitude, or an “intellectual seeming” (the sort of *sui generis* propositional attitude to which proponents of phenomenal conservatism like Huemer (2005) appeal) with the same content.

Arguably, if our hedonic-evaluative awareness were of a merely doxastic (or quasi-doxastic) nature, then this would have a negative impact on the prospects for finding a compelling version of both the Self-Experiential View and the Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis.

In the first case, if the claim that pleasantness is a matter of being experienced as good would have to be cashed out in such broadly doxastic terms – i.e. as the claim that the pleasantness of an experience is a matter of being the object of such a belief-like attitude – the resulting version of the Self-Experiential View would seem rather unattractive; whilst pleasure may often prompt corresponding evaluative doxastic states, this link would seem to be a contingent and defeasible one.⁴

Similarly, in the second case, if our experiential contact with pleasure's value were merely a matter of exhibiting a corresponding evaluative belief or belief-like state, then one could argue that it becomes harder to explain in what sense it differs from the sort of contact we could be claimed to have with other evaluative properties. Perhaps one could still try to vindicate a version of the Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis by pointing to distinctive features of our hedonic-evaluative beliefs – such proposals will be assessed in quite some detail in chapter 4 – but at the very least, having to concede that our hedonic-evaluative awareness is broadly doxastic in nature would constrain one's options here.

Since the issue is therefore pertinent to our current purposes, I shall briefly outline some reasons for thinking that our hedonic-evaluative awareness is not merely broadly doxastic but rather nonconceptual in nature.

Firstly, a purely doxastic conception of our hedonic-evaluative awareness seems to over-intellectualise our experience of the apparent evaluative features of our pleasures. After all, it seems plausible that when unsophisticated subjects (animals, infants) or sophisticated subjects who for other reasons lack evaluative concepts experience pleasure, their experiences will, in one important respect, still strike them as good in more or less the way in which they strike us as good, even though their conceptual limitations prevent them from forming the relevant sort of doxastic or quasi-doxastic attitude. This

⁴ In section 1.2.1 of chapter 2, we shall encounter a number of considerations which help to reinforce this contention.

suggests that our awareness of pleasure's value is plausibly of a nonconceptual, and, *a fortiori*, of a non-doxastic sort.

Secondly, there is plausibility to the claim that we can conceive of someone who, in the process of becoming a staunch error theorist about value, loses any inclination to believe in the instantiation of value, and yet experiences his pleasures as valuable in just the way in which he experienced them prior to changing his metaethical outlook. Again, this counts against some versions of the doxastic picture. Admittedly, this objection may fail to eliminate the possibility that the nature of this hypothetical error theorist's experience can be accounted for by the presence of an "intellectual seeming", where an intellectual seeming is a type of propositional attitude which is altogether distinct from belief. However, if one is antecedently sceptical of the existence of this type of attitude,⁵ one can discern here the basis for a second line of argument against the broadly doxastic conception of our hedonic-evaluative awareness quite generally.⁶

Thirdly, I think there is at least some intuitive force to the thought that hedonic experience can ground one's possession of evaluative concepts. If someone claimed to be unable to grasp evaluative concepts, a fairly natural response would be to suggest to him to induce in himself an intensely pleasant or unpleasant experience, and to attend to the distinctive apparent features of his experience. Again, this observation would suggest that hedonic experience typically involves a kind of awareness which is distinct from (and perhaps more primitive than) belief, although I'm happy to admit that the underlying intuition here may admittedly be somewhat less decisive.⁷

⁵ Cf. e.g. Sosa (1998), Williamson (2007) and Rogers & Matheson (2011) for the articulation of this sentiment.

⁶ The first two of these objections mirror some of the most familiar objections to Armstrong's (1968) and Pitcher's (1971) belief theories of sensory perception.

⁷ To note another parallel with the literature on perception, Pautz (2013, 107) argues against Fish's view that perceptual hallucinations lack phenomenology and merely consist in the acquisition of certain beliefs along similar lines.

Fourthly, one could argue on phenomenological grounds that in hedonic experience, evaluative properties seem to be – to borrow a common phrase from the literature on perception – “present to the mind” in a way which cannot be accounted for merely by appeal to a corresponding evaluative belief; they are experienced as in some sense “there” or “given” in a way in which it wouldn’t be experienced if all that were present were a corresponding evaluative belief.

Taken together, I think these considerations provide good reason to believe that hedonic experience often involves a kind of nonconceptual awareness of evaluative properties. Whilst this conclusion obviously falls short of establishing either the Self-Experiential View or the Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis, this intermediate conclusion will clearly be relevant to their assessment.

2. Experiential contact with value and epistemic justification

As the reader will recall, the basic idea behind the Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis is the thought that subjects stand in an especially intimate experiential relationship to the evaluative properties of their hedonic experiences, and that this accounts for the distinctive epistemic status of our hedonic-evaluative beliefs. In this section, I will briefly consider one salient reason for thinking that experiential contact with instances of value indeed plays a role in the justification of hedonic-evaluative beliefs which, at least on the face of it, it doesn’t seem to play in the case of other positive evaluative beliefs, even if we go entirely with the appearances and bracket more general and fundamental doubts about whether the other kinds of positive evaluative beliefs are justified at all. This will also allow us to introduce an important opposing perspective on the justification of hedonic-evaluative belief.

A simple thought experiment will help in bringing out the consideration I have in mind. Consider the epistemic situation of someone who has never herself experienced pleasure or suffering, but who is extremely well informed about the physical basis of hedonic experience, otherwise enjoys a phenomenology which is just as rich as ours, and possesses

excellent reasoning capacities.⁸ Reflecting on this kind of scenario, it is natural to think that as far as the subject's hedonic-evaluative beliefs are concerned, her situation is at the very least radically impoverished when compared to normal subjects like us.

The hypothesis on which experiential contact with evaluative properties plays a fundamental role in justifying our hedonic-evaluative beliefs would seem to make sense of this: On this sort of view, one thing which the experientially impoverished subject lacks is access to the relevant kind of intimate experiential contact with instances of value exhibited by hedonic experiences. In contrast, in normal subjects, this experiential contact helps to justify at least the belief that their occurrent hedonic experiences instantiate the relevant value-properties. Presumably, this sort of situation-specific discovery could then also be claimed to furthermore open up routes for also obtaining justification – although plausibly of a less conclusive nature – for more general claims about the link between value and hedonic experience. For example, it could ground or enhance the subject's justification for more general links between pleasure and value via considerations of simplicity and symmetry, perhaps coupled with Moore-style conceptual truths about the supervenience of intrinsic evaluative properties on non-evaluative properties.⁹

Now contrast this with the case of other positive evaluative beliefs. For instance, consider the case of someone's belief in, say, the value of achievement. Whilst experience may still intuitively play an important epistemic role in its justification – for example due to a link between phenomenology and reasoning, or phenomenology and intuition – it doesn't, on the face of it, appear to be of any particular importance that the relevant subject is ever

⁸ This type of case is discussed by Kahane (2010).

⁹ This way of looking at the way in which experiential contact with hedonic-evaluative properties grounds our justification of the corresponding beliefs may at least in part address Kahane's (2014, fn. 35) objection to the view that we have "direct introspective access" to "pain's badness." Kahane's objection, which he formulates when cursorily considering this proposal in the context of responding to Lazari-Radek and Singer (2012), turns on the observation that "on an objectivist conception of practical reason defended by Lazari-Radek and Singer ... pain's badness is presumably an *a priori*, necessary (even non-natural) truth. It is rather obscure, at best, how we could know such truths by introspection."

The most straightforward response here is that on the most plausible version of the view under consideration, "direct introspection" first and foremost establishes claims about experience-tokens, and the corresponding general, *a priori*, necessary truth linking types of experiences and their evaluative properties rest at least in part on broadly abductive reasoning.

in experiential contact with actual instances of achievement and their evaluative properties.

After all, it would appear that (assuming that there really is justification present in these cases) the core justification for most people's belief in the value of achievement is primarily supported by reasoning about abstract principles, or reflection on specific hypothetical cases. In support of this claim, note that entertaining Cartesian doubt about the external world (and hence about the presence of instances of achievement) wouldn't seem to call into doubt the core justificatory basis for one's beliefs about the evaluative significance of achievement conditional on its instantiation (cf. Chalmers 2012, 266; Fine 2005, 255).¹⁰ For if the justification of people's beliefs about the value of achievement were instead based on their experiential contact with actual concrete instances of achievement and their evaluative properties, then their entertainment of sceptical doubt presumably should have the potential to undermine it.

Of course, some might be willing to deny the appearances and hold on to the view that experiential contact with actual instances of achievement and their evaluative features does in fact play an important role in the justification of the relevant evaluative beliefs. My point is merely that in the case of hedonic experience, an analogous view wouldn't come with a similarly revisionary feel to it. In that respect, it enjoys greater initial appeal.

It must be conceded, however, that the idea of an experiential contact between the subject and her experience's evaluative features is not the only way to account for this observation regarding the apparent workings of the justification of hedonic-evaluative belief. In particular, some might alternatively want to hold that without first-person experience of pleasure and suffering, it is first and foremost the grasp of their intrinsic

¹⁰ We might want to qualify this claim somewhat to make an exception for one's justification derived through moral testimony, which arguably would be undermined by the suspension of judgement about whether one is in a radical sceptical scenario with respect to the external world. This still leaves an asymmetry with respect to the respective non-derivative justificatory bases of people's beliefs about the value of achievement and the value of pleasure.

phenomenal nature which is bound to remain impoverished, and that the more complete grasp enabled by experience of pleasure is required to enable the appreciation of some of the *a priori* ties it bears with other properties.¹¹ This would similarly explain why the imagined subject's epistemic predicament vis-à-vis claims about pleasure's value is inferior to ours, but it would do so without an appeal to a fundamental justificatory role played by our experiential contact with the evaluative features exhibited by instances of pleasure. As one might put it, on this proposal, it is primarily the lack of acquaintance with hedonic value's supervenience base – pleasantness – rather than acquaintance with pleasure's value itself which prevents her from attaining the same kind of justification for her hedonic-evaluative beliefs.

This alternative proposal would of course still leave it open to one to maintain that there is a difference in degree in the justification of our hedonic-evaluative beliefs as compared to that of other positive evaluative beliefs; for instance, it leaves open the possibility that the *a priori* link between pleasure and its value is easier to appreciate than other *a priori* connections between natural and evaluative properties. However, it would make it harder to identify a difference in kind between the justification of our hedonic-evaluative beliefs and that of other positive evaluative beliefs (say, in the value of achievement) – unless, of course, one is willing to beg the question regarding the truth of these other beliefs, and presuppose that pleasantness is the only natural property with an *a priori* connection to goodness (which would evidently see us thrown back into the far more mundane entrenched first-order dialectic in value theory). At any rate, on the resulting view – on which acquaintance with pleasure merely enables the proper grasp of its non-evaluative nature, and pleasantness is distinctive in being the only property linked *a priori* to value – the relevant evaluative-epistemological distinctiveness in kind wouldn't be essentially owed to our distinctive experiential contact with pleasure's evaluative properties, but rather to the distinctive *a priori* connections into which pleasure enters. This sort of view

¹¹ As a potential analogy, perhaps one needs to have experienced (phenomenal) orange before one is in a position to successfully engage in *a priori* reasoning about the relative similarity of, say, orange and red and orange and blue.

would therefore clearly fall short of vindicating the Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis.

Accordingly, it must be admitted that our initial consideration on the epistemic situation of a “hedonically innocent” subject does not help to eliminate all alternative proposals to the Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis. Nevertheless, our reflection on this case still succeeds in identifying an intuitive asymmetry between the hedonic-evaluative case and the case of other evaluative beliefs, albeit of a weaker kind than we might initially have hoped: Whereas a proposal on which experiential contact with evaluative features plays a central justificatory role seems to have little initial plausibility in other cases, parallel initial reflection on the hedonic-evaluative case at least leaves open the possibility that it could be correct.

3. Unpacking the notion of “acquaintance” with value

In order to evaluate the Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis, it would undoubtedly help to work towards the unpacking of the notion of an “especially intimate experiential contact” or “acquaintance” with evaluative properties which it invokes, and which it claims to play a role in the justification of hedonic-evaluative belief.¹²

As I in effect already suggested above, a natural starting-point is to consider the ways in which such a notion has featured in related philosophical debates. The two debates which are in this regard of particular relevance to our present purposes are the philosophy of perception and the philosophy of introspection.

In the philosophy of perception, so-called Naïve Realist have invoked the notion of “acquaintance” or “direct awareness” in order to give expression to their preferred conception of how veridical perceptual experience puts us in touch with external objects and their features. As I shall explain in greater detail in section 1 of chapter 3, I think

¹² Contemporary discussions of acquaintance and its epistemic significance have their origin in Russell’s (1910, 1912, 1914) account of our knowledge (“by acquaintance”) of sense-data.

there is in fact one salient way of interpreting the basic idea at which these theorists gesture, namely, roughly speaking, as the idea that when subjects genuinely perceive the world, their perceptual phenomenology is not just caused but is in fact constituted by features of the environment. “Perceptual acquaintance” is then simply the relation which enables this phenomenon.

A number of Naïve Realists have moreover argued that an appeal to the Naïve Realist constitution of perceptual phenomenology can do important work in blocking perceptual scepticism. The basic idea here is that if veridical perceptual phenomenology really is – as the Naïve Realist contends – not just caused by but actually constituted by features out there in the world, then the external world sceptic cannot legitimately assume that one’s perceptual experiences could have been just as they are even if one had been in a radical sceptical scenario in which one is profoundly deceived about how things stand with the external world.

On one proposal for developing the Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis, we simply transpose these claims to the hedonic-evaluative case. That is to say, the proponent of this version of thesis maintains, firstly, that when one comes to experience the value of our one’s pleasures, the relation between the associated phenomenology and the evaluative property is a constitutive one, and, secondly, that this accounts for why our hedonic-evaluative beliefs are less prone to sceptical doubts than other evaluative beliefs. I shall refer to this as the “Naïve Realist Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis.”

The concept of “acquaintance” or “direct confrontation” also plays a role in the contemporary debate regarding the nature of introspection, where a number of theorists have claimed that our acquaintance with our phenomenal properties – properties which characterise what it is like to undergo a given kind of experience – accounts for the distinctive, especially robust epistemic status of our beliefs in their instantiation.

Now as we shall see in chapter 4, the unpacking of the notion is much harder in this context, not least because different theorists of introspection in this tradition operate with a far wider range of conceptions of the relevant relation. However, we can nonetheless isolate as the “Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis” the view that our hedonic-evaluative beliefs enjoy the relevant kind of distinctive epistemic support because their justification conforms to such an acquaintance account of introspective justification.

This leaves us with two salient more concrete versions of the Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis, which I set out to assess in chapters 3 and 4 respectively. As I hope we shall see there, I think their discussion will naturally lead us to touch upon most of the key issues that the Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis raises.

4. “Value”

4.1. Value as experienced

The Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis concerns the epistemic status of our beliefs in the value of our pleasures. For obvious reasons, this means that the shape of one’s discussion of this thesis is likely to be very sensitive to the conception of value with which one operates. Some clarificatory remarks on this matter are therefore in order.

I think it will be easiest to approach the conception of value with which I shall here concern myself, as well as my reasons for choosing this focus, indirectly, by first considering a certain analogy with the case of philosophical discussions of colour. One fairly natural position which is sometimes adopted in that context is that “colours as we see them” (to borrow Mackie’s 1977 terminology) – the simple, intrinsic, categorical properties with which visual experience seems to present us – are not in fact instantiated, but that ordinary colour attributions can still be true. On this view, this is so because ordinary colour attributions involve laxer (“imperfect”) standards of veridicality which are in fact satisfied by certain physical properties, such as, for example, certain sorts of disjunctive properties which subsume surface reflectance properties (cf. e.g. Chalmers

2006). Since colour experience thus imposes stricter constraints on the world than our colour-attributions, it may be the case that one can truly claim colours to be instantiated, despite the fact that “colours as we see them” do not exist.

In my view, it could very well be the case that the same kind of ambiguity ends up afflicting the case of talk of pleasure’s value (a point which seems generally somewhat underappreciated). After all, it may be that hedonic-evaluative experience imposes stricter constraints on the world than the corresponding property-attributions in (ordinary or philosophical) English. In that case, it may be whilst the sort of evaluative properties which our pleasures strike us as having – “values as we experience them” – are not in fact instantiated, pleasure can still truly be said to exhibit value. Similarly, it may be that whilst we are not justified in our beliefs that our pleasures exhibit “value as we experience them”, we can nevertheless be said to be justified in believing that our pleasant experiences are valuable.

This raises the question: In assessing claims like the Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis, will it be of greater interest to focus on values as we experience them, or should one instead focus on value *simpliciter*?

I think it is clear that the answer to this question will largely depend on one’s background concerns. Now, I personally care deeply about whether pleasant and unpleasant experiences are, respectively, good and bad in the way in which they strike us as good and bad; if pleasure and suffering really come with *this* kind of evaluative property, then I want to promote pleasure and end suffering. In contrast, I find it hard to see why anyone should have significant *de dicto* concern for things that are good in some more deflationary sense.¹³ For instance, I am not particularly concerned to promote things *qua*

¹³ It is surprisingly common for philosophers to proclaim *de dicto* concern for what exhibits certain normative properties as problematic in general, on the grounds that it is somehow objectionably fetishistic (see Smith 1994).

This has always struck me as odd: Of course, the reason why I don’t want people to suffer is exactly because it seems like this would be bad for them, and this seems like a perfectly appropriate attitude to have!

thing-which-instantiate-the-property-which-causally-regulates-our-use-of-“good”, or *qua* thing-considered-good-by-mature-folk-morality, or *qua* thing-disposed-to-prompt-approval-under-such-and-such-circumstances.¹⁴

If one shares this attitude, as I suspect many readers will upon reflection, then the most interesting version of the Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis will be the one which concerns our beliefs in the instantiation of value as experienced. My focus will therefore be on this particular conception of value, which allows me to proceed without having to adjudicate thorny issues in moral semantics.

Now what sort of property is value as experienced? I think that much like in the case of colour as experienced, it is most natural to hold that for the world to be exactly as hedonic experience presents it as being, the world would have to contain instances of primitive evaluative properties – simple, intrinsic, categorical, *sui generis* properties which, whilst perhaps supervening on and instantiated because of certain non-evaluative properties, are metaphysically sharply discontinuous with these and any other non-evaluative properties. Intuitively, when you turn your attention to an intensely pleasant or an intensely unpleasant experience, there is a property which your experience very saliently strikes you as having which isn’t just another simple phenomenal property, or another simple physical property, or some sort of complex disjunctive property, or the property of satisfying such-and-such a functional role, or the property of being disposed to prompt approval under such-and-such conditions; instead, your experience seems to instantiate a particular kind of simple, intrinsic quality which is altogether of its own kind.

At any rate, I think that it is clear that many of us do in fact have such *de dicto* concern. Otherwise, it would be difficult to explain why moral philosophy is so gripping. For if we merely had *de re* concern for that which is good, i.e. if we cared about things that were in fact good in virtue of their non-evaluative features and our desires therefore weren’t contingent on these things being good, it is difficult to see why we should be so deeply interested in arriving at the truth when it comes to matters of value theory.

¹⁴ Cf. Parfit’s (2001b, 367) impression that “[i]f Naturalism were true, there would be no point in trying to answer” questions such as those regarding “what matters, which acts are right or wrong, or what we have reason to want, and to do.”

In this sense, we might say that what is sometimes called the “just-too-different intuition” (Enoch 2007, 44; McPherson 2012; see also Dancy 2006, 141-2) applies to values as experienced.¹⁵ Parfit (2011b, 339) captures this nicely when he writes that claiming natural facts to be genuinely normative is in some ways as if one claimed “that rivers were sonnets, or that experiences were stones.” Similarly, the evaluative properties which our pleasant experiences strike us as having simply could not possibly be properties of some other familiar and more mundane kind. Accordingly, in effect, my focus will be specifically on the belief in what would typically be categorised as “robust non-naturalist” forms of realism about hedonic value.

There is another reason for focussing on such robust non-naturalist conceptions of value where the evaluation of the Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis is concerned. After all, insofar as a pleasant experience’s instantiation of value is merely a matter of its instantiating a property of some more mundane sort – say, the property of being pleasant itself, or that of causally regulating our use of “good” – then there is no deep mystery to be resolved regarding how we can become justified in our evaluative beliefs in the first place. In fact, precisely this is one central motivation for favouring such less demanding forms of realism about normativity! As a result, the Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis is of far greater theoretical interest if discussed against the background of a robustly non-naturalist conception of value.

4.2. Further issues

A number of further clarificatory points regarding my conception of value as experienced as it will feature in subsequent chapters warrant mention.

¹⁵ This is part of the reason why I think Hewitt’s (2008) view, which I suspect is motivated by many of the considerations which are naturally taken to support the hedonic-evaluative acquaintance thesis, that “intrinsic goodness and badness are *phenomenal qualities of experience*” is not a very plausible one insofar as it is meant to capture our hedonic-evaluative phenomenology. The evaluative qualities with which we seem to be presented in hedonic experience seem radically unlike phenomenal qualities, and to claim that they are such properties seems like a category mistake; although there is plausibly something it is like to experience them, they clearly don’t themselves characterise what it is like of a subject to be a particular kind of state. Instead, they characterise the extent to which they exhibit a certain kind of primitive evaluative quality. (I suspect that what leads Hewitt to commit herself to this implausible view is her failure to note the availability of the Self-Experiential View I develop in chapter 2.)

I said above that I think that value as experienced is a simple property, which buck-passers about value,¹⁶ who would think evaluative concepts should be analysed in terms of talk about reasons, will consider contentious. I don't find such views very plausible (in part exactly because I think it is fairly plausible that evaluative experience allows us to grasp primitive evaluative properties), and I'm not particularly impressed by any of the commonly adduced motivations for such views. However, here it suffices to say that even if one is very wedded to a buck-passing view about pleasure's value, this will leave unaffected the plausibility of my arguments in this dissertation. After all, it seems to me that the buck-passer is free to substitute talk of whatever complex property to which she appeals in her preferred analysis of value for my talk of value, without this undermining the positions that I shall defend. For example, it strikes me as evident that in hedonic experience, we typically experience some sort of (broadly) normative property. Accordingly, even if the buck-passer takes herself to have convincing reason to believe that this can't be a primitive evaluative property, she should still accept that in hedonic experience, we experience whatever complex property to which she appeals in her preferred analysis of value (e.g. the property of having properties that provide reasons to respond favourably to the thing in question). The dialectics surrounding the Self-Experiential View and the Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis should then play out in a largely parallel fashion.

One could also try to determine whether value as experienced is a kind of prudential or moral value, or whether it is a value of an altogether different kind. I'm sympathetic to the view that phenomenological investigation could in principle allow us to make progress on this question. For instance, I'm inclined to think that the value hedonic experiences strike us as having does not appear to be of a merely prudential kind, but rather seems to be of an impersonal kind. One way to bring this out is suggested by Nagel, who notes that "the fact that it is mine – the concept of myself – doesn't come into my

¹⁶ Supporters include Scanlon (1998, 94-100), Stratton-Lake & Hooker (2006), Skorupski (2010), and Parfit (2011a, 38).

perception of the badness of my pain” (1986, 160; see also Rachels 2002, 204-205). In what follows, I will, however, remain neutral on the issue of whether or not the value that hedonic experiences strike us as having is impersonal in nature, since this question appears orthogonal to the metanormative questions with which I will primarily be concerned below.

Another important issue concerns whether a subject’s experience as of hedonic-evaluative features would have to be considered as misleading if it turned out that, whilst being *pro tanto* good to the extent to which it is experienced as good, it is all-things-considered bad, e.g. in virtue of being wicked or undeserved. Here I’m inclined to think that value as experienced does not speak to its object’s overall value, but only to its value in one particular respect, and I therefore think that it is a kind of *pro tanto* value. In what follows, I shall usually drop this qualification and speak of “value” where the distinction is not contextually pertinent.

Finally, there is a question of what specific object hedonic value as experienced most fundamentally qualifies. For instance, does it qualify entire experiences, or does it first and foremost qualify only non-maximal aspects of one’s phenomenology? For the sake of convenience, I’ll for now speak of experiences as the object of evaluation; I shall investigate this issue in some detail in section 1.2.4 of chapter 2.

5. Synopsis

The remainder of this thesis is structured into three main chapters and a brief conclusion.

In chapter 2, I defend the Self-Experiential View about the nature of pleasure, according to which experiences are pleasant in virtue of being experienced as good. I argue that if properly developed, the view is well-motivated, escapes various initial objections and holds up nicely when assessed in relation to the dominant positions and central arguments which shape the contemporary debate on this issue.

In chapter 3, I evaluate the Naïve Realist Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis, on which acquaintance with pleasure's value is construed by analogy to the Naïve Realist conception of perceptual awareness. After further unpacking and presenting motivations for the proposal, I pinpoint a number of serious drawbacks, which turn on the way in which the Naïve Realist model constrains one's options in providing a defensible account of hedonic value's metaphysical ground. Next, I turn to the "problem of bad cases" familiar from discussions of Naïve Realism about perceptual experience, and argue that it poses additional challenges for some versions of Naïve Realism about hedonic-evaluative experience. I then go on to argue that Naïve Realist acquaintance in and of itself is not of any epistemic significance, and reject what appears to be the only remotely plausible attempt to nevertheless vindicate its epistemic significance more specifically in the hedonic-evaluative.

In chapter 4, I assess the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis, i.e. the attempt to vindicate a version of the Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis by extending an acquaintance account of phenomenal introspection to hedonic-evaluative properties and our beliefs in their instantiation. After outlining some motivations for this proposal, I begin with a detailed assessment of the main contemporary theories of introspection which appeal to the notion of acquaintance. I isolate what I consider the most promising proposal in this category and argue that since it should not be extended to the hedonic-evaluative case, the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis should be rejected.

Finally, in chapter 5, I summarise the key insights of the preceding chapters and highlight some questions raised in the course of my earlier discussion which I think warrant further investigation.

Chapter 2: The metaphysics of pleasure and the Self-Experiential View

0. Introduction

In the previous chapter, I argued that pleasure and suffering typically involve a nonconceptual, pre-doxastic awareness as of one's experience's apparent evaluative features; pleasures are typically experienced as good, and displeasures are typically experienced as bad.

In this chapter, I want to make the case that being experienced as good or bad in this manner are not just accidental features of pleasure and suffering, but rather the very features which ground an experience's pleasantness or unpleasantness. In other words, I shall argue for

the Self-Experiential View: Pleasant experiences are pleasant in virtue of being experienced as good.¹⁷

The two views which currently dominate the debate regarding the nature of pleasure are the Felt-Quality View and the Desire View. According to

the Felt-Quality View, pleasant experiences are pleasant in virtue of exhibiting a certain shared phenomenal characteristic,

whereas according to

the Desire View, pleasant experiences are pleasant in virtue of being the object of the right kind of desire or desire-like attitude (typically, a desire for the experience to continue).

¹⁷ In what follows, I often omit the explicit mention of suffering and its disvalue in characterising and discussing views about hedonic experience. Unless explicitly flagged, this will merely be for the sake of expository convenience.

Similarly, although the Self-Experiential View, like many of the other views discussed below, is easily turned into an account also of pleasure intensity ("an experience is pleasant to a given degree in virtue of being experienced as good to a corresponding degree"), I shall typically drop this sort of addition.

In part 1, I motivate the Self-Experiential View and, in the course of considering and responding to initial objections, provide reasons for developing the account in my preferred way.

In part 2, I explain how I view the relation between my preferred version of the Self-Experiential View and the two dominant extant views, assess how the key arguments which shape the debate regarding these views impact the Self-Experiential View's plausibility, and, in the course of doing so, bolster the case for endorsing it.

1. The case for the Self-Experiential View

In this section of the chapter, I present the first part of my case for the Self-Experiential View.

I begin by presenting initial motivations for this approach in section 1.1. Rather than then moving on to develop the account in the abstract, I then turn, in section 1.2, directly to the task of addressing initial objections to the Self-Experiential View, which provides an opportunity to outline how I think it should best be fleshed out.

In this section, I shall focus on the Self-Experiential View more or less in isolation, without considering in much detail how its interaction with other positions and considerations familiar from the broader existing dialectic regarding the nature of pleasure. These issues will instead be addressed in part 2.

1.1. Motivating the Self-Experiential View

As the reader will recall, according to

the Self-Experiential View: Pleasant experiences are pleasant in virtue of being experienced as good.

Before presenting some basic considerations which count in its favour, it is worth commenting briefly on a set of central assumptions shared by the Self-Experiential View, the Felt-Quality View and the Desire View.

All these three views assume that pleasant experiences form a kind. This seems reasonable enough; after all, the category of pleasure doesn't appear to merely be a disjunctive ragbag containing a range of disunified phenomena. Instead, it seems sensible to expect there to be some fairly simple, joint-carving feature which is exhibited by all and only by pleasant experiences and which explains why these are naturally grouped together.

In addition, all three views assume that pleasure forms a non-normative kind. That is to say, they all assume that there is a common non-normative feature (characterising the experience's content, phenomenal nature or conative context) which all and only pleasant experiences share. In other words, they all involve an implicit rejection of what we might call

the Normative View: The only individuating feature associated with being a pleasure is a certain normative commonality.

Whilst the rejection of the Normative View is rarely explicitly defended and some theorists have indeed flirted with the claim that pleasures are unified only in some normative respect (say, that of being good or desirable),¹⁸ it also strikes me as defensible upon reflection.

One reason for this is that even if pleasures are indeed singled out among all the conceivable experiences by some unique normative feature – like, say, that of being the bearer of some particular kind of intrinsic value – there must, in each instance, be some non-normative property which grounds the relevant experience's goodness. Admittedly, one could in principle hold that for each kind of pleasure, a different non-normative

¹⁸ Cf. e.g. Sidgwick (1907, 3.13.4.1); von Wright (1963, 63); Nielsen (1973, 24); Rachels (2000, 198); Labukt (2012).

feature accounts for the relevant experience's value.¹⁹ However, this would lead to an unsatisfactorily unexplanatory picture at the level of value theory: There then wouldn't be any non-evaluative commonality to which one could point in explaining the striking evaluative commonalities and differences which – according to the view in question – hold, respectively, among pleasant experiences and between pleasant and nonpleasant experiences.²⁰ Accordingly, the rejection of the Normative View seems defensible; even if one maintains that pleasures can be singled out via their distinctiveness in normative respects, there is good reason to assume that they share some joint-carving non-normative feature which grounds it.²¹

The question therefore arises what this feature may be. I shall here present three simple considerations which favour the answer provided by the Self-Experiential View.

Firstly, the Self-Experiential View succeeds in capturing a key platitude which helps to pin down our ordinary conception of pleasure. In particular, it captures the idea that pleasant experiences are those experiences which *feel good*. Taken at face value, this

¹⁹ Labukt's remarks seem compatible with his endorsement of this sort of view; his "pluralistic hedonic tone view" (cf. fn. 43 below) could in principle be combined with a picture on which each pleasant experience's goodness is grounded in a different phenomenal property ("hedonic tone") (cf. esp. 2012, 192, §2).

²⁰ Of course, the extent to which it does this will depend on the specific number of different kinds of pleasure which the proponent of such a view asks us to postulate. However, since the considerations which motivate such views in the first place (see section 2.2.4 below) would arguably suggest that the relevant list would at least be very long if not even potentially open-ended and infinitary, I think it is fair to assume that the costs will be very significant.

It is moreover worth noting that such considerations of theoretical complexity seems especially germane if an endorsement of the Normative View is combined with a commitment to hedonism, the view that all and only pleasant experiences are bearers of intrinsic value. This is because since hedonism's apparent theoretical simplicity accounts for a significant part of its appeal. Accordingly, the "marginal theoretical cost" associated with introducing such complexity seems especially high for hedonists (like Labukt).

²¹ Note that there are a number of straightforward ways in which one might resist the Normative View, which I shall bracket here.

Most directly, one may simply have independent reasons for being a sceptic about the instantiation of normative properties, and on this basis deny that any experiences share (non-trivial) normative commonalities.

Moreover, one might worry that if the only individuating feature shared by pleasant experiences is a normative one such as that of being good, Moorean open-question worries become very pressing; it is not clear that the view has the resources to explain why questions of the form "X is pleasant, but is X good?" have an open feel to them even to those who master the concept of pleasure.

platitude would seem to suggest that experiences are pleasant insofar as they involve some kind of conscious awareness (“feel”) as of their (apparent) value.

Secondly, one of the most direct ways to argue the Self-Experiential View is to turn to straightforward (in)conceivability arguments in support of certain closely related modal claims. We can distinguish

Weak Self-Experientialism: Necessarily, an experience is pleasant only if it is experienced as good,

and

Strong Self-Experientialism: Necessarily, an experience is pleasant if and only if it is experienced as good.

In order to argue for Weak Self-Experientialism, one can try to make the case that it is impossible to conceive of a pleasant experience which fails to be experienced as good by the experiencing subject. In order to establish Strong Self-Experientialism, one can try to moreover claim that it is impossible to conceive of an experience that is (in the relevant sense) experienced as good without thereby also counting as pleasant.

I think both these (in)conceivability claims have plausibility. Can one really imagine a pleasant experience – say, of having an orgasm – which is such that its apparent value is completely absent from the experiencing subject’s perspective? Similarly, can one really imagine a modification of this experience with the effect that the resulting experience is still experienced as good in the relevant manner, but is no longer pleasant?

Admittedly, the intuition is probably clearer in the case of the inconceivability intuition relevant to Weak Self-Experientialism, not least because what I have said thus far in introducing the Self-Experiential View invites a fair amount of indeterminacy with regards to what experiencing one’s experience as good “in the relevant manner” amounts.

Assuming Weak Self-Experientialism has been established, one could at this point also argue, on the grounds of theoretical parsimony, that Strong Self-Experientialism could be

regarded as the default view in the absence of counterexamples; although it perhaps can't conclusively be ruled out that more than being experienced as good is required to qualify as a pleasure, a view on which this is all that is required has the benefit of being very simple.

Strictly speaking, even Strong Self-Experientialism is still weaker than the Self-Experiential View as I defined it above, since the former leaves open the possibility that reflexive evaluative experience is modally correlated with being a pleasure, but is not the feature that grounds experiences' pleasantness. Nonetheless, in the present context, such an intimate modal tie at the very least strongly suggests a more intimate hyperintensional relationship of this sort.

Thirdly, I think the Self-Experiential View nicely captures an intuition to the effect that the concept of pleasure is very intimately tied up with evaluative notions – more intimately than, say, through the mere supervenience of evaluative properties on the property of being pleasant.

I suspect that something like this intuition may partly underlie some theorists' sympathy to the view, briefly discussed at the beginning of this section, that pleasures form a kind primarily in virtue of their evaluative properties. Occasionally, it also surfaces in the guise of an argument – fairly convincing, in my opinion – to the effect that in order to adequately characterise hedonic phenomenology, one is forced to invoke evaluative notions. For instance, Mendola (1990, 72) writes, regarding a particular instance of suffering, that

“no one, not even a Martian, could give a complete and adequate characterization of that phenomenal state without talking about its nastiness, without making a committing mention of its intrinsic disvalue.”²²

²² Similarly, Hewitt (2008, 176-7) asserts that in describing the phenomenology of an instance of pleasure and suffering, “you have to mention the normativity of the phenomenology simply in order to describe it accurately.”

In my view, both Hewitt and Mendola subsequently go wrong in attempting to use this observation to argue that pleasure and suffering really are valuable and disvaluable in the way in which we experience them. Hewitt simply fails to consider alternative views like my Self-Experiential View developed below (on

The Self-Experiential View, on which suffering is a matter of experiencing one's phenomenal state as bad, and badness is hence part of the content which is individuating of unpleasant experience, rather elegantly accounts for this observation.

I think it is fair to say that together, these three types of considerations at the very least constitute enough of a *prima facie* case for the Self-Experiential View to warrant further investigation into its ultimate defensibility.

1.2. Objections and responses

In this section, I address a number of objections to the Self-Experiential View, and try to use the opportunity to clarify and develop this approach.

Whilst variants of the Self-Experiential View have been advocated at various points in the history of philosophy, they do not seem to play a very central role in the contemporary debate about the nature of pleasure.²³

However, there is something to be said for counting Sidgwick as an advocate of such a view, who at one point defines pleasure as “feeling which the sentient individual at the time of feeling it implicitly or explicitly apprehends to be desirable” (1907, 2.3.1.1). After all, if one takes “apprehending” something as good in the relevant sense to constitute a

which mention of evaluative concepts can be claimed to be necessary in characterising hedonic phenomenology because this phenomenology involves the representation of such properties, which may or may not be accurate). Mendola is led astray by background commitments to a sense-data view and a version of the nowadays widely rejected Phenomenal Principle (“if something is being experienced as good, there is something which is good”).

²³ Epicurus held that pleasure involves the perception of its desirability (Cicero 2001). The Stoics also believed that pleasant experiences involved the appearance as of their goodness, and moreover analysed pleasure as the corresponding appearance-based belief (cf. Moss 2006). In a similar spirit, Nelkin (1994) argues that pain consists in a spontaneous evaluative judgement about one's concurrent experience. Sprigge (2000) holds that being unpleasant consists in being “experienced as bad.” O'Sullivan & Schroer (2012, 741) start off by endorsing such a view, although later in their paper they muddy the water by implicitly switching to an alternative view, on which bodily goings-on are the objects of experiential evaluation. Similar things apply to Robinson (2006, 756/761).

way of experiencing it as good, this passage seems to commit Sidgwick to a version of the Self-Experiential View, or at least to Strong Self-Experientialism.²⁴

Since a number of objections have been levelled against this Sidgwickian view, it behoves proponents of the Self-Experiential to explain how they hope to sidestep them, which I set out to do in the remainder of this section.

1.2.1. Objection 1: Doxastic vs. nondoxastic awareness

Some commentators have worried that the Sidgwickian view under-generates cases of pleasure. A popular instance of this concern is that by over-intellectualising hedonic experience, the Sidgwickian view makes it difficult to see how hedonic states can be attributed to unsophisticated subjects of experience such as animals.²⁵ Similarly, Feldman (1988, 65) worries that the Sidgwickian view can't account for the fact that a staunch anti-hedonist who in no way believes that any experience is intrinsically good can clearly still experience pleasure.

Some have also worried that the Sidgwickian account over-generates cases of pleasure, since one could apprehend experiences to be intrinsically desirable even if they are not pleasant. For example, Feldman (1988, 66) objects that someone like G.E. Moore, who took painful feelings prompted by the observation of underserved pain in others to be intrinsically good, would count as “apprehending” such painful feelings as good in the relevant sense, without thereby rendering them pleasant. Crisp (2011, 34) similarly worries that one may judge an experience as of blue to be preferable to one as of red without such an experience thereby becoming pleasant.

²⁴ Many other things written by Sidgwick count against attributing such a view to him (cf. Crisp 2011 for a helpful overview). In my opinion, it may therefore simply be indeterminate whether the Self-Experiential View constitutes Sidgwick's “true” opinion on the matter, and accordingly, I should be read as treating it merely as a view suggested by some of his remarks.

²⁵ See e.g. Skelton (2008, 197), Crisp (2011, 34) and Labukt (2012, 190) for discussion.

In response to these objections, note that in section 1.2 of chapter 1, I already recommended conceiving of the kind of evaluative “apprehension” typically involved in hedonic experience – to which I there referred as our “hedonic-evaluative awareness” – as pre-doxastic, nonconceptual in nature. It should be clear that the Self-Experiential View so understood is not threatened by these objections, since they all rely for their plausibility on the assumption that the relevant “apprehension” is belief-like or judgemental in nature.²⁶

This is not to say that there aren’t legitimate questions to be raised regarding the nature of the relevant nonconceptual awareness. In my view, it is here most natural and in fact fairly unproblematic to construe it as involving something fundamentally akin – in terms of its underlying metaphysical nature – to a perceptual experience (construed in orthodox representationalist terms²⁷), which in this case takes the apparent intrinsic value of one’s phenomenal state as its object.

Of course, I have to concede that hedonic-evaluative awareness is still very unusual in that we usually don’t become aware of features of our own experiences through something like higher-order perceptual experiences; insofar as we can otherwise be said to be aware of intrinsic features of our experiences (namely, their phenomenal features), our awareness of them is typically quite unlike our perceptual awareness of external objects and their features (see section 1.2 of chapter 4).

However, I think the key question to ask here is whether, on the best theory of the metaphysics of perceptual experience, there is anything we know of that gives us antecedent reason to rule out that there could be a (quasi-)perceptual experience of the relevant kind.

²⁶ Since there is some evidence to suggest that Sidgwick himself took the relevant kind of “apprehension” which accounts for an experience’s pleasantness as judgemental in nature (cf. e.g. 1907, 2.2.2; 2.3.1), perhaps this must be regarded as an amendment to the Sidgwickian view.

²⁷ I here simply assume that the representationalist account of perceptual experience is adequate. Partial justification for this assumption is provided in section 1 of chapter 3, where I argue for its superiority over an important rival approach.

Crucially, I think that if one opts for a fairly orthodox representationalist understanding of perceptual experience on which having a perceptual experience of a given type is to represent a content of a particular sort, it is difficult to identify any such reason. Clearly, there is nothing incoherent about representing one's experience as good; after all, most of us have beliefs which do so. So if there is anything incoherent about the idea of (quasi-) perceptually representing one's own experience as good, it must be some specific feature of perceptual representation in particular which rules this out. However, once again, I can't discern any convincing reason for thinking this.²⁸

Certain reductive views of perceptual content on which perceptual content must be grounded in something like regular causal contact with the relevant represented properties might give one reasons to be less optimistic, for example because of doubts about the instantiation of evaluative properties or doubts regarding their causal efficacy.²⁹ In fact, this basic type of objection is familiar from the discussion of eliminativist primitivist accounts of colour experience, according to which we perceptually experience primitive colour properties which are not actually instantiated, and with whose instances we are therefore never in causal contact (cf. e.g. Tye 2000, 166; Byrne & Hilbert, 2003, 59).

However, I see little reason to accept the background commitments which are needed to support this objection, since there is good reason to reject the relevant reductive accounts

²⁸ Admittedly, there may be semantic reasons to balk at referring to the manner in which we experience our pleasures' apparent evaluative features as genuinely "perceptual", e.g. because it doesn't involve the senses or doesn't concern features of the external world. For obvious reasons, this does not affect the deeper point I want to make here, namely that it is difficult to see any antecedent reason to rule out a view on which we experience evaluative properties of our hedonic experiences in a manner that has the same sort of underlying metaphysical nature as perceptual experience, even if it thereby still at best qualifies as "quasi-perceptual."

²⁹ Something like this reasoning may also underlie Labukt's (2012, 196-7, fn. 60) complaint that the evaluative sceptic lacks an explanation of how we could have a persistent "overwhelming appearance that there is something intrinsically bad with the way it typically feels to have intense toothache ... if there are no intrinsic hedonic values", and that she "never explains how the illusion is supposed to work in the first place."

Interestingly, an analogous argument for moral realism – from the idea that our moral concepts are "simple", and must for this reason derive from contact with properties which are really instantiated – enjoyed popularity among British ethical theorists during the first half of the twentieth century (cf. Hurka 2014, 88).

of perceptual content. The simplest way to see this is by noting that there seems to be nothing incoherent about the idea of a world completely devoid of, say, red objects, whose inhabitants nevertheless enjoy (illusory) experiences involving phenomenal redness.³⁰

Importantly, an appeal to quasi-perceptual awareness not only allows the Self-Experiential View to retain its qualitative theoretical parsimony (since no new basic kind of awareness is being posited), but it can also do further important positive explanatory work. After all, perceptual awareness shares many of the features which we identified as features of our hedonic-evaluative awareness in section 1.2 of chapter 1. For instance, perceptual awareness is plausibly pre-doxastic and at least sometimes nonconceptual in nature, it is capable of grounding concepts of experienced properties, and its phenomenology involves the apparent “presence to the mind” of the experienced features. Insofar as the nature of hedonic-evaluative awareness can be claimed to be broadly continuous with that of perceptual awareness, one has already automatically accounted for these features.

1.2.2. Objection 2: Inattentive pleasures

It is also worth noting that the proponent of the Self-Experiential View can reject the assumption that our awareness of our pleasures’ apparent value must entail an accompanying act of attention. After all, she can hold that just as we ordinarily take perceptual attention to structure our overall state of conscious perceptual awareness into (attentive) phenomenal foreground and (inattentive) background and think of different aspects of our perceptual awareness as capable of occupying different points in this continuum, the Self-Experiential View is compatible with the possibility of a pleasant experience which only involves a peripheral awareness as of its value.

³⁰ See Chalmers (2006a, 83) and Pautz (ms, 42-44) for defences of colour eliminativism along analogous lines. Pautz’ paper contains a helpful overview of reasons for rejecting the reductive background views on which it depends.

This would seem to address Crisp's (2011, 34) concern, prompted by the Sidgwickian view, that "some of our most pleasant experiences seem to be those in which we are engrossed in what we are doing, where the question of the desirability of our experience at that time is far from our minds."³¹ On the present picture, this intuition is respected, since the Self-Experiential View's proponent can maintain that the pleasantness-grounding awareness as of evaluative properties posited by her account is compatible with inattention as well as the absence of doxastic exploitation of that awareness.

Moreover, crucially for my present purposes, it seems plausible to me that pleasures like the ones Crisp mentions are still experienced as good, if only in a peripheral way. In fact, like in ordinary perceptual cases, it strikes me as quite natural to think of the redirection of attention which yields focal awareness of the apparent value of one's pleasure as being enabled by a prior nonattentive awareness.

Admittedly, much like in discussions of whether there is perceptual experience outside of attention, one could raise legitimate concerns regarding the epistemic import of our underlying phenomenological intuitions about inattentive hedonic experience. After all, there is an inherent difficulty if not impossibility associated with attending to experience which is itself inattentive. As a result, one might worry that the sense that a certain kind of experience can take place outside of attention is owed to something analogous to the "refrigerator light illusion" (Thomas 1999, 219-22) – the illusion that the light in the fridge is always on which results from seeing that it is on whenever one opens the door in order to check. However, importantly, I think that insofar as one is impressed by this kind of consideration, one has just as much reason to question one's grounds for believing in the existence of inattentive pleasures in the first place.

Accordingly, inattentive pleasures also don't seem to constitute a convincing counterexample to the best version of the Self-Experiential View.

³¹ Labukt (2012, 190) levels the same objection against the Sidgwickian view.

1.2.3. *Objection 3: Intrinsic value*

Feldman (1997b, sect. V) articulates a further criticism of the Sidgwickian view which is highly relevant to the assessment of the Self-Experiential View.

The target of this complaint of Feldman's is the (alleged) incompatibility between the Sidgwickian view and the claim that experiences are intrinsically good in virtue of their pleasantness. In particular, Feldman argues that if pleasant experiences owed their pleasantness to the experiencing subject's "apprehension" of their value, then this would render these experiences' pleasantness an extrinsic feature.

Since this criticism does not seem to turn on idiosyncratic features of Sidgwick's understanding of the nature of the relevant kind of "evaluative apprehension", it seems to apply to the Self-Experiential View in much the same way. Of course, it simply presupposes that pleasant experiences really do have intrinsic value. However, given that it seems in any case desirable for a theory of pleasure not to render this very intuitive claim so straightforwardly incoherent, I shall simply grant objectors this premise in this and the next section.

Fortunately, there is an obvious way in which Sidgwick could sidestep this objection. One simply has to note that Sidgwick could take as the most fundamental bearer of pleasantness and of value some sort of compound experiential state which encompasses the relevant evaluative apprehension. Crucially, since the evaluative apprehension would then be an intrinsic component of that state, Feldman's worry would no longer arise.

To illustrate this proposal, consider the example of a pleasant visual experience as of blueness. Suppose this experience is the object of a Sidgwickian evaluative apprehension. We can consider the compound state consisting, firstly, of the subject's visual phenomenology as of blueness (which is itself neutral in hedonic respects, i.e. in itself neither pleasant or unpleasant) as well as, secondly, the relevant evaluative apprehension.

On the picture proposed in the previous paragraph, Sidgwick can hold that it is this compound state which is pleasant and therefore good. He would be committed to saying that the compound state in a sense owes its pleasantness and hence its value to the presence of the relevant kind of evaluative apprehension. However, since this is now conceived as an intrinsic component of the most basic pleasure state, this, *pace* Feldman, is quite compatible with its value counting as one of its intrinsic features.

One might worry that the resulting picture still conflicts with the plausible idea that pleasures are good both in virtue of being pleasant and in virtue of what it is like to experience them. In particular, one might be tempted to reason as follows: The same hedonically neutral component can occur with or without the relevant evaluative apprehension. On the Sidgwickian view, this should yield two states that differ hedonically without differing phenomenally. However, this means that its value is either not modally correlated with and hence, *a fortiori*, not grounded in its pleasantness, or that it is not modally correlated with and hence, *a fortiori*, not grounded in what it is like to be in such a state.

However, whilst perhaps initially tempting, the imagined objection assumes that the presence of the evaluative apprehension does not itself make a phenomenal difference. Importantly, the Self-Experiential View is not wedded to this assumption. In fact, on the understanding of the view I recommended above (as appealing to a particular kind of conscious reflexive evaluative experience), its proponent is arguably already committed to its denial. Once this assumption is discarded, there is no obvious reason for denying that it is the combined state's overall phenomenology which serves as the ground for both its pleasantness and its value.

Accordingly, there is nothing in the Self-Experiential View which commits its proponents to the sorts of problematic claims about pleasure's value identified by Feldman.

1.2.4. Interlude: The object of hedonic-evaluative awareness

Just as we can ask what sort of state the Self-Experiential View's proponent should identify as the candidate bearer of hedonic value, we can also ask what state the pleasantness-grounding evaluative apprehension she posits most fundamentally takes as its object. In other words, as I briefly mentioned in section 4.2 of chapter 1, there is a question of what precisely is first and foremost experienced as good when one undergoes a pleasant experience.

So far, I have been speaking loosely of the relevant "experience" as the object of this sort of experiential evaluation, but there are a number of different ways of cashing out this idea. I think that gaining a deeper understanding of the Self-Experiential View by mapping out these more specific versions and their respective attractions is of some independent interest. Moreover, as we shall see in section 2.1 below, the Self-Experiential View's ability to secure certain advantages may hinge on this very issue. I shall therefore briefly pause to sketch my take on the matter.

In discussing this question, I shall take it for granted that what strikes us as exhibiting the evaluative properties presented in hedonic experience is some aspect or other of our phenomenology; when I undergo a very pleasant experience, what strikes me as good is what it is like to be in that state. However, this assumption still leaves a variety of more specific views on the table.

Consider again a pleasant visual experience as of blueness, and suppose that this experience is accompanied by further phenomenology (e.g. further visual phenomenology, auditory phenomenology, cognitive phenomenology etc.) which is not involved in contributing to its pleasantness. The phenomenology of the overall state now factors into a number of components: The phenomenology as of blueness (P_N), the phenomenology associated with the relevant evaluative apprehension (P_{A1}), and all the other accompanying phenomenal properties ($P_1, P_2, P_3, \dots$).

What, then, does the relevant evaluative apprehension in our example take as its object?

There are two options which immediately spring to mind. According to

the Simple View, pleasure is a matter of experiencing just the neutral component of the experience as good,

whereas according to

the Complex View, pleasure is a matter of experiencing a more global (yet typically still non-maximal) phenomenal aspect as good, where this aspect involves both the neutral component and the phenomenal manifestation of the relevant apprehension itself.

It is also natural to consider

the Minimal View: Pleasure involves only the evaluative apprehension of the apprehension's own phenomenology,

as well as

the Maximal View: Pleasure always involves an evaluative apprehension of the experience's entire phenomenology.

Schematically, these views take the pleasantness-grounding evaluative apprehension (A1) to take the following structure:

Simple View: $A1(P_N)$

Complex View: $A1(P_{A1} \ \& \ P_N)$

Minimal View: $A1(P_{A1})$

Maximal View: $A1(P_{A1} \ \& \ P_N \ \& \ P_1 \ \& \ P_2 \ \& \ P_3 \ \& \ \dots)$

In principle, there are also more complex views which one could adopt. For instance, one could hold, in a Brentanian spirit, that pleasure involves an evaluative apprehension of the neutral component and a further such evaluation of the same type of the combined state consisting of the neutral component and the phenomenal manifestation of its original

evaluation (or schematically: $A1(P_N \ \& \ P_{A2(PV)})$).³² But since it is not clear what would motivate such more complex views, I shan't discuss them further.

I think there are good reasons to reject the Maximal View on which one's overall phenomenology, encompassing the relevant evaluation's phenomenal contribution to the experience as well as all of its hedonically neutral elements, is experienced as good, at least as long as this is understood as a universal generalisation which covers all cases of pleasure.³³ For, as C. I. Lewis (1946, 424) rightly emphasised, it seems that the evaluative properties which are phenomenally present in hedonic experiences often most fundamentally strike us as qualifying non-maximal aspects of experiences, such as particular elements of one's experiential field.

This point becomes particularly salient when we consider the case of mixed hedonic experiences which involve some positive and some negative hedonic aspects, or aspects that are positive or negative to different degrees. In many cases of mixed experiences, it is quite clear that these hedonic aspects are somehow intimately tied up with different hedonically neutral (e.g. sensory) aspects of one's experience. The maximal view, on which the different hedonic qualities correspond simply to different evaluations of one and the same overall phenomenology, seems unable to accommodate this datum.

To lend support to this last complaint, we one could try to make use of an argument which Feldman (1988, 64) levels against what he takes to be Moore's version of the Felt-Quality View.

³² Brentano held the view that pleasure involves bearing the intentional relation of "love" (a sort of *sui generis* pro-attitude) towards an act of sensing a sense content, as well as to the compound state consisting of both the act of sensing and the act of loving that sensing (cf. Chisholm 1987, 60).

³³ I am in principle open to the idea that the Maximal View applies in some exceptional cases; cf. Lewis (1946, 424-425).

On the view which Feldman is problematising, pleasantness is conceived as a sort of simple accompanying sensation that, though perhaps caused by hedonically neutral aspects of one's phenomenology, is not otherwise internally related to these aspects.

In criticising this view, Feldman asks us to consider a case in which two taste experiences, that of tasting beer and that of tasting peanuts, are simultaneously experienced as pleasant by the same subject, but the former is experienced as more pleasant than the latter. As Feldman points out, Moore's view would predict that such an experiential state simply consists in the hedonically neutral taste experiences being accompanied by two simultaneous pleasure sensations of different intensity.

However, as Feldman notes, in the absence of any internal connection between the taste sensations and the corresponding pleasure sensations, Moore's view cannot account for an important epistemological feature typically associated with such states. In particular, it cannot account for the fact that in cases like the one under consideration, one can usually come to know that it is the beer sensation which is causing one the greater pleasure in a very direct, straightforward way, without having to engage in any sort of complicated "causal experimentation" involving the subtraction of one of the relevant stimuli.

This objection is highly germane in the present context, since it seems that the Maximal View would run into exactly the same problems. For on the Maximal View, Feldman's imagined experience would involve two simultaneous evaluations of one and the same overall experience, one more positive than the other, but neither in any obvious, phenomenologically accessible way tied to the individual taste aspects.

Essentially the same objections could be used to argue against the Minimal View, on which pleasantness involves, in a sort of perfectly reflexive way, apprehending as valuable this very same evaluative apprehension's phenomenology. The Minimal View can't account for the fact that hedonic phenomenology and the evaluative qualities experientially present in hedonic experience in some sense pertain at least in part to

particular hedonically neutral elements of one's experiential field, and as a result, it also cannot account for Feldman's epistemological observation.

Some may want to resist this suggested application of Feldman's argument by simply denying its empirical premise to the effect that we are capable of the relevant sort of straightforward knowledge regarding the causes of our pleasures. In fact, as Roger Crisp pointed out to me, Sidgwick (1907, 43) uses the very example of simultaneous (or at least temporally proximate) taste experiences to illustrate that it is often hard to tell which of two stimuli is causing one the greater pleasure.

However, here we simply have to note that for Feldman's argument to spell trouble for the Maximal and the Minimal View, it is sufficient if there are some cases in which his observation clearly applies. Moreover, to arrive at clear cases of the relevant kind, we are free to focus on cases more extreme than the one Feldman considers. In particular, one can consider cases in which the simultaneous hedonic qualities are not just different sorts of pleasure but rather located on opposing sides of the hedonic spectrum – i.e. one clearly pleasant and the other clearly unpleasant – and the relevant hedonically neutral aspects with which they are bound up are not just two different taste experiences, but rather involve very different sensory modalities. For instance, consider the case of experiencing a very pleasant taste whilst suffering an intensely unpleasant pain in one's foot. In such a case, there clearly seems to be the sort of straightforward epistemic route towards identifying the relevant sources of pleasure and displeasure which Feldman describes.³⁴ Unfortunately, the Maximal and the Minimal View cannot account for this.

This leaves the adjudication between the Simple View, on which pleasantness is a matter of just some neutral component being experienced as good, and the Complex View, on

³⁴ If you are inclined to attribute this to subjects' background knowledge about the typical associations between the relevant hedonically neutral and corresponding hedonic qualities, simply consider a modified case in which this diagnosis won't apply.

which it is a matter of a compound state, consisting of both the relevant neutral component and a phenomenal contribution of the self-experiential aspect, being experienced as good.

These views can clearly account for Feldman's epistemological observation. The fact that Feldman can come to know that it is the taste of beer rather than the taste of peanuts which is causing him the greater pleasure would seem to be adequately accounted for by holding that only one of these experiential aspects is experienced as very good rather than just as good, as the proponent of the Simple View contends. Similarly, it would seem to be adequately explained by holding that only one of the taste aspects is part of the (non-maximal) compound state which is experienced as very good rather than just as good, as the proponent of the Complex View asserts.

Since I am not confident that it will be possible to factor apart the relevant objects of experiential evaluation through phenomenological investigation, I'm open to the idea that there isn't any way of reasonably becoming very confident in the superiority of any one of the two views. In fact, it is worth noting that the object of experience may quite possibly to an extent be ontically and not just epistemically indeterminate. For instance, it might be that the relevant self-evaluation involves a somewhat unspecific demonstrative mode of presentation ("This is good."), so that there may not be a fact of the matter as to which of these views is correct.

If forced to make up my mind, I would probably opt for the Complex View. In part, this is simply because the Complex View strikes me as the more intuitive of the two; intuitively, when I undergo a pleasant experience, what strikes me is good is what it is like to be in the state, including its phenomenal features which it wouldn't have were it not for its pleasantness.

One could also try to support the Complex View by noting that on the Simple View, it would be implausibly easy to rule out that one's experience is misleading in its attribution of intrinsic evaluative properties. This is because it might be argued that if the Simple

View were true, one could easily, for any given hedonic experience, imagine the neutral aspect in a different hedonic context in which the evaluative property apparently presented in the original experience clearly isn't instantiated.

To take a concrete example: If my enjoyment of an experience of phenomenal blueness were a matter of experiencing my experience of phenomenal blueness as intrinsically good, then assuming the Simple View, it would be very easy to work out that this evaluative appearance is misleading. After all, it is easy to imagine experiences of phenomenal blueness which are clearly perfectly neutral in hedonic and all other intrinsic evaluative respects.

One might then argue that even someone who is ultimately inclined to reject the evaluative appearances could with some legitimacy maintain that establishing this conclusion isn't plausibly so simple. As a result, one could then regard this line of thought as providing some reason for preferring the Complex View, on which no such straightforward way of debunking the hedonic-evaluative appearances is available.

I don't think, however, that these considerations are decisive. In response to the consideration introduced in the previous paragraphs, one could point out that the lack of straightforwardness in debunking one's evaluative appearances in the described manner is sufficiently explained by the fact that neither the Simple View nor the Complex View is clearly true. There is no need to invoke the further claim that the Complex View and not the Simple View is in fact true.

Moreover, I suspect that the reason why the Complex View may simply strike one as the more intuitive one could simply be that firstly, we are psychologically disposed to take the evaluative appearances at face value and that secondly, the Complex View offers a better explanation of how they could be true (for precisely the reasons outlined in the previous paragraphs).

Accordingly, there is reason to suspect that the way in which the Complex View “seems” more plausible is doxastic in nature and the result of implicit theoretical background reasoning, rather than necessarily itself a part of hedonic phenomenology *per se*. At any rate, in what follows, I shall usually, unless the issue becomes directly relevant, speak more neutrally of the subject’s experience or phenomenology as the object of her hedonic-evaluative awareness.

1.2.5. Objection 4: Self-verification

A further objection to views like the Self-Experiential View turns on the observation that they would predict hedonic experiences to be self-verifying in a way which – according to those who endorse this criticism – should be considered objectionable (Crisp 2011, 35; Bain 2013, 80).

For this objection to get off the ground, we once again need to grant the assumption that experiences are indeed (in one respect) good to the extent to which they are pleasant. The idea then is that if the right kind of reflexive evaluative apprehension really did entail a corresponding degree of pleasantness, and assuming that the pleasantness necessitates corresponding evaluative properties, then this evaluative apprehension could not be misleading; evaluative appearance and evaluative reality would here be bound to march in step.

Fortunately, however, at least from the perspective of my own version of the Self-Experiential View which appeals specifically to self-representation, it is not clear in what the supposed incoherence here is even supposed to consist. If one doesn’t in general balk at the idea of necessary connections between non-evaluative and evaluative properties, why does the fact that a given property represents, or is associated with the representation of the relevant evaluative property, make it an inherently less suitable candidate for serving as its supervenience base, than, say, some phenomenal property without such representational content, or some other sort of intentional property?

The belief in a view which entails that hedonic-experiences are self-verifying could perhaps legitimately be criticised if it were primarily supported via some more general, antecedent principle about the inherent self-verificatory nature of evaluative appearances across the board. After all, such a principle would clearly be difficult to justify. However, there is no reason to assume that this is the only way of supporting a position which combines the Self-Experiential View with the belief in pleasure's goodness.

One might of course wonder whether the Self-Experiential View offers new resources for debunking some of our dearly held evaluative beliefs. For example, one might suggest that our hedonic-evaluative judgements about the individual hedonic experiences we actually undergo are a result of our uncritical endorsement of the evaluative appearances which, as a matter of their nature, accompany them.³⁵

Perhaps a similar explanation could be given for our beliefs about the evaluative status of hypothetical pleasant experiences. For instance, it seems plausible that in order to fully imagine a particular kind of experience with the aim of adequately assessing its hypothetical evaluative import, we have to imagine it from the experiencing subject's perspective. If the Self-Experiential View is true, this means that in order to imagine a pleasant experience in the relevant manner, we have to imagine experiencing it as good, whether or not this is actually the case. Maybe this is what leads to a "modal illusion" to the effect that any hypothetical pleasant experience is thereby also good.

However, since such considerations would not involve a flat-out denial of our commonly held evaluative beliefs, but would rather stand and fall with their ability to speak directly to our reasons for holding them, this would once again not count against the Self-Experiential View.

³⁵ The Stoics held this attitude; they believed that pleasure "projects a persuasive appearance that it is good" (Moss 2006, 531), but that this appearance is ultimately misleading.

1.2.6. Objection 5: Transparency

Views like the Self-Experiential View which I am here advocating are sometimes rejected out of hand on phenomenological grounds, in favour of views on which hedonic phenomenology is instead the result of extra-experiential objects (e.g. bodily locations, goings-on in bodily locations, or goings-on in one's environment) being experienced as good or bad. Tye (2005a) endorses this latter sort of view, and argues for it on the grounds that unpleasant pains are "transparent" to their bodily locations, in the sense that only these bodily locations, but not, contrary to what I have been arguing above, the experiences themselves are experienced as exhibiting evaluative properties when we undergo such experiences (107).³⁶

In direct response to this objection, I suspect that any reader who isn't in the grip of strong theoretical background commitments will agree that Tye's claim is simply implausible and should be rejected; clearly, phenomenological reflection suggests that when we experience unpleasant pains, our phenomenology, i.e. what it is like to be in that state, strikes us as bad.

Tye's main argument against such a view seems to revolve around his insistence that when you notice an unpleasant pain such as an unpleasant pain in your finger, "your attention goes to *wherever you feel the pain* (in this case, to your finger)" (ibid., 108). However, this observation is quite compatible with the Self-Experiential View. The proponent of the Self-Experiential View can agree that pain experience involves the attribution of properties to bodily locations – say, properties characterising bodily disturbance or *sui generis* "painfulness" properties.³⁷ Moreover, it seems to me that allowing this much is all that is needed to account to for Tye's observation.

³⁶ O'Sullivan & Schroer (2012, 755) also endorse this transparency claim. Helm (2002) holds a similar view of bodily pleasure in particular. Cutter & Tye (2011) develop Tye's view.

³⁷ Where the proponent of this version of the Self-Experiential View's would part ways with Tye is by further claiming that when the pain is experienced as unpleasant, this is a matter of this bodily-directed experience being experienced as good.

To see why, note firstly that “noticing a pain in one’s finger” is arguably ambiguous between noticing certain apparent goings-on in one’s finger, and noticing one’s phenomenology of experiencing a pain one’s finger. In the first sense, it is obvious why noticing pain involves attention to bodily locations. Even in the second sense, however, Tye’s observation fails to reveal any serious obstacle for the Self-Experiential View. As we shall see in chapter 4, it is indeed quite common to hold that attention to phenomenal properties typically involves attention to their (apparent) external objects, a view to which I am in fact myself sympathetic. If this is correct, then it is unsurprising that “noticing pain” in the second sense (i.e. in the sense of “noticing pain phenomenology”) typically involves one’s attention wandering to the relevant bodily location.

I suspect that the ultimate source of this type of resistance to the Self-Experiential View is a more general belief in the obscurity of talk of awareness of one’s experiences and their qualities. In fact, in his discussions of hedonic experience, Tye repeatedly reaffirms his commitment to the claim that experience is “transparent” in the sense that one is only aware of its objects, but not of the experience itself, or of its qualities (cf. e.g. 2005a, 110; 2005b, 163). In fact, I am quite sympathetic to this sort of view in its usual context, namely the context of discussions of our experience’s phenomenal properties and our putative awareness of them; as I shall similarly explain in section 1.2 of chapter 4, I think there is an important sense in which we plausibly aren’t really aware of our phenomenal properties.³⁸ However, it is quite consistent to hold on to a version of this transparency thesis restricted to the case of phenomenal properties whilst embracing what I take to be the phenomenological data and agreeing with the Self-Experiential View about our awareness of our experience’s apparent evaluative properties.

As a supporting consideration which brings out the idiosyncratic nature of Tye’s phenomenological judgment, note that historically, many philosophers have been drawn to at least partly hedonistic views on which experiences are among the things which have

³⁸ In particular, I shall express sympathy for the view that we are only aware of our phenomenal properties in the sense that we can come to form (certain kinds of) beliefs about them.

value. In contrast, very few if any people have advocated views on which bodily locations are the primary bearers of value.³⁹ Whereas this is exactly what one would expect if something like the Self-Experiential View were true, Tye's view makes it much harder to explain this observation; if unpleasant pains really involved the experience of evaluative properties not as qualifying experiences themselves but only as qualifying bodily locations, one would expect things to be the other way around.

Another angle from which to attack Tye's position is to take a leaf out of the book of those theorists who emphasise the rationalising role played by hedonic experience, and to reflect on some specific aspects of the way in which it seems to rationalise behaviour. In particular, one could make the case that an experience's pleasantness or unpleasantness would seem to rationalise a subject's attempts to, respectively, prolong or end a given experience, and hence not just action she takes which target the relevant bodily location (if hedonic experience rationalises these at all). One way to bring this out is by noting that intuitively, unpleasant pain seems to continue to rationalise the subject's attempts directed at getting out of that experiential state even if, say, it is known to the subject that the part of the body in which her unpleasant pain appears to be located does not exist (e.g. in the case of a phantom limb). However, if the evaluative content of unpleasant pain experiences were merely concerned the relevant bodily location which is known not to exist, this would be difficult to explain.⁴⁰ In contrast, the Self-Experiential View, by entailing that unpleasant pain experience will involve the conscious, quasi-perceptual

³⁹ Tye (2005, 115) quotes a closely related objection due to Aydede (2001), but ends up misinterpreting it and as a result fails to adequately address this issue.

⁴⁰ Bain (2013, 86-7), in defending a view much like Tye's, demonstrates some responsiveness to this worry faced by views on which unpleasantness involves the spontaneous evaluative representation of bodily locations. He appears to hold that one can account for the way in which unpleasant pain rationalises behaviour directed at the cessation of the relevant experience by insisting that although unpleasantness involves the evaluative representation of bodily states, unpleasant experiences are in fact bad.

However, even bracketing doubts about this evaluative claim, one could still argue that the Self-Experiential View does a better job at capturing the idea, aptly emphasised by none other than Bain himself earlier in the same paper (2013, 71), that hedonic experience seems to rationalise action towards the continuation or cessation of one's experience more specifically from the experiencing subject's perspective; the mere fact that these experiences are good in a way which may in principle transcend the agent's subjective perspective does not seem to capture this thought.

representation of that same experience as bad, straightforwardly accounts for the intuitive data here.

Moreover, insofar as one is drawn to the view that “objectless pleasures”, i.e. pleasures which lack any obvious extra-experiential objects, are possible, this is another reason to be sceptical of Tye’s view.⁴¹ For it is difficult to see how it could be extended in any plausible way to account for their pleasantness, and opting for a disjunctive picture, on which these are given a very different treatment, does not seem like an attractive option here.

To summarise, all the initial objections I considered in this section turn out to be either irrelevant to the evaluation of or otherwise ineffective as arguments against a sufficiently carefully developed version of the Self-Experiential View.

2. The Self-Experiential View in context

In section 2, I argued for

the Self-Experiential View: Pleasant experiences are pleasant in virtue of being experienced as good.

As I mentioned above, this approach has so far remained curiously underdiscussed, and it therefore seems worth investigating how it fits into the existing debate about the nature of hedonic experience.

In the introduction, I mentioned that the two dominant views regarding the nature of pleasure are

the Felt-Quality View, pleasant experiences are pleasant in virtue of exhibiting a certain shared phenomenal characteristic,

and

⁴¹ Aydede (2000, 555) argues that such pleasures are not only possible but in fact even are the norm.

the Desire View, pleasant experiences are pleasant in virtue of being the object of a particular kind of desire or desire-like attitude (typically, a desire for the experience to continue).

The main selling-point of the Felt-Quality View is that it captures the intuition that whether an experience is pleasant is a matter of what it is like to undergo that experience. Proponents of the Desire View typically emphasise that their approach is superior in that it captures the sense in which pleasantness is a matter of liking an experience, that it better reflects the conceptual ties between pleasure and motivation, and that it enjoys greater phenomenological plausibility.

In this part of the chapter, my aim is to bolster the case for the Self-Experiential View by locating it in the existing debate.

In section 2.1, I argue that the Self-Experiential View is not only compatible with the Felt-Quality View, but is best regarded as complementing and thereby strengthening it.

In section 2.2, I explore the relationship between the Self-Experiential View and the Desire View. First (in section 2.2.1), I discuss issues pertaining to the logical relationship between the views and begin to outline reasons for preferring the Self-Experiential View to versions of the Desire View with which it is incompatible. I then (in sections 2.2.2–4) discuss the aforementioned three key motivations for the Desire View, which turn on pleasure's alleged ties to motivation (2.2.2), the role of liking (2.2.3), and the supposed phenomenological datum of heterogeneity (2.2.4). My primary aim is to argue that the first motivation if anything points to a reason against endorsing the Desire View, the second motivation is just as easily accommodated by the Self-Experiential View, and the third motivation relies on unconvincing premises.

2.1. The Self-Experiential View and the Felt-Quality View

For reasons already hinted at in my discussion in section 1.2.3, the Felt-Quality View appears perfectly compatible with my preferred version of the Self-Experiential View.

After all, it is perfectly natural to hold that quasi-perceptually representing one's experience as good corresponds to some sort of constant phenomenal contribution to the experiences that exhibit this feature; there is something it is like to experience one's experience as good.

This allows for a variety of different answers to the question of what grounds or constitutes pleasantness, including views on which experiences are pleasant in virtue of exhibiting a shared phenomenal aspect, in virtue of exhibiting a certain representational property, or in virtue of both. The last sort of view allows one to combine the Felt-Quality View and the Self-Experiential View. One could substantiate it by arguing (with considerable independent plausibility) that the relevant phenomenal and representational properties are not really distinct existences, or that they are at least themselves connected by an appropriate grounding relation running in one direction or the other.

It is worth noting, however, that the endorsement of the Felt-Quality View is by no means directly forced upon someone who endorses the Self-Experiential View. One could in principle hold that different kinds of pleasure involve different “manners” of representing the same evaluative contents, and that as a result, whilst pleasantness always makes some phenomenal contribution on each occasion, this contribution differs across cases, and different kinds of pleasures may hence lack a shared phenomenal core.

As a supporting analogy, one could argue that experiencing the same contents via different sensory modalities sometimes fails to result in any sort of phenomenological overlap. For instance, the proponent of this view could point out that what it is like to visually experience a certain content (say, an object's shape) typically has little or nothing

in common with experiencing the same content via touch, because visual and tactile experience involve different “representational manners.”^{42,43}

However, I am personally not very attracted to this version of the Self-Experiential View. At the most fundamental level, I simply don’t find the analogy with intermodal representations of the same properties convincing; in the case of different kinds of hedonic-evaluative properties, it simply doesn’t strike me as if their evaluative properties are, in any closely analogous sense, experienced in very different manners. In contrast to the intermodal case, I just don’t have any solid grip on the “manner” in which, say, the apparent value of a pleasant taste experience is experienced differently from that of the pleasure of playing football, unless one focusses on very broad, generic phenomenal determinables, like those pertaining to attentive foregrounding, or unless “manner” is used in the unhelpfully lax sense in which all sorts of independent aspects of an experience – aspects having nothing to do with the relevant act of representation – can be built into one’s characterisation of the relevant “manner.”

A potential way to bring out the implausibility of positing such a plurality of quasi-perceptual manners is to ask whether it would be possible to experience the football

⁴² See Chalmers (2004) for the terminology of “representational manners.”

⁴³ It is worth noting that this approach points to a formally available way of formulating a version of Labukt’s (2012) “pluralistic hedonic tone view” – on which there is a plurality of “hedonic tones” in virtue of which an experience may be good and thereby count as a pleasure – which avoids the objections I levelled against some further aspects of his view in my critical discussion of what I called the “Normative View” of pleasure’s nature in section 1.1.

Labukt’s own development of the “pluralistic hedonic tone view” leads him into problems if pressed to identify the feature in virtue of what the different “feeling tones” he takes to make up the category of pleasure count as distinctively “hedonic.” His suggestion is that this is a matter of their shared evaluative properties. In other words, he commits himself to a version of the Normative View. Unfortunately, this leads to exactly the worries emphasised in section 1.1 regarding the resulting lack of candidate non-normative grounds to which one could point in accounting the striking evaluative commonalities and differences between pleasant, unpleasant and hedonically neutral experiences.

However, the discussion in the previous paragraphs suggests that equipped with the resources of the Self-Experiential View, one could come up with a more promising way of developing Labukt’s basic idea. In particular, someone open to the Self-Experiential View could claim that pleasures are unified in that they all involve quasi-perceptual representations of their own evaluative properties, but that they are phenomenally diverse because there are various different kinds of pleasure which involve various different kinds of quasi-perceptual manners of representation. One could then hold that it is these sorts of representational commonalities and differences which ground the corresponding evaluative commonalities and differences.

experience as good, and hence pleasant, in the supposedly very different hedonic manner in which we ordinarily experience the taste experience, with all non-hedonic phenomenology held constant. It strikes me as very difficult to make sense of this idea, but it is hard to see how the view which appeals to a plurality of “hedonic manners” would account for this.

Assuming therefore that one opts for the natural understanding of the Self-Experiential View on which it and the Felt-Quality View become natural bedfellows, I think one can make the case that the Self-Experiential View in fact complements the Felt-Quality View in at least three respects.

Firstly, a number of philosophers of mind attracted to the general representationalist credo that all or at least most phenomenal properties are intimately tied, if not even identical to, representational properties. Provided one is sympathetic to this general thesis (a detailed discussion of which would here lead us too far astray), one could view the Self-Experiential View as supplementing the Felt-Quality View with a plausible account of the representational nature of hedonic phenomenology which would otherwise not be easy to secure.

Secondly, a further advantage to supplementing the Felt-Quality View with the Self-Experiential View is brought out by Feldman’s (1988, 64) objection against what he takes to be Moore’s version of the Felt-Quality View which was discussed in section 1.2.4 above.

Feldman’s objection to this sort of Felt-Quality View assumed that the pleasantness-grounding phenomenal aspect involved in pleasure is merely a sort of accompanying “raw feel” which lacks any sort of transparent internal intentional connection to the specific non-hedonic components of the experience which are on that occasion experienced as pleasant. Feldman’s objection to such a view was that it is difficult to explain the apparent

ease with which we are sometimes able to tell which particular non-hedonic aspects of our phenomenology are responsible for the instantiation of specific hedonic qualities. To use his own example, the worry is that when one simultaneously has a pleasant experience of tasting peanuts and an even more pleasant experience of tasting beer, one can (at least sometimes) tell which of the relevant stimuli is the source of the greater pleasure, without engaging in any sort of indirect “causal experimentation.”

However, if the phenomenal quality associated with pleasure is construed not as a “raw feel” but instead as having the sort of intentional structure exhibited by the “evaluative apprehension” posited by my preferred version of the Self-Experiential View (a version which involves the rejection of the “Maximal View” discussed in section 1.2.4), no such problems arise: Such a view would allow one to maintain one can notice that, say, it is one’s taste of beer rather than one’s cotemporaneous taste of peanuts which is responsible for one’s experience of intense pleasure because only the former aspect of one’s phenomenology is experienced as very good, whereas the latter is experienced as merely somewhat good.⁴⁴

If one is impressed by Feldman’s objection to cruder versions of the Felt-Quality View, one can here once again discern a potential complementary role played by the Self-Experiential View in suggesting a different way of developing the approach to which this complaint does not apply.

Thirdly, supplementing the Felt-Quality View with the Self-Experiential View allows its proponents to sidestep the “opposites problem” (cf. e.g. Heathwood 2007a, 27; Aydede 2014, 124). Those who press this objection argue that in contrast to the Desire View, the Felt-Quality View cannot satisfactorily account for the sense in which pleasure and suffering are, in an important sense, opposites of each other, since it lacks the resources to explain why the phenomenal properties that are supposedly respectively shared by

⁴⁴ As in my discussion of Feldman’s argument above, irrelevant features of Feldman’s own chosen example arguably make his argument appear in a less than optimally convincing light.

pleasure and suffering can be considered natural counterparts. With the Self-Experiential View at hand, this is accounted for by pointing to the opposed evaluative contents which are respectively associated with pleasure's and suffering's phenomenologies.⁴⁵

Accordingly, whilst the Self-Experiential View and the Felt-Quality View are, strictly speaking, logically independent, there are natural ways of combining them, and the Self-Experiential View promises to complement the Felt-Quality View in important respects.

2.2. The Self-Experiential View and the Desire View

2.2.1. The incompatibility of the Self-Experiential View and the Desire View

On the most straightforward reading, the Desire View is incompatible with the Self-Experiential View. After all, there does not seem to be a tight modal connection between desiring something and quasi-perceptually experiencing it as good, which means that there will be cases in which one view predicts that an experience counts as pleasant whereas the other predicts that it does not, and *vice versa*.

Surprisingly enough, some theorists have in fact argued that all desires involve quasi-perceptual “seemings” as of the instantiation of evaluative properties. Typically, these theorists also hold that desires are identical to such seemings.⁴⁶ On this stronger second view, the distinction between the Self-Experiential View and the Desire View collapses.

⁴⁵ In conversation, Roger Crisp tentatively suggested a different response to the “opposites problem” which does not require any fancy footwork and is available to proponents of crude versions of the Felt-Quality View. This involves saying that pleasure and suffering are natural opposites in the sense that pleasure is good, suffering is bad, and goodness and badness are natural counterparts on opposing sides of the evaluative spectrum.

In my view, there is a sense in which this manoeuvre threatens to result in little more than ineffective buck-passing. In particular, some of the problems which I see this proposal as facing are in some ways reminiscent of the misgivings based on considerations about the grounds of evaluative properties which I expressed in arguing against what I called the Normative View of the nature of pleasure in section 1.1: If there is a deep evaluative asymmetry between pleasant and unpleasant experiences, it would be highly desirable to point to some corresponding non-normative asymmetry in which it is grounded. In my view, this suggests that on the response in question, a version of the “opposites problem” still rears its head one level down.

⁴⁶ See Baker (2014, 3, fn. 6) for references.

Of course, I am perfectly happy for others to arrive at (a notational variant of) the Self-Experiential View by (re-)interpreting the Desire View using a conception of desire on which desire involves the instantiation of the right kind of seeming and nothing else. What is important to stress, however, is that one should then be under no illusion that one thereby remains entitled to all the (alleged) advantages which are typically associated with the Desire View. In particular, the proponent of the Desire View so interpreted can no longer claim that her view predicts that experiencing pleasure necessarily involves being motivated in certain ways.⁴⁷

At any rate, such accounts of desire do not seem to be what proponents of the Desire View typically have in mind, and strike me as unhelpfully revisionary. Firstly, unconscious desires would seem to pose a clear counterexample to the claim that desires always involve such seeming states, as does the more general category of desires which are not also what Johnston (2001) famously calls “affective desires”, i.e. do not also involve one’s being relevantly “taken with” their objects. In these cases, there is simply no temptation to claim that the presence of desire brings with it something resembling the perceptual presence of normative properties.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ This point may appear obvious. I am nonetheless flagging it because this very type of sleight-of-hand appears to play a role in some prominent applications of quasi-perceptual accounts of desire in other contexts.

For instance, Oddie (2005, ch. 2) argues that on a construal of desires as experiences of value, they can be said to play a fundamental epistemological role. He then argues that this, together with the claim that desire inherently motivates, allows one to explain why it should seem odd to assert that something is good without oneself being relevantly motivated (since it is odd to implicitly acknowledge a lack of justification for what one is asserting).

Oddie’s purported explanation faces a clear dilemma: Either desire is a just a kind of evaluative seeming, in which case it is not inherently motivational, or it is a hybrid state involving both seemings and motivational properties, in which case its epistemological role is not fundamental, since its epistemic significance is presumably “screened off” by its seeming-component. And if the epistemic significance of the compound state is indeed screened off by the epistemic significance of its seeming-component, then it is no longer clear why we should expect there to be something odd about expressing an evaluative belief whilst denying that one is in the corresponding compound desire/seeming-state, as long as one leaves open the possibility that the relevant belief is justified by the relevant seeming-state’s occurring in isolation. Either way, Oddie’s story which is meant to account for the internalist intuition at issue collapses.

⁴⁸ A clear assessment of the dialectic here is sometimes impeded by the extent to which disagreement is merely verbal. For example, when Oddie (2005, 42) argues for the surprising claim that “[t]he desire that P is ... P’s being experienced as good”, closer inspection reveals that he is in fact using the term “desire” in an idiosyncratically narrow way, to refer more specifically to desires with an associated affective phenomenology (73, fn. 2).

Moreover, we ordinarily take desiring something to be very closely tied to being relevantly motivated, an assumption which is in fact often stressed by proponents of the Desire View (see section 2.2.2 below). However, properties characterising how things appear to one and properties characterising in what ways one is motivated clearly seem to be distinct existences. Since these two aspects supposedly associated with desire could therefore be factored apart, one can argue that desires ordinarily understood couldn't possibly be identical to the relevant seeming-states; at best, they could be compound states involving (perhaps among other things) a motivational and a seeming-component.

On more orthodox versions of the Desire View, the mere direction of a desire in a more ordinary, broad sense, in which desiring doesn't entail the instantiation of evaluative seemings, is sufficient to render an experience pleasant. Such views do not strike me as very plausible, even if we require the relevant desire to be an occurrent, phenomenally conscious one. As a number of authors have noted, it just isn't particularly plausible that merely directing a desire on an experience or aspect thereof suffices to render it pleasant (cf. e.g. Feldman 1988, 64-5; Crisp 2006, 107).⁴⁹

The Self-Experiential View accounts for this, of course, by attributing the absence of pleasantness in such cases to the absence of the right kind of experiential self-evaluation; desired experiences aren't pleasant unless they are also experienced as good.

As a supporting consideration in the Self-Experiential View's favour here, some might want to point to the intuition, which a number of theorists of pleasure have emphasised,⁵⁰ that pleasure phenomenology not merely causally explains but moreover seems to rationalise affective or aversive behaviour. Whilst it is clear that the presence of an appropriate evaluative seeming could rationalise such behaviour, one might argue that it

⁴⁹ Pace Sobel (2011, 589) and Heathwood (2007a, 30), I don't think this becomes any more plausible if one requires the desire to be one for the relevant experience's "intrinsic qualitative features."

⁵⁰ Cf. e.g. Helm (2002); O'Sullivan & Schroer (2012); Bain (2013).

is more doubtful that the mere presence of the right kind of desire could play the relevant rationalising role.⁵¹

This leaves a view on which the instantiation of pleasantness is contingent on the presence of an evaluative seeming, but also on some further condition which is associated with the presence of the right kind of desire. If one is open to taking desire to be a compound state consisting of a seeming-component and some further element, one can view this as a candidate precisification of the Desire View as originally stated; otherwise, one can regard it simply as a sort of hybrid view.

It seems to me that the sorts of basic conceivability considerations discussed in section 1.1 fail to show that any such further feature is required for the presence of pleasantness, and if anything suggest that no such further feature is required. Accordingly, the proponent of such a rival view to my preferred Self-Experiential View stands in need of a solid argument for thinking otherwise. As I shall argue in the next two sections, the central extant arguments for assigning desire a central role in one's theory of pleasure do not succeed in this regard.

2.2.2. Pleasure and motivation

Many proponents of the Desire View consider it an important advantage of their view that it can account for the existence of strong modal ties between pleasure and motivation. They often consider it obvious that one could not be in a pleasant or unpleasant state without, respectively, being disposed to act towards, respectively, its continuation or cessation (cf. e.g. Korsgaard 1996, 147; Brandt 1979, 38). And if one takes desire to enjoy constitutive links to motivation, this is a straightforward consequence of the Desire View.

⁵¹ The Desire View's proponent (or, for that matter, the proponent of any other view) could of course claim that the way in which hedonic phenomenology rationalises action towards it is explained by the fact that it is rendered actually good or bad by the presence of the right kind of desire. However, as explained in more detail in fn. 40 above, even bracketing doubts about this evaluative claim, it would then arguably still not account for the way in which hedonic experience seems to rationalise action more specifically from the experiencing subject's perspective.

In contrast, others (e.g. Goldstein 1989, 260; Crisp 2006, 107; Sidgwick 1907, 2.2.2), regard the motivational associations of pleasure and suffering as contingent psychological regularities in the actual world; in principle, someone with a psychology very different from ours could, for example, be in an intensely unpleasant state whilst in no way being motivated to get out of it.

I side with the second group, and do not think that the Self-Experiential View is discredited by the fact that in the plausible absence of constitutive links between motivation and evaluative experience, it is in conflict with the first sort of picture.

There are some candidate debunking considerations which might partly explain the intuition which leads others to the opposing modal judgment that pleasure entails motivation. For example, a suggestion available to the Self-Experiential View's proponent is that pleasure experience involves the (inaccurate) representation of instances of specifically motivational internalist evaluative properties, i.e. of evaluative properties which exhibit necessary ties to motivation (for example by being such that anyone experiencing an instance of such a property, or anyone who judges that it is instantiated, is automatically relevantly motivated). This would explain why those which take the apparent nature of pleasure – the way pleasant experience presents itself as being – at face value would be drawn to the ultimately mistaken conclusion that pleasure necessarily motivates. Whilst I don't want to place much weight on this specific considerations here, I think it has at least some phenomenological plausibility and seems to be underexplored.

Moreover, I think one can advance a more direct argument against views on which pleasure enjoys constitutive ties to motivation, which turns on observations regarding apparent epistemic differences between facts about pleasure and facts about motivation.

One version of this argument runs as follows: Consider a world in which the connection between agents' phenomenology and their dispositions to act is entirely chaotic, so that agents are constantly surprised by their own subsequent behaviour and are unable to make

any strong predictions regarding how they are currently disposed to act. Let us further suppose, however, that their introspective capabilities are completely intact. Such a world strikes me as clearly conceivable, and it is difficult to see what considerations could overturn this intuition.

We can now consider the epistemic situation of such a subject upon undergoing an intensely pleasant experience. It seems plausible that given how I constructed the case, this subject will be unable to come to know facts about her motivations, including facts about whether she is disposed to act towards the continuation or cessation of her current experience. Moreover, on a view on which there are constitutive ties between pleasure and motivation, this means that facts about whether she is currently undergoing a pleasure will also be largely beyond her ken. However, this strikes me as a very counterintuitive verdict regarding such cases; in the presence of normal introspective capabilities, it simply does not seem plausible that the localised inability to predict her actions suffices to put facts about whether she is currently undergoing an intensely pleasant or unpleasant experience outside of her epistemic reach. Accordingly, we should reject the view that there are constitutive ties between pleasure and motivation.^{52,53}

If such considerations fail to move theorists of pleasure closer towards a consensus, one could start speculating that the disagreement here may have a merely verbal aspect to it.

⁵² Kahane (2009, 334-5) runs an argument which exhibits broad structural similarities to my argument here against the view that dislike – the attitude which renders an experience unpleasant – is an “intentional state” rather than a “conscious state.” In particular, he argues that analogues of certain claims about the epistemology of suffering which he considers plausible (e.g. that suffering implies that one believes that one is suffering) are true of conscious states but not of intentional states. My argument relies on no such (in my view highly dubious) principles, and Kahane’s own account – on which dislike is a phenomenal state with conceptual ties to motivation – seems vulnerable to the line of objection presented here.

Perhaps Kahane would deny that in the case of the phenomenology of suffering, a scenario in which a reliable connection between phenomenology and motivation is lacking is even conceivable. However, this claim strikes me as implausible, not only because it commits one to odd necessary connections between seemingly distinct existences. It would also seem to suggest, in my view just as objectionably, that when one comes to know that one exhibits suffering phenomenology, one could in principle come to conclusively rule out – simply through a combination of introspection and *a priori* reasoning – sceptical scenarios in which one is not relevantly motivated, independently of any other background knowledge.

⁵³ As Rachels (2002, 196) appositely points out, the view under consideration would also entail that agents incapable of action can’t experience pleasure. But on the face of it, it seems perfectly conceivable for there to be, for instance, a disembodied ghost which exists only for an instance and is hence incapable of action, and yet experiences pleasure.

For instance, it might be that what at bottom accounts for the apparent difference in opinion is that theorists like Korsgaard and Brandt use “pleasant” to pick out a certain crude functional property which usually accompanies positive hedonic experience, e.g. the property of having such-and-such behavioural and psychological associations, whereas the concept(s) most of us express when we use the term “pleasant” pick out finer-grained representational or phenomenal features.⁵⁴

In fact, given the persistent correlation between these properties in the actual world, it seems not all that implausible to think that our ordinary use of “pleasant” simply doesn’t decide matters one way or the other (although I must confess that my own first-order intuitions favour the latter reading pretty decisively). So one might think that we should proceed by simply distinguishing simply a plurality of pleasure concepts (*pleasure*₁, *pleasure*₂, *pleasure*₃, ... etc.), and leave the question of which of these “pleasure” really expresses to descriptive linguists.⁵⁵

Although I am very sympathetic to this sort of philosophical manoeuvre in general and to some extent also in this specific context, I think it would be wrong to think that all of the disagreement in this area is merely verbal. To take an especially clear case, consider the fact that whilst it may be that proponents of the Desire View and the Self-Experiential View broadly agree on the sorts of circumstances (picked out in some neutral terminology) under which actual subjects typically experience pleasure, some proponents of the Desire View will deny that these sorts of circumstances are really at all

⁵⁴ Interestingly, Chalmers (1996, 17) specifically chooses the example of “pain” to illustrate the general phenomenon of how many everyday mental concepts have both phenomenal and psychological components, and are arguably even ambiguous between corresponding phenomenal and psychological concepts.

⁵⁵ Arguably, we already have reason to believe that unfruitful verbal disagreement of this kind has historical precedent in the debate about the nature of hedonic experience. For instance, it used to be a matter of debate whether it is possible for there to be experiences of pain that aren’t unpleasant, a question which is today often regarded as having been resolved by empirical means in favour of those who give the affirmative answer to this question. In retrospect, it seems to me that this debate could have been side-stepped simply by distinguishing between a narrow conception of pain (e.g. as involving both a sensory-nociceptive and an affective component) and a broader conception of pain (e.g. as involving the sensory-nociceptive component, without any additional requirement regarding affect), without any tangible loss of philosophical surplus value.

accompanied by common phenomenal features or evaluative seemings with the same contents; they will deny that such cases form a phenomenal or (non-conative) representational kind. This clearly amounts to more than verbal disagreement.

Moreover generally, the disagreement between proponents of the Desire View and the Self-Experiential View becomes nonverbal if one holds fixed certain ties between pleasure and value theory, such as, to consider some very rough initial approximations, the claim that all and only pleasures exhibit a certain kind of intrinsic value, or, more neutrally, that all and only pleasures are such that there is at least *prima facie* intuition that they exhibit a certain kind of intrinsic value. The task of evaluating which theory of pleasure is more plausible then becomes one of assessing whether the relevant evaluative intuitions apply in certain hypothetical cases in which, for instance, desire is held constant but evaluative seemings are absent or *vice versa*, i.e. the same sorts of hypothetical cases which were used to tease apart the different views in my discussion above. Importantly, I would expect this dialectic to continue to play out in a broadly parallel fashion. For instance, as far as my *prima facie* evaluative intuitions are concerned, it doesn't seem like the presence of the right sort of motivational state is either necessary or sufficient to render an experience good or bad in the way in which paradigm cases of actual pleasures and displeasures seem good and bad. Similarly, it doesn't seem plausible to me that whether one is in the sort of state which grounds the value of paradigm cases of pleasure is something which could radically transcend a subject's subjective perspective, in the way in which facts about motivation arguably could.

Even an error-theorist can agree that there is value in this sort of work, since it forces value theorists to pin down their views and offer a clearer target for discussion. For instance, if the *prima facie* intuition that a hypothetical experience is bad tracks the presence of an appropriate evaluative appearance, then as we saw above, some potential avenues for running a debunking argument which target these intuitions suggest themselves.

In fact, on a personal note, I take the primary epistemic value which I derive from having gone through the reasoning outlined in this chapter to stem not so much from having a better sense of the intension of “pleasure”, but rather from having arrived at a clearer sense of the sort of feature which seems to be most intimately bound up with my evaluative intuitions regarding different sorts of experiences. In some respects, this gain in clarity has in turn placed me in a better position to reassess my previous, in this regard less informed convictions regarding their epistemic credentials. The hope would be that some of these benefits carry across to the intersubjective case.⁵⁶

2.2.3. *Pleasure, like and dislike*

The Desire View is often motivated by emphasising that we ordinarily take one’s experience’s being pleasant or unpleasant to be a matter of involving a hedonically neutral phenomenal aspect which one likes or dislikes. This would make it easy to account for why one may now enjoy tastes that didn’t give one any pleasure when one was younger, and for why someone suffering from pain asymbolia can experience pain without finding it unpleasant⁵⁷: The reason is, in the first case, that one now likes the relevant tastes whereas one didn’t like them before, and, in the second case, that the pain asymbolic does not dislike the sensation of pain.

However, it strikes me as rash to take this observation to establish or even just suggest the truth of the Desire View. The impulse to do so seems to stem from a background commitment to the claim that the additional ingredient of like or dislike which accounts for whether a phenomenal aspect is experienced as pleasant or unpleasant must be a desire or desire-like attitude.⁵⁸ But it is not clear to me what justifies this assumption.

⁵⁶ Part of the reason for framing my discussion as a discussion of nature’s pleasure was that this made it easier to tie it into an existing debate, and thereby at least to some extent avoid concerns regarding whether this is indeed the case.

⁵⁷ See Grahek (2007) for a comprehensive survey of such pathological cases.

⁵⁸ Cf. e.g. Hare (1964); Pitcher (1970); Hall (1989); Brandt (1979, 132); Tye (1995); Clark (2005).

Of course, I agree that the observation that pleasantness is a matter of liking does indeed suggest that whether an experience is experienced as pleasant or not is a matter of the subject taking a certain stance towards the sensation in question (namely, that of like or dislike). Moreover, perhaps there is a pre-theoretical basis for taking like to be a pro-attitude with some sort of internal intentional structure, and hence to reject a view on which it involves just some non-intentional phenomenal element, as a proponent of a crude version of the Felt-Quality View would presumably have to maintain. However, I see little reason for thinking that it counts against all views other than the Desire View, including, for example, views which construe this pro-attitude in (Self-Experiential-View-friendly) quasi-perceptual terms, as consisting in the right kind of reflexive evaluative experience.

Here it is worth noting that when speaking loosely, some proponents of the Desire View who motivate their views by emphasising the role of like and dislike occasionally come close to endorsing claims which sounds a lot like the Self-Experiential View. Hall (1989), for instance, sometimes speaks of like as the attitude of “viewing as good” the experience which is being liked. This might legitimately prompt one to speculate whether the Desire View owes part of its popularity to the fact that the Self-Experiential View hasn’t been sufficiently salient as an option on the theoretical menu.

In fact, proponents of the Desire View sometimes make cursory remarks suggesting that they are open to the idea that like is some kind of pro-attitude which is not a desire in any strict sense (see e.g. Heathwood 2007a, 33). However, this sort of sanguine attitude clearly invites the objection that even placing correct emphasis on the role of like and dislike in hedonic experience leaves open a significantly wider range of theoretical options than many proponents of the Desire View implicitly assume.

Accordingly, I think that reflection on the role of like and dislike in grounding pleasantness and unpleasantness in no way casts doubt on the Self-Experiential View.

2.2.4. *The heterogeneity of pleasure phenomenology*

One of the stock objection against the Felt-Quality View is the so-called heterogeneity objection. According to this objection, when we reflect on the phenomenology of hedonic experience, we find no single common phenomenal ingredient which is shared by all experiences of a given hedonic type. Typically, proponents of this objection try to elicit this intuition from their readers by asking them to think of a range of pleasures which differ radically in their sensory nature. So for example, Feldman (1997b, 449) asks us to “[t]hink of an array of typical sensory pleasures: the taste of sparkling cold beer; the smell of roses; the feeling in your nether parts when reaching fruition in happy sex.” As a supporting consideration, proponents of the heterogeneity objection often assert that it seems very difficult if not impossible to introspectively isolate a phenomenal quality associated with pleasantness.

Whilst not everyone who presses the heterogeneity objection is a proponent of the Desire View (Feldman being a case in point), the objection typically plays a central role in sympathetic discussions of this view. Moreover, as I mentioned above, although the Self-Experiential View does not have the Felt-Quality View’s commitment to the phenomenal homogeneity of pleasure as a direct consequence, I argued the strongest versions of the view should accept this claim, which calls for some remarks regarding my take on the matter.

Personally, I was very surprised to find that anyone would find the heterogeneity objection compelling upon first encountering it; of course there is some phenomenal respect in which all pleasant experiences resemble each other, and similarly for unpleasant experiences.⁵⁹ Whilst it is true that pleasant experiences may be partly constituted by sensations that have nothing in common, there is clearly an aspect of their global phenomenology which they share – an aspect in virtue of which they can all be said to *feel enjoyable* (cf. Crisp 2006).

⁵⁹ Schroeder (2001, fn. 20) shares my sentiment.

I must moreover confess that I have similar difficulty empathising with the intuition regarding the lack of introspective isolatability. It seems very plausible to me that one can attend to changes in pleasantness; if an experience goes from being pleasant to being unpleasant but otherwise remains phenomenally as similar as possible, one can direct one's attention to the phenomenal change associated with the change in pleasantness. Likewise, it seems to me that one can attend to – and thereby “introspectively isolate” – the relevant feature before such a change has occurred. So I am also inclined to reject the key premise of this supporting consideration.

Nevertheless, I think there may be some scope for dialectical progress on this issue which goes beyond reciprocal bullet-biting.

In fact, I think one can provide a fairly compelling argument against the claim that hedonic experience really are phenomenally radically heterogeneous, which runs as follows: Whether an experience is pleasant or not makes a phenomenal difference; any difference in hedonic respects is accompanied by a difference in phenomenal respects. That is to say, whenever one experience is pleasant or unpleasant to a given degree and another experience is pleasant or unpleasant to a different degree, there must be a difference in what it is like to experience them – no two experiences are phenomenal duplicates whilst differing in respect to pleasantness.⁶⁰ This observation strikes me as extremely hard to deny, but it suggests that whatever feature it is that accounts for whether an otherwise hedonically neutral experience is experienced as pleasant or unpleasant –

⁶⁰ Kahane (2009, 333) also employs reflection on cases of “hedonic inversion”, in his case to argue for the claim that hedonic value supervenes on, and ultimately obtains in virtue of, hedonic phenomenology.

In the present context, we could redeploy this sort of principle as a supporting intuition in favour of the thesis with which I am here concerned: There is a strong intuition to the effect that pleasant experiences have their value in virtue of how they feel, but this intuition would clearly be incoherent if an experience could feel exactly the same way and yet be unpleasant or hedonically neutral.

call this feature “like*” – this feature makes or is associated with some sort of phenomenal contribution to any experience which it accompanies.⁶¹

Now in principle, this still leaves open the view that while within each context, like* makes some phenomenal contribution to the experience which it accompanies, there is no pattern to the phenomenal contribution it makes across contexts. However, such a picture does not seem attractive, in part for the sorts of reasons I adduced in favour of rejecting the idea of appealing to a plurality of manners of experiencing one’s experience as good.

Note here that such a view does not seem to become any more plausible if one endorses a version of the Desire View. For in order to explain why liking* a sensation has phenomenal implications, the most natural move for a proponent of the Desire View would be to claim that liking* is a matter of having a conscious desire aimed at one’s present experience. However, it is very difficult to see how such a conscious desire could fail to make some sort of constant phenomenal contribution across contexts. Appealing to a phenomenologically heterogeneous plurality of “conscious manners” of desiring arguably stands in even greater lack of antecedent plausibility than the corresponding proposal in the self-experiential context.

Perhaps the Self-Experiential View also provides the resources to account for some aspects of the supposedly greater difficulty associated with hedonic-phenomenal introspection.

To see why one might think this, note that, as we shall discuss in section 1.2.3.2 of chapter 4, it is plausible that we typically attend to phenomenal properties by “looking through” these properties and attending to the objects and features which they represent. So for example, someone undergoing an experience as of a red object will have to attend to the

⁶¹ Naturally, the standard view regarding cases of pain asymbolia is therefore also that the asymbolic subjects’ absence of dislike for their pain experiences makes a phenomenal difference (cf. Grahek 2007; Aydede 2008).

relevant external object and its redness in order to attend to the corresponding phenomenal quality of his experience, phenomenal redness.

On the Self-Experiential View, this would suggest that attending to one's hedonic phenomenology is a matter of attending to an aspect of one's phenomenology and its apparent value. It would not be surprising if this often leads to attention to the non-hedonic phenomenal properties which constitute that aspect of one's phenomenology as a consequence. If this is so, maybe one should expect selective introspective attention to (or "introspective isolation" of) one's hedonic phenomenology to be somewhat more difficult than in the case of other phenomenal properties. Perhaps this goes some way towards accommodating the intuition that introspective isolation is especially difficult in the hedonic context.

3. Conclusion

In this chapter, my primary aim was to develop and make the case for the Self-Experiential View about the nature of pleasure and suffering. Along the way, I commented on various related questions and debates pertaining to the metaphysics of hedonic experience.

In section 1, I defended the Self-Experiential View against a range of initial objections, and used the opportunity to characterise my preferred way of developing this approach.

In section 2, I located the Self-Experiential View in the existing debate regarding the nature of pleasure, with a particular focus on its relationship to the two accounts which dominate the debate, the Felt-Quality View and the Desire View.

I explained that the Self-Experiential View is not only compatible with the Felt-Quality View, but also naturally seen as complementing the latter in important respects. Furthermore, I argued that whilst the Desire View is naturally understood in such a way as to render it a rival to the Self-Experiential View, there are good reasons to favour the

Self-Experiential View. Moreover, the central motivations for the Desire View are either flawed, fail to confer on it any kind of differential advantage, or even end up revealing further shortcomings the approach.

Accordingly, proper attention to the Self-Experiential View and its merits promises to help us advance the debate regarding the nature of pleasure and suffering.

Chapter 3: Naïve Realism about hedonic-evaluative experience

0. Introduction

Back in chapter 1, I introduced the Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis. According to this thesis, when one undergoes a pleasant experience, one typically stands in an especially intimate experiential relationship – “acquaintance” – with its value, and when one forms, on this basis, a corresponding belief that it is valuable, this belief thereby enjoys a distinctive, especially robust kind of foundational epistemic support.

In chapter 1, I identified two more specific ways of further pinning down the notion of “acquaintance” which seem especially pertinent in the context of hedonic experience and value. These gave rise to two corresponding interpretations of the Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis which I singled out for further investigation.

On the first of these more specific versions of the Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis, the version the assessment of which will be the subject of this chapter, the notion of “acquaintance” is understood in the way in which it features in contemporary Naïve Realist accounts of perceptual experience. In other words, according to

the *Naïve Realist Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis*, the metaphysics of our experience of pleasure’s value conforms to a close analogue of the Naïve Realist model of veridical perceptual experience, and this fact accounts for the distinctive epistemic status of our hedonic-evaluative beliefs.

As I shall explain in greater detail in section 1, I think that Naïve Realism about perceptual experience is best understood as the claim that when one genuinely perceives an object as exhibiting certain features, one’s phenomenology is not just caused by but in fact constituted by the perceived object and features. To say that we enjoy “(Naïve Realist) perceptual acquaintance” with a particular feature then simply amounts to the claim that

this sort of constitutive relationship, or perhaps a more basic underlying relation which enables it, obtains.

In a parallel fashion, one could be a Naïve Realist about hedonic-evaluative experience, and maintain, correspondingly, that when one experiences one's pleasant experience as good, one's phenomenology of being so aware of its goodness is similarly constituted by this very evaluative property.⁶² On such a view, the goodness of one's pleasure is a constituent of what it is like to experience one's pleasure as good.

Now why should we be interested in the Naïve Realist Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis – the thesis that Naïve Realism about hedonic-evaluative experience is true and that this fact accounts for the distinctive, especially robust epistemic status enjoyed by our hedonic-evaluative beliefs?

Firstly and most straightforwardly, the Naïve Realist model is simply one salient way of cashing out the idea of what it could mean to enjoy especially intimate or direct experiential contact with an instantiated property, which is precisely the idea the plausibility and potential significance of which we are trying to assess.

Secondly, most relevantly for my present purposes, a number of philosophers have argued that if Naïve Realism is true of perceptual experience, then this has important epistemological implications. In particular, they argue that veridical perceptual experience which conforms to the Naïve Realist picture of acquaintance-involving constitution can, precisely in virtue of being relevantly world-involving, provide one with distinctive justification to reject sceptical hypotheses according to which things are not as they perceptually appear to be. This would suggest that in a parallel fashion, a Naïve

⁶² Interestingly, Goldstein (1989, 273), who I quoted as an apparent supporter of a particular version of the hedonic-evaluative acquaintance thesis back in chapter 1 (fn. 2), could be read as having something like Naïve Realism about hedonic-evaluative phenomenology in mind when he writes:

“Appreciating [pleasure’s] value and understanding what pleasure is are not independent projects. Intrinsic goodness is not merely incidental to pleasure; I suggest it is fundamental to what makes an experience pleasure.”

Realist about hedonic-evaluative experience could try to make the case that in virtue of being constituted by the very evaluative features at issue, one's experience of pleasure's value can (under certain circumstances) provide one with distinctive justification to reject sceptical hypotheses according to which one's experience doesn't exhibit the evaluative property which it appears to exhibit. In other words, not only does the Naïve Realist model, transposed to the hedonic-evaluative case, give us a way to cash out the idea of distinctively intimate experiential contact; it also, more specifically, gives us a way of making more precise this idea in a way which, in the original perceptual context, many have taken to have precisely the sorts of epistemological implications with which we are here concerned.

Thirdly, Naïve Realism about perceptual experience is typically motivated on phenomenological grounds. In other words, many of its proponents emphasise that it does a better job than alternative views of capturing how veridical perceptual experience seems to us to be. Specifically, it is often emphasised by its proponents that it is more successful in reflecting the way in which perceptual experience seems to be “relational” (Crane 2006), “bring one into direct *contact* with *remote* objects” (Broad 1952, 32-3), or place “objects and their features directly before the mind” (Sturgeon 2000, 9). In my view, it is plausible that the sort of phenomenological intuition at which these authors are gesturing has just as much, if not even greater force in the hedonic-evaluative context; *prima facie*, when you undergo a pleasant experience and become aware of its apparent goodness, it's goodness similarly appears to be “directly before the mind”, and what it is like to be so aware equally seems to fundamentally derive from this evaluative feature of one's experience. So if phenomenology gives one reason to take seriously Naïve Realism about perceptual experience, there is certainly good reason to take seriously Naïve Realism about hedonic-evaluative experience.

Fourthly, one could also approach the Naïve Realist Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis from the opposite direction. In particular, as an alternative way of coming at the issue, one could instead take as one's starting point the intuition that the evaluative beliefs

we form based on our hedonic-evaluative experience are special in epistemic respects, and then, provided one buys the claim that their Naïve Realist constitution would allow experiences to do distinctive justificatory work, try to infer Naïve Realism about hedonic-evaluative experience as a compelling explanation of this dialectically prior epistemological thesis.

In other words, there seem to be a range of angles from which an assessment of the Naïve Realist Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis seems worth investigating. In undertaking this task, I shall proceed as follows. In section 1, I justify my way of unpacking the idea of Naïve Realist acquaintance. In section 2, I raise a difficulty which afflicts Naïve Realism in the hedonic-evaluative case in a unique way. This issue turns on the observation that such a view seems to narrow down our choice of candidate grounds for hedonic-evaluative properties (i.e. the candidates for what makes certain experiences good) in a problematic manner. Moreover, I argue that the situation is exacerbated by the way in which hedonic-evaluative awareness and hedonic value seem to be intimately modally related. In section 3, I discuss in what ways, if any, the Naïve Realist about hedonic-evaluative experience could hope to give a satisfactory account of hedonic-evaluative phenomenology in the actual world even if she is willing to allow for the possibility in principle of nonveridical hedonic-evaluative experience. In doing so, I draw various connections with parallel arguments which in my view spell doom for Naïve Realism about perceptual experience, and explain how one might try to use these to put pressure on some versions of Naïve Realism about hedonic-evaluative experience. In section 4, I assess the potential anti-sceptical epistemic significance of Naïve Realism. I argue that in the perceptual case, there is good reason to doubt that Naïve Realist acquaintance is of the relevant kind of epistemic significance, and that the considerations which push one towards this conclusion also cast doubt on Naïve Realism's epistemological significance in the hedonic-evaluative case, unless further features – features which somehow make this context distinctive – are identified. Finally, in section 5, I assess what I take to be the only feature which might fit this bill – the claim that in the hedonic-evaluative context, Naïve Realism enjoys *a priori* status – and explain why

this still can't serve as a defensible basis for the vindication of the Naïve Realist Hedonic-Evaluative acquaintance Thesis.

1. Characterising Naïve Realism

In the introductory section, I glossed the basic idea behind Naïve Realism about perceptual experience in a fairly specific way. In this section, I shall say a bit more to expand upon and justify this characterisation of the view, especially since some of these clarificatory considerations will be of recurring relevance in subsequent sections.

What I take to be the core idea espoused by Naïve Realists about perceptual experience is best introduced by way of contrast with the more orthodox rival Representationalist view of perceptual experience. According to

Representationalism, perceptual phenomenology is grounded in representational characteristics; to have a perceptual experience of a given phenomenal type is fundamentally a matter of representing a particular sort of content in a certain way.

For example, Representationalists will hold that exhibiting perceptual phenomenology as of a red vase is fundamentally a matter of representing there to be a red vase in a certain manner.

Proponents of Representationalism typically also hold that successful, “veridical” perception of objects and (some of) their features is a matter of instantiating a perceptual phenomenal property which is appropriately caused by these objects and features, and whose constituting representational content in some sense matches the scene in question. So for example, a Representationalist might hold that genuinely perceiving a spherical vase at a particular location is a matter of exhibiting a phenomenal property which involves the representation of there being a spherical vase at the relevant location, and whose occurrence is appropriately caused by the vase and its shape.

In contrast, according to what I consider the most important version of

Naïve Realism, when one enjoys veridical perceptual experience, the perceived property-instances are not just causally responsible for our perceptual phenomenology, but rather constitutive of the relevant phenomenal properties.⁶³

Naïve Realists typically hold that that when it is instantiated, this sort of constitutive connection between perceptual phenomenology and the environment holds in virtue of an appropriate causal connection between the perceiver on the one hand and the perceived objects and features on the other. The subject can then be said to be “perceptually acquainted” or “presented” with these features.

In effect, I have just presented the fundamental disagreement between Naïve Realists and Representationalists as a disagreement about the metaphysical grounds of perceptual phenomenal properties. In other words, as I see things, Naïve Realists and Representationalists at bottom disagree about the kind of feature in virtue of which subjects of perceptual experience exhibit the properties which characterise what it is like for them to be in these states. Whilst this way of framing the debate enjoys increasing popularity,⁶⁴ it is worth commenting briefly on the fact that Naïve Realism is sometimes formulated in different, non-equivalent terms.

One example comes from the work of Martin, one of the prominent proponents of this school of thought, who sometimes glosses Naïve Realism as the view that perceived objects and their features are “essential constituents” of veridical perceptual episodes (2004, 39), and sometimes as the thesis that no experiential episode of the same “fundamental kind” could occur in their absence (*ibid.*; see also Logue 2013). Another such instance is Campbell’s (2002, 118) gloss of Naïve Realism as the view that “the

⁶³ Some Naïve Realists prefer to formulate things in terms of cognate relata such as facts or states of affairs, rather than in terms of property-instances; these subtleties won’t significantly affect the dialectic explored in what follows.

⁶⁴ Enthusiasts regarding the Naïve Realist approach who explicitly adopt this sort of conception in formulating their central view include Brewer 2007, 89, 2008, 171; Hellie 2007, 264-5, 2013, 150; Fish 2009, 16; Nudds 2009, 335, Kennedy 2013, 230. Cf. Johnston 2004, 146. Even those who primarily rely on other definitions (see next paragraph) make remarks which signal openness to such a gloss of their view; cf. e.g. Campbell 2002, 1145, 2008, 668; Martin 1997, 83, 2004, 64, 2006, 369. Opponents of Naïve Realism who identify this conception as the central target of discussion include Pautz 2010, 264, fn. 7, 290; Smith 2010, 388; McLaughlin 2010, 246.

relation ‘S perceives O’ is taken as primitive” instead of being “analysed” in causal terms. These conceptions of the view are clearly not equivalent to that sketched above.

In my view, one forbidding problem with all these alternative formulations of the central Naïve Realist credo is that they fail to mark out a view which Representationalists cannot accept. For example, it would appear open to Representationalists to individuate experiential episodes not just in terms of their representational properties but also partly in terms of their relation to objects in the environment, so that a given veridical perceptual episode could not occur in the absence of the relevant perceived objects and its features (cf. Pautz 2007, fn. 19, 538-9, 2010, 286-7; McLaughlin 2010, 244-5). This would seem to rule out Martin’s first definition as reflecting the commitment which is distinctive of Naïve Realism. Similarly, it is not clear why “typing” experiences broadly in an analogous manner wouldn’t allow Representationalists to honour Martin’s claim involving “fundamental kinds” (Pautz 2007, 528-9; Fish 2009, 17). And finally, it seems perfectly possible (and in fact advisable) for Representationalists to deny that the notion of “appropriate causation” to which they appeal in their characterisation of veridical perception can be exhaustively analysed in terms of more basic concepts, and hence to deny the claim about conceptual primitiveness emphasised by Campbell (cf. Pautz 2007, 527-8; McLaughlin 2010, 244-5).

Since these alternative definitions hence fail to carve out a position which is distinctive in the relevant sort of way, it strikes me as preferable to characterise Naïve Realism about perceptual experience in something like the manner suggested above.⁶⁵ Moreover, the very same considerations of course apply when Naïve Realism is applied to the hedonic-evaluative case. Accordingly, insofar as we are interested in the extent to which the basic idea at which Naïve Realists are most charitably interpreted as gesturing in the perceptual context has plausibility in the hedonic-evaluative case, I think we have good reason to

⁶⁵ Of course, one could view all this as a matter of mere verbal stipulation. But there is still a relevant substantive question of what the most interesting position is at which the majority of card-carrying friends of Naïve Realism could most charitably be interpreted as gesturing.

focus on my earlier characterisation of Naïve Realism about perceptual experience in terms of the constitution of hedonic-evaluative phenomenology by the experienced hedonic value.

2. The problem of the evaluative ground

As the attentive reader may already have noticed, Naïve Realism about hedonic-evaluative experience faces a potential initial obstacle which Naïve Realism about the perceptual case does not face.

To get this problem, note that if one takes Naïve Realism about hedonic-evaluative awareness to be true and our phenomenology as of pleasure's value thereby to be constituted by this very evaluative feature, then this clearly rules out a view on which this phenomenology is the ground of pleasure's value. After all, grounding is naturally taken to be an irreflexive relation. This means that if pleasure's value grounds the phenomenology of hedonic-evaluative awareness, it cannot itself be grounded in this phenomenal feature.

As a result, the Naïve Realist about hedonic-evaluative awareness faces an initial task which proponents of other views do not face: She needs to identify an alternative plausible candidate ground for the value of our pleasures besides our hedonic-evaluative awareness, i.e. a ground besides the phenomenology of experiencing one's experience as good. In fact, in order to avoid the problem of reflexive grounding, Naïve Realism in this context even rules out that this phenomenal aspect is even part of what makes pleasures exhibit the value they typically exhibit. So a wholly distinct basis for hedonic value needs to be identified.

It is easy to see that a number of considerations encountered in chapter 2 render this implication very problematic. Most straightforwardly, it simply strikes me as very plausible that insofar as pleasures exhibit the value they appear to exhibit, they do so precisely in virtue of being experienced as good; at least part of what renders some

experiences – our pleasant experiences – valuable is precisely that the way in which they *feel good* to their experiencing subjects.

A slightly different way to reinforce essentially the same point is to note, more generally, that it seems plausible that pleasures are good (at least in part) in virtue of how they feel. Yet it seems very difficult, to say the least, to identify any phenomenal features that are systematically associated with being a pleasure other than the phenomenology of being experienced as good. Accordingly, it is difficult to see what plausible candidate grounds for pleasure's value remain once the phenomenology associated with hedonic-evaluative awareness is ruled out.

Relatedly, if one wants to hold on to the simple thought that pleasures are (under certain circumstances) good (at least partly) in virtue of being pleasant, and simultaneously accepts the Self-Experiential View which I defended in chapter 2 – the view that an experience's being pleasant is a matter of it being consciously experienced as good – then this already commits one to the idea that the hedonic-evaluative awareness-phenomenology plays a role in grounding the value of our pleasures. Since Naïve Realists cannot – for the simple reason mentioned above – accept this, they are hence forced to either deny that pleasantness grounds hedonic value, or to find fault with the Self-Experiential View. I think that neither option seems palatable.

Assuming certain background views, one could also reinforce this line of objection in a more direct way, without a detour via the Self-Experiential View, simply by problematising the relevant modal evaluative intuitions.⁶⁶

Firstly, although those sufficiently impressed by cases of wicked or undeserved pleasures may disagree on this point, there seems to be something to the intuition when one experiences one's experience as good in the right sort of way, then it is also *pro tanto*

⁶⁶ These mirror some of the modal arguments which I invoked back in section 1.1 of chapter 2 in supporting my favoured conception of pleasure.

good. So for instance, regarding an experiential episode which involves you undergoing an orgasm in a typical context, one might maintain that as long as you continue to experience your experience as good in the same manner, no other changes to this initially evidently good orgasm experience or its circumstances could undermine its (*pro tanto*) value.

Secondly, some might want to argue that intuitively, an experience couldn't exhibit the value which typically comes with being a pleasure without being experienced as valuable by its subject. Intuitively, if an experience does not *feel good* for the experiencing subject, then it won't exhibit the value which pleasures typically seem to exhibit; insofar as such an experience can be good at all, the source of its value must be an entirely different one. For example, it seems very difficult to see how an intensely pleasant experience – say, an intense orgasm – could retain its value even as its apparent value completely drops out of the experiencing subject's subjective perspective; if it still exhibits value after even after this change, this must now involve a difference instance of this feature, with a very different ground.

As long as one maintains that it is in virtue of being experienced as good that pleasant experiences exhibit value, it is obviously easy to account for this sort of modal data; all one needs to maintain is that the relation between the relevant non-evaluative ground and the corresponding evaluative property is one of *a priori* entailment.

In contrast, if one is committed to a Naïve Realist model, one would have to maintain, in the first case, that hedonic-evaluative awareness phenomenology can only be constituted in the Naïve Realist way, and, in the second case, that the instantiation of hedonic-evaluative properties without corresponding Naïve Realist awareness of them is inconceivable. Although I will leave a more detailed assessment of these claims until section 5 below, I take it that on the face of it, both of them already look rather problematic. The first claim seems unattractively *ad hoc* and lacks precedent in other contexts like the perceptual one, where it is typically at the very least granted – even by

Naïve Realists – that Naïve Realism’s falsity is at least conceivable, or even that there are actual experiences – non-veridical experiences – to which it does not apply). Similarly, the claim that hedonic-evaluative properties necessitate awareness of them despite the fact that this awareness does not serve as their ground seems to commit one to rather peculiar necessary connections between seemingly distinct existences.

Now some may be willing to sever these sorts of modal ties between hedonic-evaluative awareness and hedonic value, in which case the latter two lines of objection become irrelevant. However, as we shall see in the next section, this would then raise further problems for the Naïve Realist about hedonic-evaluative experience.

To briefly summarise the upshots of this section, we saw that Naïve Realism about hedonic-evaluative experience encounters the unique difficulty of requiring one to be able to identify a ground for the evaluative properties of our pleasures besides the phenomenology associated with our hedonic-evaluative awareness itself. Not only does this task seem challenging on the face of it, but we also saw that various further considerations could be employed to render even more acute the difficulties this poses for the Naïve Realist about hedonic-evaluative experience.

3. The problem of bad cases

In the perceptual context, one central problem for Naïve Realists – a problem which appears to play a central role in many opponents’ rejection of their view – stems from the apparent impossibility of extending their account of veridical experience to the “bad cases” of illusion and hallucination.⁶⁷

The basic problem posed by bad cases is easy to grasp: The Naïve Realist account of the metaphysical grounds of the veridical perceptual phenomenal character as characterised

⁶⁷ As these terms feature in the debate about perceptual experience, during an illusion, an object is perceived, but perceptually experienced as exhibiting features which it does not in fact exhibit. In contrast, during a hallucination, one has an experience as of an object exhibiting certain properties, even though no object is being perceived.

above clearly cannot be extended to the phenomenal character of illusory and hallucinatory cases; given that, in such cases, the perceptually experienced property in question is not actually instantiated by a perceived object, the subject of an illusory or hallucinatory experience cannot be claimed to bear the relation of acquaintance to the relevant sort of property-instance. Hence, it cannot be Naïve Realist acquaintance which grounds illusory and hallucinatory phenomenal character.

Whether one thinks this problem has its analogue in the context of assessing Naïve Realism in the hedonic-evaluative case obviously depends on one's background views. One could try to emphasise that it is difficult to conceive of an experience which is experienced as good in the relevant manner without actually being (at least *pro tanto*) good, and on this basis adhere to a view on which illusory or hallucinatory hedonic-evaluative experience is impossible. However, others would insist that cases of wicked or undeserved pleasures constitute counterexamples to this claim; they could maintain that whilst such pleasures may seem good to their experiencing subjects just like other kinds of pleasures do, the evaluative appearances will be misleading in these particular contexts. Against this background, the problem of bad cases would seem to become pertinent.

Admittedly, this latter position could be regarded as something of a niche view, so I shall limit myself to scratching the surface of this set of issues. However, it is also worth mentioning again that, as we saw above, for the Naïve Realist about hedonic-evaluative experience, the kind of modal commitment in question – which rules out the possibility of bad cases by stating that hedonic-evaluative phenomenology can only be constituted in the Naïve Realist way – does itself look somewhat problematic. In this respect, the proponent of this view may have an additional reason for holding that there are cases of nonveridical hedonic-evaluative experience.

I think that the responses to the problem of bad cases available to the Naïve Realist can (in both contexts) be helpfully taxonomised into three broad categories. Drawing parallels

between their application in the original perceptual and the hedonic-evaluative contexts, I shall briefly run through the first and most important of these – Disjunctivism – in section 3.1, and comment on the other two versions – Eliminativism and what I label Revisionism – in section 3.2. Finally, in section 3.3, I summarise some key upshots of this discussion.

3.1. Disjunctivism

The first general Naïve Realist strategy of responding to a given type of illusory or hallucinatory experience consists in conceding that such experiences do on occasion occur in the actual world, whilst offering an account of the grounds of the nonveridical phenomenology present in such a case which does not appeal to acquaintance with the features exhibited by an external object.

So for instance, the Naïve Realist about perceptual experience might concede, upon being presented with the hypothetical case of appropriately stimulated brains in vats which exhibit the same neural properties as ordinary perceivers, that these brains in vats really would undergo corresponding hallucinatory perceptual phenomenology, and yet maintain that their phenomenology would have to be constituted in a fundamentally different way.

On this strategy, the Naïve Realist tries to accommodate the existence of nonveridical perceptual phenomenology by bifurcating her theory regarding the metaphysical grounds of perceptual experience: Having perceptual phenomenology is held to be a disjunctive property (hence the label “Disjunctivism”); it involves either being acquainted with a property of an external object or satisfying some other condition, namely the one which grounds perceptual phenomenology in the relevant kind of nonveridical case.

This Disjunctivist strategy could also be applied to the hedonic-evaluative case. According to this approach, although hedonic-evaluative phenomenology is constituted by hedonic-evaluative properties in good cases, there are not just conceivable but also actual bad cases in which the hedonic-evaluative appearances mislead. In these cases,

according to the Disjunctivist, one's phenomenology is constituted in an entirely different way.

A number of obvious general drawbacks of the Disjunctivist strategy are easily discerned, and these apply in the perceptual and the hedonic-evaluative case alike.

Firstly, what I take to be one common reason for resisting Disjunctivism about perceptual experience is that by telling us two completely distinct stories about how different kinds of perceptual phenomenal properties are grounded, the Disjunctivist Naïve Realist evidently incurs significant costs in the form excess theoretical complexity. This cost is not incurred by someone who adopts an alternative proposal of perceptual experience like the Representationalist one; the proponent of such an approach can offer a single unified account of the grounds of perceptual phenomenology.

Clearly, this criticism applies in much the same way in the hedonic-evaluative case. Whereas Disjunctivist Naïve Realism about hedonic-evaluative experience similarly commits one to an unattractively complex account of the grounds of hedonic-evaluative experience, an alternative straightforward Representationalist view of the nature of our hedonic-evaluative experience (like the one proposed in chapter 2) could straightforwardly be extended to both veridical and nonveridical cases of hedonic-evaluative experience.

Secondly, I noted in the introduction that in the perceptual context, theorists on both sides of the debate agree that Naïve Realism enjoys some *prima facie* phenomenological support; phenomenologically, it seems that the phenomenal character of a veridical perceptual experience is fundamentally inherited from the relevant perceived intrinsic qualitative features out there in the world. Following Pautz (2010), I shall refer to this as the "Naïve Intuition." In my view, the argument from the Naïve Intuition constitutes the

only remotely convincing argument for Naïve Realism.⁶⁸ However, accepting a Disjunctivist view of this sort in effect amounts to conceding that the Naïve Intuition misleads in the cases of nonveridical experiences which are given a Disjunctivist treatment. For it will seem just as compelling to subjects undergoing illusions or hallucinations that the Naïve Intuition applies to their experiences. Arguably, this casts doubt on the claim that there really is strong reason for honouring the intuition in the veridical case; it is natural to think that conceding that the Naïve Intuition misleads in the relevant nonveridical cases defeats much of the support it provides for honouring this intuition when it comes to veridical experiences (cf. Pautz 2010, 296-7).

To reinforce this point, note that since the relevant instance of the Naïve Intuition as it applies to one's occurrent experience will seem just as compelling to subjects unfortunate enough to undergo nonveridical experiences, the Disjunctivist must concede that there must be some story which accounts for the presence of the Naïve Intuition in these cases which does not rely on, and is in that sense independent of, the intuition's truth. In my view, it is then difficult to see what stops one from extending this story in such a way as to explain away the intuition in the context of veridical experiences. After all, the uniformity of such an explanation would have obvious attractions, and in the present context, it strikes me as difficult to discern any obstacles which would stand in its way.

Clearly, both these points also have force in the hedonic-evaluative case. Firstly, Disjunctivism Naïve Realism about hedonic-evaluative experience similarly commits one to an unattractively complex account of the grounds of hedonic-evaluative experience. Secondly, for the same reasons as in the perceptual case, conceding that the relevant instance of the Naïve Intuition misleads in cases of non-veridical hedonic-evaluative

⁶⁸ The Naïve Intuition is identified as the key motivation for Naïve Realism both by many friends – e.g. Crane 2006, 139-41; Hellie 2007, 266-9; Fish 2009, 18-23; Kennedy 2009, 578-80; Hobson 2013, 438 – and foes – e.g. Pautz 2010, 290; Smith 2010, 395-6; Millar 2014, 625 – of the view. I also suspect that it underlies the arguments of many of those who simply find Naïve Realism “intuitive”, e.g. Brewer 2007, 88.

A number of other arguments for Naïve Realism have been put forward. Since my reasons for rejecting them have in all prominent cases already been articulated in the literature, I shan't rehearse them here.

experience threatens to defeat the support which it provides for Naïve Realism about veridical hedonic-evaluative experience.

It is also worth noting here that versions of both these objections could be pressed even just based on the failure of Naïve Realism in the perceptual case (provided this assumption is granted), which in a sense would already force the Naïve Realist about hedonic-evaluative experience to accept a form of Disjunctivism in a broader sense, namely Disjunctivism across these two types of experience. After all, if Naïve Realism is false of perceptual experience, this would mean that the proponent of Naïve Realism about hedonic-evaluative experience would have to countenance an unattractive lack of uniformity in her account of the metaphysics of perceptual and hedonic-evaluative experience. Similarly, if Naïve Realism about perceptual experience fails, it means that the Naïve Intuition radically misleads in that context. Presumably, this would raise serious worries about the epistemic support which the corresponding instances of this intuition can lend to Naïve Realism in the hedonic-evaluative context.

I think that a further serious difficulty for Naïve Realism in the perceptual and the hedonic-evaluative contexts stems from problematic consequences of these views regarding the overdetermination of veridical phenomenology which these views threaten to entail.

Inspired by considerations raised by Martin's (2004) "screening-off argument", suppose that we grant the common assumption that there are phenomenal properties associated with "causally matching hallucinations" corresponding to a given veridical perceptual experience – that is, hallucinations "brought about through the same proximate causal conditions", e.g. the relevant sort of neutral stimulation. So for instance, suppose that if there were a perfect intrinsic physical duplicate of a perceiver of a spherical vase who is not surrounded by any such object, this subject would also undergo (hallucinatory) spherical vase phenomenology.

Presumably, there will then be some story about how the internal state of the subject gives rise to some sort of non-phenomenal property which is capable of grounding a certain perceptual phenomenal property. Moreover, it is clearly very natural to suppose that all this is essentially an affair internal to the subject.⁶⁹ As a result, it is difficult to see what stops this very story from carrying over to the veridical case; it would be odd to think that what appears to be this primarily internal affair is somehow prevented from unfolding in some mysterious manner whenever the subject comes to be appropriately causally related to the relevant properties in the environment. In other words, it is natural to expect the internal state of the subject to give rise to the same phenomenal property in the veridical case. However, now suppose that in the veridical case, the relevant naïve property also, as the Naïve Realist must maintain, grounds a corresponding phenomenal property. Then we are left with the conclusion that in the veridical perception of a red and round object, a subject undergoes two simultaneous perceptual experiences as of a red and round object.⁷⁰ This seems to count against the Disjunctivist Naïve Realist proposal to give an account of veridical perceptual phenomenology which is not extended to cases of causally matching hallucinations.

In my view, these concerns are also potentially highly relevant to the hedonic-evaluative case. For if there is non-veridical hedonic-evaluative phenomenology – say, when one undergoes a wicked pleasure which merely appears to be good – and this phenomenology is constituted in a non-Naïve Realist manner, then the question similarly arises what stops it from being around in the veridical case.

⁶⁹ Hellie (2013, 161) gives eloquent expression to this specific point when he writes that “in the case of hallucination, intuitively one’s experience is “cut off” from one’s environment; we should not think of a hallucination as a case of consciously taking in the abnormal causation of one’s internal condition” (my emphasis; cf. Fish 2009, 85).

⁷⁰ I think that my framing of the difficulty as one of overdetermination rather than as one of explanatory “screening off” (as done in Martin’s (2004) influential discussion) sharpens the problem. In particular, it would seem to render irrelevant Martin’s insistence that, on his “Negative Disjunctivist” view, the non-Naïve property F* which grounds non-veridical phenomenal character derives its power to explain phenomenal character in the hallucinatory case from its relation to the Naïve property F which grounds veridical phenomenal character. After all, this fails to explain what stops being F* from also being around in the veridical case (given that its grounding is presumably an internal story), and what prevents it from there grounding additional, non-Naïve perceptual phenomenal properties.

Of course, the extent to which this concern can be answered will depend on the specifics of what one takes to be the conditions under which hedonic-evaluative properties fail to be instantiated, and the way in which non-veridical hedonic-evaluative phenomenology is physically realised. However, if it turns out that the neural property which seems to ground hedonic-evaluative phenomenology in nonveridical cases is also present in cases in veridical cases of hedonic-evaluative phenomenology, then for analogous reasons, there will be serious pressure to accept either that veridical hedonic-evaluative phenomenology is overdetermined in this bizarre manner, or that Naïve Realism about veridical hedonic-evaluative experience is false.

Crucially, the cases of wicked and undeserved pleasures – pleasures whose value *prima facie* seems somehow tainted or undermined by circumstantial factors, like the relevant agent's intentions or past conduct – are ones in which this worry is very pertinent. For example, suppose one takes the view that whilst wicked pleasures are still experienced as good, they are not actually good. Accordingly, in such cases, hedonic-evaluative phenomenology in the context of wicked pleasures must be grounded in a way other than the Naïve Realist one – there is no evaluative property around to constitute it. Moreover, it would be odd to think that wicked hedonic-evaluative phenomenology somehow “takes in” (in Hellie's 2013 terms; see fn. 69 above) the fact that it is accompanied by a certain abnormal cognitive context. As a result, the question arises: What stops the basis of wicked hedonic-evaluative phenomenology from being present in the case of ordinary pleasures, and from there grounding hedonic-evaluative phenomenology as well?

In summary, then, Disjunctivism about hedonic-evaluative experience faces a number of serious general difficulties. Moreover, the only obvious candidates for bad cases of hedonic-evaluative experience, wicked or underserved pleasures, give rise to analogues of the overdetermination worries which afflict Naïve Realism in the perceptual case, and hence threaten to undermine Naïve Realism about hedonic-evaluative experience.

3.2. Other approaches

There are two alternative approaches to the problem of bad cases. Since these strike me as even less promising, I shall discuss them only very briefly.

The Naïve Realist's first alternative to Disjunctivism is Eliminativist about nonveridical phenomenal character. As I shall understand this approach, Eliminativism about a particular type of purported case of nonveridical experience consists in the denial that phenomenal character of that kind is ever instantiated. So for instance, an Eliminativist about hallucinatory phenomenal character will hold that when you go through a list of all the phenomenal properties which are actually instantiated, you won't find a property which characterises what it is like to specifically undergo a hallucination as of a red vase.⁷¹ In the hedonic-evaluative context, the relevant analogue would be a view on which, whilst misleading hedonic-evaluative awareness phenomenology is in principle conceivable, the laws governing the specific world we inhabit are such that it never actually occurs.

Whilst a surprising amount of ink has been spilled in discussions of this sort of view in recent years, I think it can legitimately be put to one side in a rather straightforward manner: Most of us (namely those of us who are currently undergoing, or can remember undergoing a hallucination or the relevant sort of illusion) have excellent first-person evidence for the instantiation of nonveridical phenomenal properties. The Eliminativist approach is outright incompatible with this evidence, and we are therefore entitled to reject it.⁷² Clearly, this objection applies in the perceptual and the hedonic-evaluative case alike.

⁷¹ In the literature on perceptual experience, Fish (2009) prominently applies this sort of treatment to hallucinations and some illusions, including shape illusions brought about by distorting lenses. Logue (2012) makes the case for and fleshes out a view of this variety about hallucinations.

⁷² If one started to treat this sort of evidence as negotiable – as Fish, who seems to subscribe to a far more restrictive conception of the relevant evidence as exhausted by “everything a hallucinating subject thinks, does, and says” (2009, 98; cf. 108, 118), effectively does – then I think that the far more natural option would be to outright Eliminativism about perceptual phenomenology across the board.

As an interesting parallel, note how Chalmers (1996, 187-91) comes to a closely analogous diagnosis regarding the key mistaken assumption underlying Dennett's (1991) argument for eliminative materialism, and is happy to concede that an approach on which judgments about conscious experiences rather than the

A third conceivable strategy for accommodating purported cases of nonveridical experience, which has also been gaining some popularity, is to what I shall refer the “Revisionism.” Broadly speaking, a Revisionist approach consists in denying that the kind of experience in question really is at bottom nonveridical by reconceiving the constituents of veridical experience. For example, a Revisionist may hold that experiences which we ordinarily classify as illusions really does acquaint us with certain surrogate properties. For example, they may hold that colour illusions acquaint us with certain relational light-reflectance properties, or, on a more generally applicable approach, that visual illusions acquaint us with circumstance-relative “appearance properties” or “objective looks.”⁷³ Applied to the hedonic-evaluative case, a Revisionist could, for example, hold that both veridical and non-veridical hedonic-evaluative experience involve acquaintance with the same surrogate property – say, the same neural property, or the same “value-appearance” property.⁷⁴ Where successful, Revisionism allows the Naïve Realist to stick to an account of the grounds of the relevant (purportedly)

experiences themselves are the explananda of a theory of consciousness will inevitably lead one to a eliminativist or at least hard-line reductionist theory of consciousness.

⁷³ For the first approach, see Fish (2009, 150-9). For versions of the second approach, which vary with respect to the scope with which this strategy is applied, see Travis 2004, Noe 2005, Fish 2009, Antony 2011, Kalderon 2011, Genone 2014. Brewer’s (2008, 2011) “relevant visual similarities” is also naturally placed in this category.

⁷⁴ A variant of this approach preserves an underlying continuity in the metaphysics of illusory and veridical experience not by reconceiving the perceived property which helps to constitute veridical phenomenology, but rather by introducing an additional degree of freedom into the Naïve Realist’s phenomenology-constituting relation. This approach to developing a Revisionist variant of Naïve Realism is in effect embodied by Campbell’s (2009) “Standpoint Account.” According to this view, perceptual phenomenology is grounded in “a three-place relation between a person, a standpoint and an object.” Campbell’s notion of a “standpoint” is essentially meant to characterise the circumstances of perception. On Campbell’s view, both the veridical and the illusory case, the object, its features (2008, 668 – contra Pautz 2010, 288-9) and one’s standpoint enter the constitution of one’s phenomenology, but in the illusory case, the deviant nature of one’s standpoint (i.e. the circumstances of perception) gives rise to one’s correspondingly deviant phenomenology.

It seems difficult to extend this account to the hedonic-evaluative case without succumbing to Disjunctivism. Since there is no obvious suitable candidate positive property which hedonic-evaluative experiences only exhibit in nonveridical cases, the question will then arise of why this property is prevented from co-constituting hedonic-evaluative phenomenology in veridical cases as well. To avoid such problematic implications regarding the overdetermination of veridical phenomenology, I think the proponent of the Standpoints account would here have to amend her view, and hold that there isn’t any such property which plays a role in the constitution of nonveridical hedonic-evaluative phenomenology. However, the resulting view is now at bottom a Disjunctivist one, with many of the drawbacks associated with that approach.

In addition, the view incurs analogues of the objections to Revisionism discussed here.

nonveridical phenomenal properties which preserves the continuity with her account of the phenomenal character of paradigmatically veridical experiences.

Without going through various specific objections that could levelled raised against particular instances of this strategy, it is possible to identify a few general, more thematic problems that Revisionists face.

Firstly, all of these proposals, by reconceiving the constituents of veridical experience in some way or another, threaten to come into conflict with the (relevant instances of) the Naïve Intuition. For instance, taking phenomenology at face value, colour experience under good lighting instead seems to acquaint us with primitive, simple, intrinsic, *sui generis* colour qualities, rather than with some sort of contrived relational reflectance properties, or “colour-looks” which the relevant objects could exhibit even if they differed radically in intrinsic respects, as long as compensating adjustments to the viewing conditions were made.⁷⁵ These considerations also seem to carry over to the hedonic-evaluative case. Hedonic-experience seems to acquaint us with certain primitive evaluative properties, not with evaluative “appearance properties”, or some surrogate neural properties. Similarly, phenomenologically, it does not seem to be the case that the circumstances of one’s hedonic-evaluative experience feature in the constitution of one’s phenomenology in the way in which hedonic-evaluative properties appear to do so.

Secondly, all of the Revisionist proposals face a version an objection which is more familiar as an objection to Martin’s “Negative Disjunctivism”: Arguably, illusorily perceptually experiencing a yellow square as red and round enables *de re* knowledge about redness and roundness (Johnston 2004, 131), and provides the potential to ground one’s grasp of corresponding concepts and thoughts (Pautz 2007, 525-6; 2010, 278). The question arises how Revisionists can hope to account for these facts. After all, on none of these approaches does such an experience actually involve acquaintance with these

⁷⁵ Smith (2010, 392, fn. 12), Pautz (2010, 290) and Hobson (2013) gesture at this sort of objection.

features.⁷⁶ Again, this problem seems to translate to the hedonic-evaluative case; whatever precisely illusory hedonic-evaluative experience is supposed to involve, it seems clear that as long as it involves an awareness of evaluative properties like that involved in the case of ordinary pleasures, it will just as plausibly equip us with novel *de re* knowledge about and concepts of evaluative properties. This is something for which Revisionists cannot account.

Thirdly, for obvious reasons, all of the Revisionist proposals are inherently unsuited to account for purported cases of hallucinatory perceptual phenomenology, and are in this sense incomplete. After all, in the case of hallucinatory phenomenology, there is no object such that some its features – however contrived – could plausibly be claimed to feature in its constitution. Accordingly, any Revisionist proposal will struggle with preserving the continuity in the account of hallucinatory and veridical experience. The approach is therefore incomplete; some other theory of hallucinatory phenomenal character is required. Of course, since nonveridical hedonic-evaluative experience will always be more akin to perceptual illusion than hallucination – presumably it will never occur in the absence of phenomenology which is experienced as good – this point is of less direct relevance to the hedonic-evaluative case.

The fourth and final general point regarding the Revisionist approach which I want to note here concerns the way in which it threatens to undermine the epistemological significance of Naïve Realism. To see why, note that, in order to avoid the collapse into Disjunctivism, I think that the Revisionist has to proceed by telling us that veridical perceptual experience does not acquaint us with the sorts of properties with the familiar, intrinsic, simple properties which we would initially take it to acquaint us, but rather with some contrived properties like complex relational physical properties or “objective looks.” Arguably, this would undermine Naïve Realism’s potential to explain why veridical experience can (supposedly) give us distinctive knowledge about ordinary

⁷⁶ The Representationalist is in a better position; she will hold that in both veridical and non-veridical cases, the representation of the relevant property grounds these kinds of knowledge and concepts.

properties, rather than the contrived properties with which he takes us to be acquainted. This observation translates straightforwardly to the hedonic-evaluative case, and seems particularly pertinent in the context of assessing the Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis. After all, we are interested in the epistemic advantages which hedonic-evaluative experience confers on our beliefs in the instantiation of hedonic-evaluative properties rather than on beliefs in the instantiation of some other kind of surrogate properties, and which it clearly does not confer on beliefs about circumstantial factors that accompany hedonic-evaluative experience.

Accordingly, neither the Eliminativist nor the Revisionist alternatives to Disjunctivism seem like attractive options for the Naïve Realist, whether in the original perceptual or the hedonic-evaluative context, especially if she aims to defend an epistemologically ambitious version of the view.

3.3. Taking stock

Let me briefly summarise where I think the discussion of the in this section leaves us. One important upshot of this section is an indirect one: We saw that the problem of giving a plausible account of cases of nonveridical experiences poses serious difficulty for Naïve Realism about the perceptual case, and this in itself makes it more difficult to maintain that the view applies in the perceptual case.

Moreover, I argued that the Naïve Realist about hedonic-evaluative experience who also wants to maintain that there are hedonic-evaluative illusions faces additional obstacles. Since Eliminativism and Revisionism seem like non-starters, her main option is to embrace Disjunctivism about hedonic-evaluative experience. However, not only are there general reasons for finding such an approach unattractive, but I also explained how it might be possible to transpose certain arguments which have a lot of force in discrediting the corresponding views about perceptual experience to the hedonic-evaluative case, assuming that wicked and undeserved pleasures are the most plausible candidate examples of non-veridical hedonic-evaluative experience.

4. Naïve Realism's epistemological significance

In this section, I shall temporarily put the reservations regarding Naïve Realist views about the metaphysics of hedonic-evaluative experience voiced in earlier parts of this chapter to one side. Instead, my aim will be to assess to what extent Naïve Realist acquaintance with hedonic value could be used to vindicate the claim that our belief in its instantiation is in some distinctive way less prone to sceptical doubt than other positive evaluative beliefs.

The easiest way to approach this question will be to focus on the issue of Naïve Realism's (purported) anti-sceptical potential in the more familiar perceptual context, and to then evaluate to what extent the key conclusions carry over to the hedonic-evaluative case.

Accordingly, I begin, in section 2.1, by characterising, in very broad terms, what seems to be the key motivation for thinking that proponents of the Naïve Realist claim that veridical perceptual phenomenology is constituted – via Naïve Realist “acquaintance” – by the corresponding features of the environment can indeed bring unique anti-sceptical resources to the table. This line of reasoning is easily transposed to the hedonic-evaluative case.

In section 2.2, I argue that upon closer inspection, this motivation is not compelling. In particular, I diagnose as its unstable basis the idea that Naïve Realism opens up novel possibilities for maintaining, in an Epistemological Disjunctivist spirit, that veridical perception provides better epistemic grounds for the belief in non-sceptical hypotheses than nonveridical experience, whilst at the same time, in an epistemological internalist spirit, respecting the thesis that the determinants of perceptual justification must always in some sense be internal to one's subjective perspective. I argue that this hope turns out to be an illusion, and that the idea of assigning Naïve Realist acquaintance a fundamental, scepticism-blocking epistemological role in the perceptual context lacks proper

motivation. I also consider and reject one initial reason for thinking that the hedonic-evaluative case differs in relevant respects.

In section 2.3, I introduce independent considerations, based on the role of defeaters of perceptual justification, which I argue cast further doubt on optimistic claims about Naïve Realism's epistemological potential. In particular, I explain why reflection on the role of epistemic defeaters suggests that in order to provide a convincing response to the sceptic, proponents of Naïve Realist Epistemological Disjunctivism may have to presuppose the success of standard anti-sceptical strategies which are also available to proponents of rival approaches. As a result, where the blocking of external world scepticism is concerned, Naïve Realist perceptual acquaintance would either be epistemologically redundant or ineffectual. I apply these considerations to the hedonic-evaluative case, and argue that at least on the face of it, they suggest a similar lesson in this context.

Taken together, these considerations put serious pressure on the Naïve Realist about hedonic-evaluative experience to identify some further feature distinctive of the hedonic-evaluative case which allows claims about Naïve Realist constitution to play a more significant epistemological role in that context.

4.1. The basic idea

As noted in the introduction to this chapter, a number of authors have claimed that Naïve Realism about perceptual experience brings unique anti-sceptical resources to the table. In fact, some Naïve Realists even rely on this claim in motivating the move to their preferred conception of perceptual experience in the first place.

Extant discussions in the literature suggest that the basic *prima facie* support for this sort of idea traces back to something like the following line of thought:

Sceptical worries regarding our beliefs about the external world, according to this line of reasoning, stem from the assumption that one's perceptual experience underdetermines

the choice between various hypotheses about the nature of one's environment. That is to say, according to the assumption which – supposedly – underlies sceptical concerns, one's perceptual experience as of a red vase in front of one could be just as it is even if the make-up of the world weren't what it appears to be. For example, one's perceptual experience as of a red vase in front of one could be just what it is even if one were a brain in a vat in a world devoid of red vases which is appropriately stimulated to have the right sort of experience.

But Naïve Realists, so those optimistic about Naïve Realism's epistemological significance point out, reject the claim that the perceptual experience enjoyed by ordinary perceivers could be just what it is even if they were brains-in-vats whose experience of the external world is utterly misleading.⁷⁷ After all, on the Naïve Realist picture, veridical and nonveridical experience differ radically in their fundamental constitution; veridical experience is constituted by acquaintance with states of one's environment and therefore entails that the environment is such-and-such, whereas nonveridical experience would have to be, for obvious reasons, constituted in an entirely different way. Accordingly, it is open to the Naïve Realist to hold that, as long as one actually is in the good case, one's perceptual experience can provide one with a factive and hence decisive basis for favouring the anti-sceptical hypothesis that the world really is the way it perceptually appears to be.

Transposed to the hedonic-evaluative case, the idea would then be that Naïve Realism, by verifying certain distinctive claims about the constitution of veridical hedonic-evaluative experience, allows one to maintain that one's hedonic-evaluative experience is veridical – i.e. when one's pleasures really do have the value they appear to have – one's experiences confer especially robust epistemic support on one's hedonic-evaluative

⁷⁷ This basic line of reasoning is endorsed by, among others, Johnston (2006, 287), McDowell (2008, 378) and Kennedy (2010, 78), and sympathetically discussed by Hellie (2007, 260, 270) and Fish (2009, 25). It is frequently identified as the source of Naïve Realism's *prima facie* epistemological advantages, for example by Logue (2011, 277), MacPherson (2013, 32-33) and Pritchard & Ranalli (forthcoming, 6). Wright (2013, 256) is someone who expresses the sentiment that, for this sort of reason, the potential benefits of Epistemological Disjunctivism are reserved to metaphysical disjunctivists.

beliefs which they would not provide if the hedonic-evaluative appearances were misleading.

In very broad terms, then, the basic idea here is that, by verifying certain distinctive claims about the constitution of veridical experience, Naïve Realism somehow allows us to arrive at an especially attractive version of what is generally known as

Epistemological Disjunctivism: In the good case (e.g. of actually seeing a red vase), one's perceptual beliefs enjoy a kind of epistemic support which they do not enjoy in a corresponding bad case (e.g. of being a relevantly deceived brain in a vat).

4.2. Naïve Realist Epistemological Disjunctivism and internalism

4.2.1. Experiential Internalism

In order to get to the bottom of this line of reasoning, let's continue to focus on the perceptual case for now.

One question which arises here is that of why an analogous Epistemological Disjunctivist position isn't open to someone who is committed to an alternative view of the metaphysics of perceptual experience, such as a proponent of my preferred approach, Representationalism.⁷⁸ After all, Representationalists don't deny that when one veridically perceives – in virtue of being in an appropriately caused representational state of the right type – a red vase, one is thereby in a state that entails that one's environment contains such a vase. Clearly, the state of so veridically perceiving fits this job description. Accordingly, there is room in logical space for an analogous Representationalist Epistemological Disjunctivist view on which veridically perceiving subjects can, to use our earlier concrete example, come to possess conclusive epistemic grounds for believing that there is a red vase in front of them in virtue of enjoying veridical Representationalist perception of a red vase.

⁷⁸ This question is also raised by Conee (2007) and Pritchard & Ranalli (forthcoming, 8).

However, the line of reasoning presented in the previous sub-section brought out what at least superficially appears to be an advantage of Naïve Realist Epistemological Disjunctivism over Representationalist Epistemological Disjunctivism. In particular, it suggested that by entailing the existence of a difference in the constitution of veridical and non-veridical experience, Naïve Realism allows one to attribute the justificatory difference between the good and the bad case to a difference in experiences that the good case and bad case subjects undergo. The crucial move in the attempted response to the sceptic was, as the reader will recall, to deny that in the good case, one's experience underdetermines the choice between sceptical and ordinary perceptual hypotheses.

Accordingly, the key point underlying optimism about Naïve Realism's epistemological significance seems to be that if one accepts Naïve Realism, one can endorse the crucial Epistemological Disjunctivist commitment that, for example, the ordinary vase perceiver and the corresponding brain in a vat differ with respect to their justificatory status, whilst at the same time upholding one's commitment to

Experiential Internalism: Differences in (perceptual) justification are grounded in experiential differences.⁷⁹

This now in turn raises the further question of why it should be considered desirable to respect Experiential Internalism.

I take it that the idea here must simply be that a violation of Experiential Internalism would implausibly entail that justificational differences are sometimes grounded in facts which are, to use McDowell's (1982, 390-1) memorable phrase, "blankly external to [one's] subjectivity." In other words, I think the obvious source of Experiential Internalism's appeal and initial air of significance is that there is a temptation to view it

⁷⁹ This sort of principle comes in both a type- and a token-version; its proponent could hold either that every justificational difference across different hypothetical scenarios must be grounded in a difference in the identity of the relevant subject's experience-tokens, or in the difference in the kinds of experience the subject exhibits in the relevant scenarios. Both types of claims are invoked by different authors in motivating Naïve Realist Epistemological Disjunctivism.

as getting at the basic intuition which drives internalist theories of epistemic justification. In other words, it may seem to capture

the *Basic Internalist Intuition*: Facts about one's epistemic justification are determined by factors which lie within the boundaries of one's subjective perspective.

I in fact agree that the Basic Internalist Intuition is a very powerful one. However, the big question in evaluating what I take to be the motivation for Naïve Realist Epistemological Disjunctivism along these lines is of course whether Experiential Internalism really does succeed in capturing this intuition. I think that it does not, and that the best way to see this is to reflect on the ways in which Naïve Realism violates stronger internalist principles that enjoy significant intuitive support, which I shall do in the next sections.

Before moving on to that task, however, it is worth noting that upon reflection, it is not even immediately clear why, for example, Representationalist Epistemological Disjunctivists should have a harder time in respecting Experiential Internalism. After all, we saw in section 1.1 that there appears to be little which stops Representationalists from “typing” experiences widely (i.e. in environment-involving ways), and to thereby verify the claim that veridical and hallucinatory perceptual experiences qualify as different types of experiences (as well as related claims, such as the claim that veridical and hallucinatory experiences exhibit different essential experiential characteristics).⁸⁰

In a sense, this looks like a trivial verbal manoeuvre to which it seems very difficult to object. But if such a trivial move allows proponents of opposing views to similarly verify Experiential Internalism, then it is hard to see how Naïve Realists can claim to have identified a significant epistemological thesis which proponents of Epistemological

⁸⁰ Conee (2007, 20-23) presses the same basic sort of consideration in his discussion of the appeal to Disjunctivism as an anti-sceptical strategy. Logue (2011, 276-7) is an example of someone who seems to overlook this simple point.

Disjunctivism somehow only become uniquely placed to respect once they also embrace Naïve Realism.⁸¹

In a sense, this also already strongly suggests that Experiential Internalism is probably too weak to capture the Basic Internalist Intuition. After all, it would seem odd to think that merely by building environmental factors into one's "typing" of experiences, one thereby succeeds in bringing them, in the relevant sense, inside the boundaries of the agent's subjective perspective, and thereby in making them suitable candidates as potential grounds of specifically internalist epistemic justification.

In the next section, I shall substantiate this suspicion by explaining how Naïve Realist Epistemological Disjunctivism in the perceptual context comes into conflict with important internalist principles which are stronger than Experiential Internalism, and noting that the proper appreciation of this fact plausibly undermines the Naïve Realist's claim to distinctive advantages as far as anti-sceptical epistemological theorising is concerned. Finally, I consider and reject one reason for thinking that things are relevantly different in the hedonic-evaluative case.

4.2.2. *Phenomenal Mentalism*

4.2.2.1. *Naïve Realism and Phenomenal Mentalism*

The first more specific internalist intuition which I want to single out for further discussion is

⁸¹ Of course, one might argue that "typing" experiences by features which play a role in the constitution of one's phenomenology rather than by environmental features which play no such role allows one to carve closer to "nature's joints." Accordingly, one could try to make the case that the Naïve Realist variant of Epistemological Disjunctivism can be stated using less gerrymandered concepts, concepts which correspond to somewhat more natural properties, and might in that sense come out as a simpler and (at least in that respect) more attractive epistemological theory than non-Naïve Realist Epistemological Disjunctivist Views.

However, this at best provides a weak *pro tanto* reason for favouring the Naïve Realist variant of Epistemological Disjunctivism over other versions of the view.

Phenomenal Mentalism: Justificational facts concerning a given subject are determined by facts about her instantiation of phenomenal properties, i.e. by facts about what it is like to undergo the sorts of experiences she undergoes.⁸²

The strong intuitive appeal of this principle is easily illustrated by comparing the epistemic situation of an ordinary perceiver, like our earlier subject perceiving a red vase, with the epistemic predicament of a brain in a vat that is being stimulated to undergo experiences that are subjectively just like the experiences which an the ordinary perceiver undergoes. In such cases, there is a strong intuition that these pairs of subjects are also justificational duplicates. (In essence, this is Lehrer & Cohen's 1983 influential "New Evil Demon Problem" for epistemological externalist views). Phenomenal Mentalism simply gives expression to this sort of intuition in more general terms.

In contrast, in a sense the whole point of Naïve Realist Epistemological Disjunctivism (in the perceptual context) was to deny that the justificatory status of a subject who perceives veridically is no better than that of a correspondingly hallucinating brain in a vat. Accordingly, at least *prima facie*, Naïve Realism seems to be in straightforward conflict with Phenomenal Mentalism.

In order to forestall some confusions here, it is worth explicitly acknowledging that the Naïve Realist may of course deny that in a world like ours, there could ever be any veridical and hallucinatory experiences which exhibit the same phenomenal character.⁸³ For example, Fish's Eliminativist view (see section 3.2 above), according to which, as a

⁸² I am here glossing over some subtleties in specifying what it takes for two subjects to count as duplicates with respect to the justificational facts. One natural way of spelling out this idea is to understand this in terms of the obtaining of a "justificational isomorphism" regarding propositions which subjects can entertain and the justificatory status which these subject enjoy with respect to them, where this isomorphism is taken to hold whenever they respectively exhibit the same justificatory status with regard to two propositions insofar as these propositions are "counterparts" of each other. The obvious way of out the relevant notion of counterparthood at play here is then in terms of a match in "narrow content" (the component of the content of the subjects' mental states which supervenes on subjects' internal features.) This would seem to diffuse stock objection against Phenomenal Mentalism from content externalism (endorsed e.g. by Williamson 2007).

⁸³ For different reasons, Martin (2006, 366-72) also appears to be committed to this claim (cf. Haddock & MacPherson 2008, 16).

matter of nomological necessity (2009, 122), hallucinatory experiences altogether lack phenomenal character, is a case a point. As a result, the Naïve Realist may deny that in our world, one could induce in a brain in a vat which lacks the right sort of non-deviant causal links to the relevant sorts of objects the sorts of phenomenal properties exhibited by those who perceive veridically.

However, such versions of Naïve Realism are still perfectly compatible with the thought that the existence of a brain in a vat with experiences whose phenomenal character comes, through appropriate causal stimulation, to perfectly match that of veridical perceivers is by no means ruled out *a priori*.⁸⁴ In fact, it would seem that they had better be compatible with this claim, given that it appears very easy to conceive of such a scenario.⁸⁵

Accordingly, there is nothing question-begging in pointing out that Naïve Realist Epistemological Disjunctivism is in conflict with Phenomenal Mentalism, since these principles deliver conflicting verdicts about subjects' justificatory status at least in such hypothetical examples.

A further important source of confusion here is that in a certain sense, Naïve Realism does entail that a subject in a bad case could not be a phenomenal duplicate of a subject in a good case. In particular, Naïve Realism entails that as a matter of necessity, their phenomenal properties – the properties which characterise what it is like to undergo their experiences – are constituted in different ways. In that sense, there is an essential difference between the phenomenal characters of subjects of veridical and hallucinatory experience.

⁸⁴ Conee (2007, 18) can be read as getting at this claim when he writes that “[t]here is no a priori limit on the potential verisimilitude of hallucination”, as does Wright (2008, 399), who emphasises, in his response to McDowell, the “possibility in principle”, granted by both sides, that experiences in bad cases may “counterfeit instances of the ‘good’ disjunct to phenomenological perfection.”

⁸⁵ In his discussion of the dialectical (ir)relevance of the conceivability of brains in vats to the assessment of the local supervenience of the phenomenal on the physical, Fish (2009, 120-122) seems to be willing to grant as much at least for the sake of argument.

However, pointing to a difference in phenomenal character in this very specific sense, i.e. a difference in phenomenal constitution, does not seem to make it any more intuitive to claim that if what it is like to undergo my (for the sake of argument, acquaintance-grounded) veridical perceptual experience and what it is like to undergo my internal duplicate's (differently grounded) veridical perceptual experience are exactly the same, we are also justificational duplicates.⁸⁶

As a result, as long as the constitutional differences between good and bad case phenomenal character are, to use Chalmers' (2013, 352) term, "phenomenologically subterranean", they still, in the epistemologically relevant sense which drives the Phenomenal Mentalist intuition, seem to lie outside of perceivers' subjective perspectives. What seems to matter epistemologically are differences in phenomenal character in the sense of difference in the phenomenal properties which subjects instantiate, and not in the sense of differences in how their phenomenal properties are constituted.

Accordingly, I think Naïve Realist Epistemological Disjunctivism really is best regarded as being in straightforward conflict with the strong intuition behind Phenomenal Mentalism; the impression that the view at least captures an important cognate intuition in the same ballpark seems strikes me as an illusion.

4.2.3. Access Internalism

4.2.3.1. Naïve Realism and Access Internalism

In this section, I shall discuss a second familiar and important way of cashing out the Basic Internalist Intuition that justificatory facts are determined by facts internal to one's

⁸⁶ Hellie (2007, 260) is naturally read as being insensitive to this distinction when he writes that Naïve Realism ("Phenomenal Naivete") promises to reconcile the internalist thesis that what justifies must be "internally available, perhaps by being phenomenal" with the claim that good-case evidence is factive. Macpherson (2010, 258) aptly complains that naïve realists are guilty of "terminological hoodwinking" in this regard. Cf. Chalmers' (2006a, 53, fn. 1) discussion of "Disjunctivism about metaphysics" and "Disjunctivism about phenomenology."

subjective perspective, which, as I shall argue, Naïve Realist Epistemological Disjunctivism likewise threatens to violate, namely

Access Internalism: Facts which determine subjects' justificatory status are reflectively accessible to them. That is to say, subjects can in principle achieve knowledge or at least justified belief regarding them via a mixture of introspection and *a priori* reasoning.

Again, this thesis is a very intuitive one. After all, returning to our previous example, one natural way to support the claim that the brain in a vat is no worse off, justificational speaking, than its veridically perceiving phenomenal counterpart is to resort to the observation that the very same facts seem to be reflectively accessible to each of these subjects.

In order to pre-empt obvious objections to Access Internalism, it should be flagged that this thesis must be understood as a thesis about propositional rather than doxastic justification (cf. Poston 2008).

Propositional justification is a matter of what one is justified in believing, i.e. which propositions one has sufficient reason to believe; doxastic justification is a matter of which of one's belief-tokens are justified. Doxastic justification is a far stronger condition; in order for a belief to be doxastically justified, it must be formed in such a way that it is appropriately based on one's propositional justification for its content.

The reason why Access Internalism about justification is plausible only as a claim about propositional justification is that whether a subject enjoys doxastic justification will typically depend on all sorts of causal features of her belief which take place at an entirely subpersonal level and are therefore not accessible to her. (In fact, similar things apply to the Phenomenal Mentalist principle we discussed in the previous section.)

The obvious problem here is of course that the Naïve Realist picture makes it no more plausible that introspection could ever put one in a position to know (or at least justifiably

believe) whether one is in a good case in which things are as they perceptually appear, or whether one is in a corresponding bad case in which one exhibits the very same (though perhaps differently constituted) phenomenal properties.⁸⁷ As far as one's introspective evidence is concerned, the good and the bad case seem perfectly symmetric. Accordingly, there is an inherent tension between Access Internalism and Epistemological Disjunctivism, whether of the Naïve Realist or of a different variety.

Some Epistemological Disjunctivists have attempted to dispel these reservations. In my view, they have remained unsuccessful.

Most prominently, Duncan Pritchard holds that introspection can, in good cases, give one access to the fact that one is in a factive mental state such as seeing that P.⁸⁸ Pritchard also identifies this as one of the core commitments underpinning McDowell's Epistemological Disjunctivist position (2008, 471).

Unfortunately, neither Pritchard nor McDowell say much to elucidate how the relevant introspective mechanism is supposed to work. Some such elucidation would obviously be required in order overcome the aforementioned presumption against such a view.⁸⁹ Moreover, importantly for our present purposes, it is again hard to see any reason for thinking that an appeal to Naïve Realism makes it any easier to identify such a mechanism.

⁸⁷ This concern is present in Wright (2008, 394-5) and Pritchard & Ranalli (forthcoming, 8).

⁸⁸ At least officially, Pritchard is himself non-committal about the metaphysical dimension of his Epistemological Disjunctivism. However, Pritchard also writes that "it could be that it is hard to motivate the Epistemological Disjunctivist position without appeal to a form of metaphysical Disjunctivism" (2012, 24), and that, although "it seems at least possible" to accept Epistemological Disjunctivism whilst rejecting metaphysical Disjunctivism "such a combination of views may well be philosophically quite uncomfortable" (forthcoming, 11).

⁸⁹ Similar things apply to Johnston's (2006, 287-8) appeal to an unexplained higher-order awareness of one's factive perceptual states, and Millar's (2008, 342) appeal to a "higher-order recognitional ability ... to tell whether or not one sees that an F is there."

Kennedy's (2011) account of subjects' first-person knowledge of one's naïve properties goes via the somewhat obscure notion of perceptually recognising things as "objects of sight." As a result, it is presumably best understood as offering a perceptual rather than distinctively introspective account, which therefore doesn't meet the present explanatory demands (cf. Logue 2011, 281).

To add to the difficulties faced by the Epistemological Disjunctivist, note that, as Smithies (2013a, §19) points out, in order to uphold the intuitive claim that what is bad about bad cases is that reflection alone does not allow one to tell them apart from good cases, the Epistemological Disjunctivist has to maintain that the absence of factive reasons for one's perceptual beliefs is not accessible to one in the bad case. Unfortunately, this is already a denial of the very intuitive version of the Access Internalist claim which was introduced above.

Moreover, as Pritchard is himself aware, there is a tension between maintaining, on the one hand, that in the good case, introspection can, in combination with some *a priori* reflection, land one with knowledge of being in the good case, and, on the other hand, respecting the claim that good and bad cases can be perfectly introspectively indistinguishable. Pritchard (2012, 5) calls the problem of reconciling these commitments the “distinguishability problem.”

Pritchard's supposed solution to this problem starts with the introduction of a distinction between what he calls “favouring” and “discriminating” epistemic support. Initially, it appears that the purpose of this is to allow the Epistemological Disjunctivist to maintain that one's factive support for the belief that one is in the good case is of the favouring sort, and that only the claim that it provides discriminating support would come into tension with the intuitive datum of subjective indiscriminability.

Regrettably, Pritchard's take on the dialectic then becomes successively more and more opaque. He fleshes out this distinction somewhat indirectly, via the example of a subject seeing a zebra. In such a case, Pritchard tells us, one can come to know that one sees a zebra (partly) in virtue of one's “favouring evidence” that there is a zebra rather than a cleverly disguised mule in front of one. In outlining in what this relevant “favouring evidence” consists, we are told that in this case, it centrally involves background evidence which makes this sort of deception antecedently unlikely (2012, 79). Moreover, Pritchard

asserts that this knowledge can be obtained in spite of the absence of any “discriminating evidence” which favours the zebra hypothesis, where such “discriminating evidence”, we are told, would in this case amount to evidence which suggests that the subject “is able to make the relevant perceptual discrimination” (2012, 82).

At this point in the discussion, one would expect Pritchard to attempt to dispel the “distinguishability problem” by pointing out that it is favouring rather than discriminating evidence which justifies us in the rejection of sceptical hypotheses. However, as he in a way appears to concede (2012, 130), given that “an independent epistemic basis for dismissing the target error-possibility” is “lacking when it comes to radical scepticism”, it is ultimately not entirely clear how this distinction is supposed to help with the problem as it applies to radical sceptical scenarios. For it simply isn’t immediately clear that we enjoy “favouring evidence” for the rejection of the hypothesis that, say, we are deceived brains in vats in anything like the way in which we enjoy “favouring evidence” for the zebra hypothesis in Pritchard’s original case.

In the book, Pritchard at times signals responsiveness to this problematic complicating twist in the dialectic. In these passages, his response to this aspect of the problem seems to consist in emphasising (e.g. on p. 130) that since radical sceptical error-possibilities are “epistemically ungrounded”, our reflectively accessible rational basis suffices for rejecting them.

Unfortunately, I then no longer see how Pritchard’s overall line of argument addresses the distinguishability problem as applied to radical sceptical scenarios. One of Pritchard’s core commitments appears to be that veridical perceptual experience supplies one with introspective data, and that this data allows one to reason oneself to the conclusion that one is not in a radical sceptical scenario. Since, I take it, anti-sceptical background knowledge is not supposed to play a central role in this reasoning process, the resulting anti-sceptical belief seems to constitute a clear example of a belief which rests on

“discriminating” as opposed to “favouring” epistemic support. So Pritchard lacks a response to the distinguishability problem as it applies to radical sceptical hypotheses.⁹⁰

In fact, it strikes me as quite clear that it is in principle impossible to give a satisfactory response here; the sort of ability for knowing that one is in the good case which Pritchard attributes to us as subjects of veridical perceptual experience seems to be of exactly the sort that clashes with the datum of introspective indiscriminability. So I maintain that Epistemological Disjunctivism, whether of the Naïve Realist or any other variety, is in irreconcilable conflict with the intuitions behind Access Internalism.

4.2.4. Taking stock

Let us briefly pause in order to take stock in order to bring these considerations together, and to assess where this leaves us with respect to the Naïve Realist Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis.

Earlier in this section, I identified as the supposed unique selling point of the specifically Naïve Realist brand of Epistemological Disjunctivism regarding the perceptual case its ability to preserve compatibility with Experiential Internalism, the claim that perceptual justificational status is determined by the kinds of perceptual experience one undergoes. Moreover, I diagnosed as the most plausible basis for the sense that this really is an advantage of the view the idea that Experiential Internalism allows one to capture the appeal of the Basic Internalist Intuition.

However, we saw that by making fairly trivial decisions about the individuation and “typing” of experience which themselves seem like unlikely candidates for being of any

⁹⁰ In correspondence, Pritchard writes that whilst the idea of favouring (as opposed to discriminating) epistemic support is introduced via examples involving favouring background evidence, he thinks these examples allow us to latch on to a broader category which subsumes support via the sort of factive evidence to which he appeals but excludes standard cases of introspective discrimination. I find it very difficult to see what this notion is supposed to be, and whilst various reviewers uncritically report on this aspect of Pritchard’s approach, I was not able to find evidence that they had been able to attain a better handle on this distinction.

significant direct epistemological import, it appears that proponents of other views regarding the nature of perceptual experience can mimic these supposed benefits. This already cast doubt on the existence of any significant distinctive advantages to Naïve Realism's ability to accommodate Experiential Internalism. We also saw that the Naïve Realist brand of Epistemological Disjunctivism has no better chance of allowing one to accommodate (the most important version of) Phenomenal Mentalism (the thesis that justificatory facts supervene on facts about one's instantiation of phenomenal properties) and Access Internalism (the thesis that justificatory facts supervene on facts which are reflectively accessible to one).

My sense is that when one reflects upon and properly appreciates Naïve Realist Epistemological Disjunctivism's incompatibility with Phenomenal Mentalism and Access Internalism, any remaining sense that Naïve Realism promises epistemological advantages over other forms of Epistemological Disjunctivism evaporates. In that sense, the implausibility of denying Phenomenal Mentalism and Access Internalism can be said to "screen off" the implausibility of denying Experiential Internalism.

Crucially, since the only discernible motivation for thinking that Naïve Realism allows one to formulate a distinctively appealing form of Epistemological Disjunctivism derived from the appearance that it uniquely allows one to reconcile Epistemological Disjunctivism with important internalist intuitions, I think these arguments suggest that the view lacks proper motivation. We should therefore reject the claim that Naïve-Realist acquaintance is of fundamental anti-sceptical epistemological significance.⁹¹

⁹¹ Couldn't the Naïve Realist, for all I have said, still claim Naïve Realist acquaintance to play a less direct yet significant epistemological role, on the true Epistemological Disjunctivist view?

For example, one natural proposal, explicitly pursued by Kennedy (2011, 92-3) would be to argue that if Naïve Realism is true, then the possibility that one's phenomenology could have been deceptive poses less of a danger to the modal stability or "safety" of one's belief in cases of veridical perception, since if Naïve Realism is true, such worlds will end up counting as significantly more "distant" from worlds in which one perceives veridically, since they will involve experiences which are constituted very differently.

There are a number of concerns one could raise about this strategy. For example, as I noted repeatedly above, it may be the case that non-Naïve Realists can mimic the Naïve Realist's claims about the individuation of experiences.

Moreover, proponents of epistemological theories which draw heavily on notions like "safety" typically argue that there are no non-circular ways of arguing for these sorts of conclusions about safety-relevant

Note here that this specific criticism of the Naïve Realist Epistemological Disjunctivist approach – which goes via the claim that it lacks proper motivation – is in a sense independent of whether one is at the end of the day inclined to actually endorse the internalist principles I introduced in the course of formulating it. However, insofar as one does oneself endorse these principles, one could obviously also offer a more direct argument against Naïve Realist Epistemological Disjunctivism, from its violation of these very principles. This would require the defence of these principles from influential objections for which I here lack the space, but it is worth noting that this is another route which one could pursue here.

Now how does this impinge on the prospects of the Naïve Realist Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis? I think that most straightforwardly, it casts similar doubt on the epistemological significance of the claim that our veridical hedonic-evaluative phenomenology is in part constituted by the relevant evaluative properties: Whilst a difference in the constitution of one's hedonic-evaluative phenomenology is in one sense an internal one, it is not internal in the senses which intuitively seem to matter epistemologically namely the senses captured by Phenomenal Mentalism and Access Internalism; for all that has been said so far, it could be that the difference between good and bad cases of hedonic-evaluative awareness are entirely “phenomenologically subterranean” and reflectively inaccessible to the subject in question. As a result, it is difficult to see how Naïve Realism about hedonic-evaluative awareness would help to render the claim that there is a justificatory difference between good cases and bad cases of hedonic-evaluative awareness any more plausible. Of course, for all I have said, one may still want to posit such a difference, but whether or not we enjoy the kind of intimate

closeness, i.e. no way of establishing such claims independently of one's grasp of the corresponding substantive epistemological claims (cf. e.g. Williamson 2000, 100, 2009, 9-10; Rabinowitz 2011, sect. 2a), which would render this strategy dialectically ineffective.

At any rate, this kind of derivate significance for our experiential contact with evaluative properties simply does not strike me as the sort of thing we initially hoped to obtain in the hedonic-evaluative case when we set out to assess the Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis; it would not amount to the identification of a difference in epistemological kind between beliefs which are based on acquaintance-involving perceptual phenomenology, but rather one of degree, and a not particularly interesting one at that.

experiential contact with evaluative properties countenanced by the Naïve Realist model does not seem to render this sort of view any more plausible.

Now the proponent of Naïve Realism about the hedonic-evaluative case might here be tempted to emphasise a potential difference between the hedonic-evaluative and the perceptual case on which it is worth reflecting. In particular, as long as she maintains that pleasure's value is grounded in some phenomenal characteristic (besides one's phenomenology as of its value) P_G , this will mean that good cases and bad cases will always differ phenomenally, if only with respect to P_G . Accordingly, on this sort of view, Naïve Realist Epistemological Disjunctivism about hedonic-evaluative awareness won't come into conflict with Phenomenal Mentalism (nor, presumably, with Access Internalism).

In response, I think that whilst this position is formally available to the Naïve Realist about hedonic-evaluative awareness, it threatens to render any claim about the Naïve Realist constitution of hedonic-evaluative awareness redundant in this account of the epistemology of pleasure's value. After all, what would be doing the real dialectical work would be the claim that pleasure's value is grounded in the phenomenal characteristic P_G , and the claim that a difference in P_G can account for a relevant epistemological difference between good and bad cases of hedonic-evaluative awareness; the claim that we enjoy a form of awareness of hedonic-evaluative properties that is distinctive in certain respects – namely, in conforming to the Naïve Realist picture – seems irrelevant to this story. (In fact, for this very reason, this account of the relevant epistemological difference between good and bad case remains available to us independently of whether we subscribe to the Naïve Realist picture or not.)

To put this point somewhat differently: The perceptual case arguably shows that Naïve Realist acquaintance *per se* does not seem to be of epistemic significance. It would then be odd to think that in the hedonic-evaluative case, the fact that the good and the bad case differ with respect to the phenomenal property P_G would somehow make this – i.e. one's

Naïve Realist acquaintance – epistemologically relevant after all, rather than itself being what is epistemologically significant here.

To summarise, I think that the standard reasons for thinking that Naïve Realist acquaintance is epistemically significant fail in both the perceptual and the hedonic-evaluative case. Accordingly, unless some further distinctive feature of the hedonic-evaluative case is identified, the Naïve Realist Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis lacks proper motivation.

4.3. Naïve Realist Epistemological Disjunctivism and defeat

In this sub-section, I turn to an independent line of argument for thinking that Naïve Realist acquaintance is unsuited to playing a fundamental anti-sceptical epistemological role, which turns on reflection of the role of defeaters of epistemic justification. I shall again begin by discussing the perceptual case and then move on to transposing the relevant insights to the hedonic-evaluative case.

The basic thought I want to pursue here can be introduced using a modified version of a thought-experiment which is originally due to Wright (2008, 398-9). Suppose that a subject takes part in a double-blind experiment in which X% of participants are in condition 1, and the remainder in condition 2. The value of X and the nature of the relevant conditions are known to the subjects. Participants in condition 1 are given a pill which induces a perfect hallucination as of a red cube once they are led into an empty room. Participants in condition 2 are given a vitamin pill with no effect on their perceptual system and are similarly led into a room, which however really does contain a red cube. As far as their phenomenology is concerned, the experiences of the subjects in these conditions are perfectly indistinguishable.⁹² In other words, it is known to the participants that X% of them will be undergoing a perfect hallucination as of a red cube.

⁹² This case differs from Wright's in that Wright does not specify what subjects expect the room to be like conditional on perceiving veridically and on hallucinating. Since we then lack a determinate handle on the antecedent likelihood which the subjects assign to the room appearing the way it appears to them, his case is arguably somewhat underdescribed in crucial respects.

When one considers this sort of case, it is very natural to hold that at least when X is known to be sufficiently high, the subjects' confidence in there being a red cube in front of them should be no higher than $100\%-X\%$. Whatever factive support seeing the red cube may provide in ordinary cases, it is intuitively very plausible that this support is defeated if, for example, 50% of the subjects are known to find themselves in the deceptive condition 1.⁹³ It is certainly not the case that the subjects in condition 2 should assign a credence significantly greater than 50% to their being in that condition.

For our present purposes, this observation matters in several respects.

Firstly, it points to the fact that an appeal to Naïve Realist perceptual acquaintance alone yields an incomplete epistemological picture; further resources are required to account for epistemic phenomena like those in the case above. Arguably, this already raises an initial worry of whether the resources which will need to get wheeled in in order to complete the account might not end up rendering the Naïve Realist element explanatorily idle.

Secondly, whatever one might think about this admittedly somewhat indeterminate worry, as Wright points out, the earlier observation regarding his case suggest that those who want to employ Epistemological Disjunctivism for anti-sceptical purposes now owe us an account of how our predicament, under ordinary perceptual circumstances, vis-à-vis radical sceptical hypotheses relevantly differs from the predicament of these experimental subjects. Once again, this point seems to apply just as much to Naïve Realist versions of Epistemological Disjunctivism as it does to Epistemological Disjunctivist views of any other variety.

⁹³ Maria Lasonen-Aarnio (2014) is a hard-line externalist who is likely to be willing to deny this, but this position seems to be very unpopular and strikes me as wildly implausible.

I would here expect most Epistemological Disjunctivists to point to a supposed disanalogy between the two sorts of epistemic predicaments.

To consider a concrete example, Pritchard (2012, 126) holds that “radical sceptical error-possibilities are never epistemically motivated but are instead only merely raised.” Presumably, he would then hold that the relevant difference which elicits the scepticism-friendly verdict in my modified version of Wrights’ case – the verdict that participants should significantly reduce their credence even if they are in fact perceiving veridically – is that in these cases, the error possibilities are epistemically motivated, presumably via probabilistic considerations stemming from our background knowledge about the experimental set-up.

So why does Pritchard hold that radical sceptical hypotheses are “merely raised”? His primary reason for this seems to be that they are “never epistemically motivated by appeal to empirical considerations” (2012, 128), given that these sceptical hypotheses by their very nature call into doubt our empirical background knowledge. But a natural response here is that Pritchard must be relying on a false dichotomy; after all, for all we have been told, it could be that there are convincing non-empirical, a priori considerations which help to motivate and not just raise radical sceptical hypotheses.

In fact, this is far from a niche concern. After all, the abductivist responses to scepticism that have historically been popular among internalists are naturally seen as contributions to the struggle against the conclusion that sceptical hypotheses enjoy greater prior plausibility due to their greater apparent simplicity. They proceed by trying to show that in virtue of offering a better explanation for certain regularities in our experience for which we enjoy internalist evidence, anti-scepticism is the simpler theory after all.

But now we can raise a dilemma for the Epistemological Disjunctivist: Assuming that abductivist responses to scepticism fail, they owe us an account of why simplicity arguments for radical sceptical hypotheses don’t defeat the factive evidence for anti-

scepticism we supposedly enjoy. If, on the other hand, abductivist responses to scepticism are successful in showing that anti-sceptical hypotheses enjoy the greater prior plausibility, then the availability of this anti-sceptical strategy to internalists threatens to erode much of the unique anti-sceptical advantage which Epistemological Disjunctivism was supposed to provide.

Accordingly, independently of whether Naïve Realist Epistemological Disjunctivism has advantages over other Epistemological Disjunctivist proposals, these reflections on the role of epistemic defeaters for our perceptual beliefs cast doubt on the claim that any remotely plausible Epistemological Disjunctivist proposal could provide us with advantages in answering scepticism which are not available to proponents of more straightforward and intuitive internalist approaches. This means that we have further reason to doubt that Naïve Realist acquaintance is of fundamental anti-sceptical epistemological significance.

Now crucially, I think that these considerations to do with epistemic defeat are arguably especially pertinent in the hedonic-evaluative context. After all, we just saw that even if Naïve Realist phenomenology provided one with especially strong (“factive”) grounds for favouring non-sceptical hypotheses on which things really are as they perceptually appear, this support would be defeated if one were to have strong prior reason to expect one’s phenomenology to be misleading. And since there is clearly something to the idea that the instantiation of *sui generis* evaluative properties is antecedently extremely unlikely,⁹⁴ one could make the case that the relevant analogue of this clause regarding defeat is very much applicable in the hedonic-evaluative case.⁹⁵ The upshot would then be that even if Naïve Realist Epistemological Disjunctivism were true, it wouldn’t help

⁹⁴ This seems true at least if we bracket one’s potential prior appreciation of *a priori* connections between hedonic-evaluative phenomenal properties and corresponding evaluative properties which, for reasons discussed in detail in section 2 of chapter 1, would undermine the distinctiveness of the route to evaluative knowledge in question.

⁹⁵ Cf. Pautz’ (ms, 38) objection to a “Moorean” argument for primitivist colour realism, in the context of which he appeals to claim that the *prima facie* support we enjoy for propositions about the instantiation of primitive colours is defeated by the “Dualism at the surfaces of objects” which realist colour primitivism would seem to entail.

us in opposing scepticism about hedonic-evaluative awareness; whatever distinctive support Naïve Realist acquaintance might provide in other circumstances, this support would be defeated in the hedonic-evaluative case.

4.4. Conclusion

In this section, I have provided two main reasons for thinking that if the rationale for taking Naïve Realist acquaintance to be of anti-sceptical epistemological significance mirrors that familiar from the perceptual case, then the Naïve Realist Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis does not look promising.

Firstly, the standard way of motivating Naïve Realism in the perceptual case is unconvincing in either context – it seems to rely on the impression that Naïve Realism allows one to simultaneously embrace a form of Epistemological Disjunctivism and yet at the same time respect important internalist intuitions, but this hope seems illusory.

Secondly, I have argued that plausible versions of Naïve Realist Epistemological Disjunctivism regarding the perceptual case must make room for the epistemic defeat of the epistemic support provided by Naïve Realist acquaintance. Unfortunately, I argued that this threatens to undermine the views anti-sceptical significance, and that the reasons for thinking this are especially pertinent in the hedonic-evaluative context.

As a result, there is serious pressure on the proponent of the Naïve Realist Hedonic-Evaluative acquaintance thesis to identify some further feature distinctive of the hedonic-evaluative case which allows claims about Naïve Realist constitution to play a more significant epistemological role in that context.

5. A *Priori* Naïve Realism about hedonic-evaluative experience

In the previous section, we saw that there is good reason to doubt that Naïve Realist acquaintance would be of fundamental anti-sceptical epistemological significance in the perceptual case, and that in order to vindicate the Naïve Realist Hedonic-Evaluative

Acquaintance Thesis, some further distinctive feature associated with the hedonic-evaluative case would have to be identified.

In my view, there is only one discernible way in which the Naïve Realist about hedonic-evaluative experience could deliver in this regard. In particular, I think she would have to make the case that in contrast to the case of perceptual awareness, it is not even conceivable that one could come to enjoy hedonic-evaluative phenomenology which is constituted in a way that does not involve the relevant evaluative property. I shall refer to this view as “*A priori* Naïve Realism” about hedonic-evaluative experience in what follows.

Presumably, if *A Priori* Naïve Realism about hedonic-evaluative awareness could be vindicated, then one’s Naïve Realist hedonic-evaluative phenomenology presumably does put one in an excellent position to rule out sceptical scenarios in which, contrary to appearances, one’s experience isn’t actually good. Conversely, as long as non-veridical hedonic-evaluative experience is conceivable, the challenges highlighted in section 4 above rear their head. Accordingly, I think that whether Naïve Realism about hedonic-evaluative awareness can be claimed to entail distinctive epistemological consequences in large part hinges on the defensibility of this strengthened variant of the view.

Moreover, the view has some *prima facie* support; accepting *A Priori* Naïve Realism about hedonic-evaluative awareness is one way of accounting for the intuition that whenever one conceives of one’s experiencing one’s experience as good in the right sort of way, it will also be at least *pro tanto* valuable.

In this section, I shall therefore offer an assessment of this more specific thesis, which will also provide an opportunity to reinforce some of the general difficulties for Naïve Realism about hedonic-evaluative experience which were already touched upon in earlier sections.

As I just noted, *A Priori* Naïve Realism about hedonic-evaluative awareness provides one possible explanation for the intuition that one cannot experience one's experience as good (in the way in which one ordinarily experiences pleasures as good) without it also in fact being good. Call this the "Awareness-Value Link." This is a *prima facie* point in the view's favour. However, the question of course arises whether it is the best explanation of the Awareness-Value Link.

Most obviously, *A Priori* Naïve Realism competes with the explanation provided by what we might call the "Simple View." According to the Simple View, the reason why it is not conceivable for someone to experience her experience as good (in the relevant sort of way) without it actually being good is that it is precisely one's experiencing one's experience as good which makes them good, coupled with the standard Moorean idea that such connections between normative properties and their grounds will be *a priori*.

Which of these explanations is the superior one? One implication of the Simple View which one could view as a drawback is that it commits one to an *a priori* connection between a phenomenal and an evaluative property. One might very well consider this implication objectionable, for example because one finds objectionable the very idea of an *a priori* connection between properties which seem metaphysically deeply discontinuous in the way in which evaluative and phenomenal properties evidently are. Moreover, since this connection is not grounded in constraints on the constitution of phenomenology, one could view it as in a sense more "brute" than that countenanced by *A Priori* Naïve Realism.

However, I think it would not be advisable for the *A Priori* Naïve Realist about hedonic-evaluative awareness to base the case for the superiority of their view on this kind of objection. One way to bring this out is to note that the Naïve Realist about hedonic-evaluative experience will presumably have to agree that there is some non-evaluative property in virtue of which pleasant experience have their evaluative properties. Moreover, at least on a robustly non-naturalist conception of evaluative properties against

the background of which I am here operating (see section 4.1 of chapter 1),⁹⁶ it strikes me as very natural to think that insofar as such properties are instantiated at all, they are linked to their grounds by a relation of *a priori* entailment.⁹⁷ At the very least, it seems very plausible that the Naïve Realist must agree that there is no conceivable world which is a perfect non-evaluative duplicate of our world and yet differs in evaluative respects (cf. Chalmers 1996, 83). This may already suffice to commit the Naïve Realist to the same sort of natural-evaluative *a priori* connection countenanced by the Simple View.⁹⁸ Moreover, even more straightforwardly, it strikes me as quite likely that whatever reason one has for objecting to *a priori* connections between evaluative properties and their non-evaluative grounds will end up similarly carrying over to the sort of *a priori* connection that according to the *A Priori* Naïve Realist holds between hedonic-evaluative awareness and hedonic value. Accordingly, whatever objections one might raise regarding the *a priori* connections posited by the Simple View, I think it would be unwise for the proponent *A Priori* Naïve Realism to press these against this rival explanation of the Awareness-Value Link.

In contrast, there are a number of obvious objections to *A Priori* Naïve Realism which the proponent of the Simple View could press in arguing for the superiority of her view.

The first thing which comes to mind here is that there is something inherently very unattractive about *A Priori* Naïve Realism about hedonic-evaluative experience. After all, where the weaker version of the view already committed us to an unattractive

⁹⁶ Note that by constraining our focus in this manner, I have in effect bracketed synthetic naturalist views on which “good” picks out whatever property plays the such-and-such role in the actual world, where what fills this role is sensitive to *a posteriori* contingencies of the world which we happen to exhibit.

⁹⁷ To bring this out, note that it would be odd to think that although in the actual world, some such-and-such evaluative property is instantiated wholly in virtue of such-and-such a non-evaluative property, but that it is perfectly conceivable for this non-evaluative property to occur without giving rise to the corresponding evaluative property. Intuitively, if it is conceivable for the non-evaluative feature N_G to occur without the accompanying feature V , then it cannot be just in virtue of the instantiation of N_G that V is instantiated on that occasion, i.e. at the very least, N_G cannot exhaustively characterise the ground for V ’s instantiation.

⁹⁸ It does so unless the Naïve Realist holds that the supervenience of the evaluative on the non-evaluative is somehow exclusively owed to the fact that all instantiations of evaluative properties in the actual world are accompanied by instances of Naïve Realist awareness and that these, given *a priori* constraints on their constitution, entail them, despite not serving as their grounds.

discontinuity in the constitution of hedonic-evaluative phenomenology and other kinds of phenomenal properties, *A Priori* Naïve Realism makes this discontinuity even deeper by claiming that it holds throughout the entirety of modal space, in a way which appears decidedly *ad hoc*. For in the perceptual case, we saw that all sides should agree that it is at the very least conceivable that the relevant phenomenal properties could be constituted in ways that don't conform to the Naïve Realist model. *A Priori* Naïve Realism about hedonic-evaluative experience would now require us to believe that hedonic-evaluative experience differs starkly in this regard.

In addition, I noted in section 2 above that the Naïve Realist about hedonic-evaluative experience is left with the difficult task of finding a plausible ground of hedonic value besides our hedonic-evaluative awareness itself. By endorsing the Awareness-Value Link, this task now becomes even harder. After all, if hedonic-evaluative awareness entails the instantiation of hedonic value, it also entails the instantiation of hedonic value's ground. But it seems doubtful, to say that least, that there is any distinct non-evaluative property which is such that it is impossible to imagine the instantiation of hedonic-evaluative awareness without its instantiation. Presumably, since pleasures are plausibly good in virtue of how they feel, and since it seems that beings which don't exhibit any non-phenomenal properties could presumably instantiate hedonic-evaluative awareness and value (think of disembodied ghosts), this candidate feature would have to be a phenomenal one. Unfortunately, it seems hard to think of a distinct phenomenal feature which is such that hedonic-evaluative awareness phenomenology cannot conceivably occur without it.

Thirdly, the Simple View makes it much easier to account for the converse of the Awareness-Value Link, the "Value-Awareness Link."

As I also noted in section 2 above, it seems very plausible that insofar as an experience exhibits the value that typically comes with being a pleasure, it must also be experienced as good; if an experience is not experienced as good by the relevant subject, then insofar

as it can have value at all, it must have a different source. Accordingly, it seems that hedonic-value *a priori* entails hedonic-evaluative awareness. In fact, in a sense, this Value-Awareness Link seems if anything more strongly supported than the Awareness-Value Link of which it is the converse; for example, in contrast to the Awareness-Value Link, cases of wicked or undeserved pleasures in no way cast doubt on the Value-Awareness Link.

Furthermore, note that in addition to being inherently unappealing, the idea of denying the Value-Awareness Link would give rise to some additional difficulties for proponents of Naïve Realism about hedonic-evaluative experience. After all, if hedonic value does not necessitate hedonic-evaluative awareness, they must point to some contingent relation subjects bear to the hedonic-evaluative features of their experience which account for why they sometimes do and sometimes don't give rise to hedonic-evaluative experience. However, since familiar considerations regarding the causal (in)efficacy of evaluative properties give rise to serious difficulties for applying the standard causal model of Naïve Realist acquaintance to the hedonic-evaluative case, it would look like another non-trivial burden to take on this additional task.⁹⁹

Now on the Simple View, the Value-Awareness Link is easily explained: If pleasures have their value precisely in virtue of the subject's instantiation of hedonic-evaluative

⁹⁹ Expanding on this point: In the perceptual context, Naïve Realists typically think of Naïve Realist acquaintance as obtaining in virtue of an appropriate causal connection between the perceived property-instance and the perceivers' internal states. An obvious concern about extending this proposal to the hedonic-evaluative case is that that familiar worries about "causal exclusion" make it difficult to see how V could plausibly be claimed to have an effect on the subject's brain states. The completeness of physics suggests that these brain states will have sufficient physical causes. Accordingly, if one accepts this attractive principle, the problem becomes one of assigning a causal role to V without committing oneself to persistent unexplained causal overdetermination.

Perhaps such worries could in principle be avoided if one ties V very closely to its non-evaluative grounding property, e.g. by appealing to an *a priori* connection between V and its ground, so that it can inherit or share in the causal efficacy of that grounding property. However, as long as one holds that V's ground is itself a phenomenal property – i.e. that V obtains only because some further phenomenal property obtains – it is not even clear that this would help, since it is not clear that there is any causal efficacy to V to inherit. After all, for reasons very familiar from extant debates in the philosophy of mind, to the extent to which is attracted to the dualist position that a physical duplicate of this world is conceivable in which V's phenomenal ground is not instantiated, it will be doubtful that the non-evaluative property which grounds V will have physical effects.

awareness phenomenology, it is unsurprising that instantiating hedonic value entails hedonic-evaluative awareness.

In contrast, the *A Priori* Naïve Realist would have to account for the Value-Awareness Link by positing another rather peculiar necessary connection, one which lacks this sort of independent motivation. They would have to hold that – as a sort of brute fact – hedonic-evaluative value simply necessitates awareness of that property, even though this awareness plays no role in grounding these evaluative features, and these features would presumably – once the intuitive grounding relationship countenanced by the Simple View is rejected – otherwise appear to be clear examples of “distinct existences.”¹⁰⁰¹⁰¹

Moreover, although this does not necessarily constitute a decisive objection to the view, it is worth noting that the Naïve Realist would now be committed to rejecting the standard model for Naïve Realist acquaintance, on which it obtains in virtue of some contingent relation – like an appropriate causal connection – between the relevant property and the relevant subject’s internal states.

In addition, if the Value-Awareness Link is granted, this further exacerbates the by now familiar difficulty of identifying a plausible non-evaluative ground for hedonic value. After all, this grounding property will plausibly entail the instantiation of the corresponding evaluative property, and this will in turn entail the instantiation of hedonic-evaluative awareness. Accordingly, we now need to find a distinct non-evaluative property – plausibly a phenomenal one – such that it is inconceivable for it to be instantiated without also entailing the instantiation of hedonic-evaluative awareness. Yet once again, it seems very difficult, to say the least, to identify a plausible candidate here.

¹⁰⁰ The suggestion that hedonic-value necessitates hedonic-evaluative awareness via its non-evaluative ground seems hardly more plausible in this respect.

¹⁰¹ This point is closely related to the appearance of a “quality/awareness gap” which Chalmers (2015, 274) identifies for “panqualityist” views regarding the grounds of consciousness on which phenomenal properties are constituted by primitive “qualities” like redness, heat etc. exhibited by fundamental physical entities.

Accordingly, while *A Priori* Naïve Realism arguably has its ability of explaining the Awareness-Value Link counting in its favour, the explanation of this link embodied by the Simple View – which states that pleasures owe their hedonic-evaluative properties to their subjects’ hedonic-evaluative awareness phenomenology – seems to offer a clearly superior explanation of this intuition. Moreover, since, for the reasons outlined in section 4, one would plausibly need to invoke the *a priori* version of Naïve Realism about hedonic-evaluative experience in order to vindicate the Naïve Realist Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis, this thesis should therefore be rejected.

6. Conclusion

In this chapter, I set out to assess and ultimately argued against the

Naïve Realist Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis: The metaphysics of our experience of pleasure’s value conforms to a close analogue of the Naïve Realist model of veridical perceptual experience, and this fact accounts for the distinctive epistemic status of our hedonic-evaluative beliefs.

After sketching some reasons for being interested in this thesis in the introductory section, I justified, in section 1, my preferred way of unpacking the idea of Naïve Realist acquaintance, in terms of the constitution of subjects’ perceptual phenomenology by features of the environment – or, transposed to the hedonic-evaluative case, the constitution of hedonic-evaluative awareness phenomenology by the relevant experienced evaluative features.

In section 2, I identified a difficulty which uniquely afflicts Naïve Realism in the hedonic-evaluative case. This difficulty turned on the observation that such a view seems to narrow down our choice of candidate grounds for hedonic-evaluative properties in an – at least on the face of it – problematic manner, since it rules out the view that the value exhibited by pleasures is at least partly grounded in their being experienced as good. This difficulty was exacerbated by the apparent difficulty of conceiving of hedonic value in the absence

of hedonic-evaluative awareness as well as hedonic-evaluative awareness without the simultaneous instantiation of hedonic value.

In section 3, I discussed in what ways, if any, the Naïve Realist about hedonic-evaluative experience could hope to give a satisfactory account of hedonic-evaluative phenomenology in the actual world if she at the same time allows for the possibility in principle of nonveridical hedonic-evaluative experience. In doing so, I drew various connections with parallel arguments which – I argued – pose serious difficulties for Naïve Realism about perceptual experience. I explained how analogues of these arguments can be used to put pressure to on the most plausible instances of those versions of Naïve Realism about hedonic-evaluative experience which allow for the conceivability of non-veridical cases.

In section 4, I assessed the potential for Naïve Realism to provide us with novel anti-sceptical resources. By arguing that the view that it does so lacks proper motivation and that it threatens to be undermined once the role of epistemic defeaters is properly appreciated, I argued that this is very doubtful in the case of Naïve Realism about perceptual experience. Moreover, I made the case that these considerations also cast doubt on Naïve Realism's epistemological significance in the hedonic-evaluative case, unless further distinctive features associated with that context are identified.

Finally, in section 5, I assessed what I take to be the only feature which could be thought to fit this bill, namely the claim that in the hedonic-evaluative context, Naïve Realism is not just in fact true, but also true *a priori*. I noted that this proposal could be seen as having the merit of explaining why it is hard to conceive of an experience which is experienced as good (in the relevant way) without actually being good. However, I further argued that a far simpler explanation of this intuition – the claim that pleasures owe their value to their associated hedonic-evaluative awareness phenomenology – is clearly superior.

Accordingly, I think we have good reason to reject the Naïve Realist Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis.

Chapter 4: Hedonic experience and introspective acquaintance

0. Introduction

In the previous chapter, we saw that the attempt to vindicate the Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis by construing our relationship to hedonic-evaluative properties in analogy with Naïve Realist perceptual acquaintance – i.e. as involving the constitution of hedonic-evaluative phenomenology by hedonic-evaluative properties – founders.

However, as I already mentioned in chapter 1, the philosophy of perception is not the only area in which a relation of “acquaintance” has been invoked for the purpose of epistemological theorising; importantly, such a notion also features in the debate about the nature of phenomenal introspection. In that context, a number of philosophers have claimed that subjects’ introspective beliefs regarding the phenomenal properties which they instantiate enjoy a distinctive sort of foundational epistemological significance which is conferred on them by a special relation of “acquaintance” or “direct confrontation” which experiencing subjects bear to these properties.

As I also noted in chapter 1, I think this points to a further interesting way of developing the Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis. In particular, I pointed out that provided one is already willing to endorse an acquaintance theory of phenomenal introspection, one could try to make the case for its extension to the hedonic-evaluative case. In other words, one could try to argue for

the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis: Subjects bear the same kind of special relation – “introspective acquaintance” – to their phenomenal properties and the value of their pleasures, and this fact accounts for the distinctive epistemic status of our hedonic-evaluative beliefs.

I think this thesis clearly has some intuitive appeal. In fact, I suspect that the attraction to something like this picture to a considerable extent accounts for the often-expressed conviction that the belief in pleasure’s value and suffering’s disvalue constitutes, or at

least come close to constituting, a sort of normative-epistemological bedrock. Besides emphasising the force of this intuition as considered in isolation, one could also point to a number of obvious ways in which its proponent might try to reinforce it.

Firstly, assuming that one accepts an acquaintance account of phenomenal introspection, one could motivate the extension of such a view to the hedonic-evaluative case by pointing out that there is a sense in which the subject matter of hedonic-evaluative and phenomenal beliefs overlaps: They both pertain to the intrinsic nature of one's conscious experience. Moreover, an intimately connected intuition which drives acquaintance accounts in the case of phenomenal introspection is the thought that experiencing subjects enjoy a kind of epistemic authority regarding such phenomenal introspective propositions because they are in some sense especially "close" to the relevant objects of predication. Arguably, this intuition is also present in the hedonic-evaluative case, presumably precisely because hedonic-evaluative properties similarly qualify subjects' experiences, and one could try to invoke it in reinforcing one's case for an epistemic symmetry between the two cases.

Secondly, one could point out that in the context of phenomenal properties, claims pertaining to the overlap or intersection of *esse* and *percipi*— i.e. claims regarding the way in which when it comes to phenomenal properties, the distinction between appearance and reality seems to collapse — have frequently been invoked in order to bring out some of the epistemological distinctiveness of phenomenal-introspective belief. This might lead one to emphasise that the idea that pleasant and unpleasant experiences really are (at least *pro tanto*) good to the extent to which they are experienced as good also has force in the hedonic-evaluative context, and to try to argue that this suggests another way of motivating the belief in epistemological parallels (cf. Lewis 1946, 407).

Thirdly, it is worth noting that in both the phenomenal and the evaluative case, philosophers have voiced the concern that since (certain classes of) robust realist views in these domains threaten to entail the causal-explanatory irrelevance of the relevant

properties, their proponents face difficult questions in accounting for how they could ever come to amount to knowledge, or even just come to be justified.¹⁰² Moreover, as we shall see in section 1.3.5.2 below, acquaintance theories about phenomenal introspection are sometimes developed with the explicit aim of addressing these concerns as they arise in the phenomenal context. Accordingly, someone who is sympathetic to this approach to silencing these causal-explanatory concerns in the phenomenal case and on the look-out for a corresponding treatment of the hedonic-evaluative case, it would on the face of it seem very natural to try to kill two birds with one stone by extending her preferred account of phenomenal acquaintance in such a way as to cover both cases.

Now as the attentive reader will have noticed, there is a certain asymmetry in how I chose to formulate the Naïve Realist and the Introspective versions of the Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis. In the former case, I assessed whether a certain specific conception of acquaintance justification – involving the constitution of phenomenology by the experienced properties – applied in the hedonic-evaluative case. This particular model of acquaintance justification had originally been proposed in the perceptual context, but the claim I set out to investigate wasn't formulated so as to stand and fall with the analogy between the original perceptual and the hedonic-evaluative context (although we saw that whether the model applies in the perceptual case was nevertheless of some indirect dialectical relevance). In contrast, the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis as stated above is explicitly a claim that a certain sort of epistemological parallel holds between the phenomenal introspective and the hedonic-evaluative case.

For a number of reasons, this strikes me as the most natural way of approaching things. One relevant consideration here is that in the introspective case, there is an intuition of there being the relevant kind of parallel between the introspective and the hedonic-evaluative case which has significant force even prior to pinning down precisely what is claimed to be involved in both cases. In contrast, I think that at least before one pins down

¹⁰² See Shoemaker (1975) and Harman (1977) as the respective *loci classici* for these debates.

in specific terms what perceptual acquaintance would involve (e.g. in terms of the claim about constitution on which I concentrated), the intuition that the hedonic-evaluative case and the perceptual case involve the same kind of “direct confrontation” is much weaker, or at least far more equivocal.

Relatedly, I think that the various models of introspective acquaintance which I unpack in my discussion below would seem forbiddingly *ad hoc* if one proposed them as models just of the hedonic-evaluative case without at the same time holding that they applied to phenomenal introspection as well – even more so, that is, than if one proposed the Naïve Realist model solely as an account of hedonic-evaluative justification, without also advocating its applicability in the perceptual case.¹⁰³

As a result, the questions regarding the most plausible acquaintance model in the original phenomenal introspective context, and regarding the analogy between the original phenomenal introspective and the hedonic-evaluative contexts will feature much more prominently in this chapter than their analogues did in chapter 3. This also strikes me as also felicitous in a further respect, since I think there remains significant potential to do useful philosophical work in properly unpacking and bringing out the respective merits and disadvantages of the core positions in the extant debate regarding the nature of phenomenal introspection, to which I hope to contribute in this manner.

This chapter is divided into two main sections. For much of section 1, the focus is on the discussion of extant acquaintance views of phenomenal introspection. My aim will be to narrow down the list of viable acquaintance accounts of phenomenal introspection, in order to give us a clearer sense of what exactly it would take for such an account to be

¹⁰³ For example, it would seem incredibly *ad hoc* to maintain that we enjoy epistemic acquaintance with hedonic value in virtue of the fact that our hedonic-evaluative beliefs are appropriately constituted by such value properties (as some “Constitutivist” theorists analogously maintain in the phenomenal cases; see section 1.3.5 below) without identifying a broader class of beliefs to which this phenomenon applies. In addition, it is worth noting that many of the objections which I will level against such specific models of phenomenal introspection would in an obvious manner carry over to analogues applied to the hedonic-evaluative case.

successfully extended to the hedonic-evaluative case. Moreover, my discussion will allow us to identify a view about phenomenal introspection in the acquaintance-theoretic tradition which is plausible not just as relative to alternative proposals in the acquaintance tradition but moreover holds at least some promise as a contender for being an appealing account of phenomenal introspection *simpliciter*. This has the benefit of providing reassurance that the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis doesn't fail prematurely.

In section 2, I then try to assess whether the attempt to extend this picture of phenomenal introspective epistemology to the hedonic-evaluative case holds any promise. I explain why I think that three important indirect arguments that one may want to use to support such an extension fail, and that there are in fact fairly robust intuitive grounds for resisting this move. On this basis, I conclude that that this proposal should ultimately be rejected, and that the prospects for defending the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis are therefore bleak.

1. Acquaintance views about phenomenal introspection

In this section, I critically discuss extant acquaintance theories of phenomenal introspection, ultimately with the aim of identifying what would be required for the extension of such a view to the hedonic-evaluative case. Since statements of these views often remain frustratingly impressionistic and the similarities and differences between different views in this family are rarely made explicit by their proponents in a satisfactory way, I will end up offering something of a piecemeal mapping of this territory which in many places involves a fair amount of work dedicated to identifying the best ways of unpacking the commitments of theorists who work in this tradition.

In section 1.1, I offer a sketchy initial characterisation of acquaintance theories of introspection by identifying some core commitments shared by many proponents of this approach.

In section 1.2, I turn my focus to the seemingly widespread conception of introspective acquaintance as a distinctive form of awareness. Against the background of such a conception, the obvious way to assess the plausibility of the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis would be to evaluate whether we enjoy the same kind of awareness of phenomenal and hedonic-evaluative properties. However, I argue that this very idea is a red herring, since those acquaintance theorists who adhere to a conception of introspective acquaintance as a special form of awareness would be well-advised to drop it.

In section 1.3, I distinguish and assess various different views which an acquaintance theorist could put forward in fleshing out the specific workings of phenomenal introspective justification. I end up arguing for the conclusion that the most attractive view of phenomenal introspective justification in the acquaintance theoretic tradition is one on which (with certain qualifications) one's mere instantiation of a phenomenal property suffices to provide one with corresponding introspective justification. Finally, I explain in some detail where I think this leaves us vis-à-vis the assessment of the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis.

1.1. Core commitments

In the contemporary literature on introspection, there is a whole cluster of views which appeal to the idea of “acquaintance” or “direct confrontation” with one's phenomenal properties.¹⁰⁴ Unfortunately, in part because different authors introduce this relation via very different theoretical roles which it is supposed to play, there is no salient canonical characterisation of such views. In fact, it may be that strictly speaking, these views are connected only through a sort of family resemblance of partially overlapping shared commitments, without there being a single commitment which informatively captures what is distinctive about these views.

¹⁰⁴ This includes the views of Moser (1989); Fumerton (1995, 2008a); McGrew (1995, 1999); Chalmers (1996, 2003, 2010, 2013a); Gertler (2001, 2011, 2012); Bonjour (2003a, b); Pitt (2004); Horgan et al. (2006); Horgan & Kriegel (2007); Hasan (2011, 2013a, b).

However, one discernible basic idea common to most if not all of the views in this category is this: Subjects bear, or can come to bear, a *sui generis* relation – acquaintance – to the truthmakers of their introspective beliefs regarding which phenomenal properties they currently instantiate, i.e. to the relevant property instances or states of their instantiation. It is this relation which accounts for the justificatory status of the relevant introspective beliefs. Typically, this relation is furthermore taken to involve or consist in a distinctive form of awareness which precedes the introspective beliefs on which it confers justification.

In addition, those who appeal to introspective acquaintance usually take the justification enabled by introspective acquaintance to be foundational in nature. That is to say, by their lights, beliefs justified through introspective acquaintance are not justified in virtue of their inferential relation to other justified beliefs. This idea is typically coupled with the commitment that the introspective justification which acquaintance grounds is especially robust, in the sense of being less prone to certain sorts of sceptical challenges. Moreover, introspective acquaintance is commonly taken to play a distinctive and fundamental epistemological role, in that the foundational epistemic justification enabled by acquaintance is not to be understood in terms of some more general and widely applicable model of foundational justification. For example, it is not to be understood merely in terms of familiar general externalist models which appeal e.g. to reliability or cognate notions in accounting for the epistemic status of “basic beliefs.”

At least for now, this will suffice as a first-pass characterisation of acquaintance theories of phenomenal introspection. To reiterate, this initial delineation is meant to serve merely as a starting point; as I shall later argue, the strongest view in the spirit of the acquaintance approach will require the rejection of some of these more specific of the commitments.

1.2. Introspective acquaintance as a form of awareness

In section 1.1., I noted that acquaintance theorists often conceive of the justification-conferring acquaintance relation as a form of awareness. To illustrate this with a concrete example, many acquaintance theorists of phenomenal introspection take one's foundational justification for thinking that one currently instantiates phenomenal redness to be at least partly a matter of one's being aware – in a certain distinctive way which precedes one's introspective belief – of the relevant instance of phenomenal redness.

Whether this turns out to be a good way to think about introspective acquaintance or not has obvious implications for the assessment of the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis. For if what makes the epistemology of phenomenal belief special is the distinctive type of awareness which we as introspecting subjects enjoy of our phenomenal properties, then presumably, the natural first question to tackle in assessing whether our account of phenomenal introspective epistemology should be extended to the hedonic-evaluative case would be that of whether we enjoy an awareness of our hedonic-evaluative properties which is of that same kind.

In this section, my primary aim will be to argue for the rejection of this component of many extant acquaintance accounts, and to thereby allow us to approach the question of whether there is introspective acquaintance with hedonic value in a more informed manner. In particular, I shall argue that it is hard to see a way of spelling out this idea of introspective awareness in the acquaintance-theoretic context in a way that is not either implausible or unhelpful, and that acquaintance theorists of introspection would therefore be well-advised to refrain from appealing to it.

1.2.1. Experiential awareness

In discussing questions pertaining to the idea of introspective awareness, we have to pay attention to the way in which, in general, talk of “awareness” has both broader, more inclusive, and narrower, more restrictive uses.

When it comes to the specific issue of whether introspective acquaintance is helpfully construed as a distinctive form of awareness, the first obvious point to note is that if the idea of a distinctive introspective awareness relation is supposed to play the kind of theoretical role which many acquaintance theorists want it to play, then it must presumably be thought of specifically as some sort of conscious, experiential awareness.

To illustrate my reasons for thinking this, consider the sort of conception of introspection propounded by the likes of Armstrong (1980) and Lycan (1996), on which introspective beliefs are the causal upshot of a “self-scanning” mechanism which itself operates on an entirely sub-personal level. Proponents of such views also sometimes speak of the operation of such a mechanism as amounting to a kind of introspective “awareness.” Yet clearly, this conception of introspection seems to be diametrically opposed to that embodied by the acquaintance-theoretic tradition.

Presumably, the basis for this impression is that it is hard to see how the operation of such a mechanism could be thought to do justificatory work other than *qua* reliable causal mechanism which grounds reliabilist externalist justification. Of course, Armstrong’s and Lycan’s background commitments allow them to be content with this. However, such a view would, for reasons outlined in section 1.1 above, clearly fall short of the acquaintance theorist’s epistemological ambitions; acquaintance theorists take the acquaintance relation to play a distinctive and more fundamental epistemological role.

Accordingly, when acquaintance theorists speak of acquaintance as a special sort of awareness, I take it that they must have a conception of awareness in mind that is narrower in at least one respect than the broad conception that encompasses such sub-personal processes. One obvious suggestion here is to start by limiting one’s focus to some sort of conscious, experiential awareness; introspective acquaintance-awareness minimally involves our phenomenal properties consciously appearing a certain way to us.

This raises the question of whether, and if so, in what sense, we can be claimed to be consciously aware of our phenomenal properties, as well as the question of what epistemological significance such theses could be claimed to have.

1.2.2. Coincident awareness

Clearly, there is one sense in which the claims that one experiences one's phenomenal properties, or that one's phenomenal property typically appear or seem a certain way to one (namely, the way they really are), are truisms which should not be denied. However, insofar as these claims are uncontroversially true, I think they must be understood in analogy with the – similarly trivial – claims that, for example, one dances one's dances or laughs one's laughs (e.g. Siewert 2012, 136-7, Smithies 2012a, 282-3). To use Siewert's (2012) terminology, the only kind of experiential awareness which we uncontroversially have of our phenomenology is "coincident" with – i.e. in no way to be distinguished from – the phenomenal property instance of which it is an awareness. So for instance, the only sense in which someone experiencing phenomenal redness uncontroversially experiences, and in that sense is aware of, phenomenal redness just amounts to the claim that she instantiates phenomenal redness.

Unfortunately, on the corresponding uncontroversial interpretation, the claim that one experiences one's phenomenal properties then amounts to little more than the thought that to instantiate a phenomenal property is to instantiate that phenomenal property. It is hard to see how this tautological claim could be held to be of any explanatory value as far as epistemological theorising concerned. (Compare: In explaining why walks and runs differ in their respective associated health effects, it would not be particularly helpful to cite the facts that one merely walks the former but runs the latter.) Therefore, it seems that acquaintance theorists must look beyond the coincident sense in which we are aware of our phenomenal properties in order to arrive at a conception of acquaintance awareness which satisfies their desiderata.

1.2.3. Noncoincident awareness

If what I just argued is correct, introspective acquaintance theorists who assign a central theoretical role to (and conceive of introspective acquaintance as) a form of awareness of our phenomenal properties which precedes introspective belief should try to make the case that phenomenal introspection involves a form of noncoincident awareness. That is to say, they need to convince us of the existence of an additional layer of distinctively introspective phenomenology involved in our conscious awareness of familiar first-order phenomenal properties (which of course leaves open whether these different layers of phenomenology are still intimately modally interrelated).

In addition, whilst it has been asserted that “[n]o one thinks that in being aware of a sensation or sensory experience one has yet another sensation or experience that is ‘of’ the first one, and constitutes its appearing to one in a particular way” (Shoemaker 1994, 254-5), I think it is evident that a number of acquaintance theorists are in fact committed to something like this claim. For instance, Fumerton maintains that acquaintance with a phenomenal property is a matter of its being brought “before consciousness” (1995, 75) and into “introspective ‘sight’” (2005, 123) by an act of non-judgmental conscious awareness which is distinct from the property which it takes as its object. Similarly, Bonjour (2003a, 62, 67) argues that our acquaintance with familiar first-order conscious experiential properties involves a further “conscious awareness” of the content and attitude towards that content associated with the relevant first-order experience. Admittedly, Fumerton’s and Bonjour’s views differ importantly; whilst on Fumerton’s view, this awareness is transient and only occurs upon introspective “noticing” of the relevant property, Bonjour considers it ubiquitous in virtue of being “built-in and constitutive” (67) of first-order experience. Nonetheless, I think both authors are naturally interpreted as being committed to the existence of noncoincident “introspective experiences.”

As I shall now argue, I think this idea is, firstly, inherently implausible and, secondly, at any rate unhelpful for the explanatory purposes for which acquaintance theorists seem to typically invoke it.

1.2.3.1. The case against noncoincident awareness

One (in my mind compelling) reason for resisting a picture on which we enjoy noncoincident awareness of our phenomenology is that, as a number of theorists of introspection have argued, the idea of there being distinctive “introspective appearances” is simply phenomenologically very implausible. Several more elaborate arguments have been developed with the aim of supporting this line of argument,¹⁰⁵ but I think the by itself most effective objection here is the flat-footed one that phenomenologically speaking, there don’t seem to be any such “extra qualities.”¹⁰⁶

Admittedly, one might point out here that whether one introspectively attends or not makes a phenomenal difference, and that in this sense, there is at least something it is like to be attentively aware of, say, phenomenal redness, where this something is not just identical to phenomenal redness itself. However, as I shall explain in more detail in section 1.2.3.2. below, I think that there are perfectly natural alternative ways of accounting for this sort of phenomenon in terms of facts about subjects’ beliefs regarding their instantiation of phenomenal properties, and these alternative proposals do not commit us to distinctively introspective forms of pre-doxastic awareness. At any rate, I don’t think that reflection on the phenomenological role of introspective attention points to a compelling positive case for “introspective appearances” as of first-order phenomenal properties.

¹⁰⁵ See e.g. Shoemaker (1994); Siewert (2012, 140).

¹⁰⁶For proponents of this objection, cf. e.g. Siewert (1998, 212-3); Rosenthal (2002, 409); Smithies (2012a, 282-3).

To make matters worse, when proponents of noncoincident introspective awareness go on the offense and set out to formulate arguments with the purpose of supporting the phenomenological case in their view's favour, these typically turn out to be unconvincing.

For instance, Fumerton, in motivating his idea of a transient introspective awareness of phenomenal properties, often points to the case of pain which can drop out of "introspective sight", and in that sense "'recede' from consciousness", without itself ceasing to be instantiated (e.g. 2005, 123).

This argument strikes me as far from compelling. Insofar as Fumerton's example enjoys an air of plausibility, it seems to me that this primarily derives from its inherent ambiguity, which derives from the inherent ambiguity in talk of awareness of pain which was touched upon in section 1.2.6 of chapter 2. As I noted there, when one speaks of awareness of pain, one must distinguish between, on the one hand, the awareness of (apparent) properties of the relevant bodily location which this involves – the awareness of tissue damage, or perhaps of a *sui generis* "painfulness" property seemingly instantiated by, say, one's foot – and, on the other hand, one's (supposed) higher-order awareness of this former first-order, externally-directed awareness.

Now I am happy to concede that it is quite plausible that in principle, things could remain unchanged with one's damaged foot even as it and its apparent pain-related features drop out of attention, and in that sense, the pain one initially felt could then truly be said to subsequently recede from consciousness without ceasing to be instantiated. However, it seems to me that we can simply think of this phenomenon as involving a change in externally directed, (quasi-)perceptual attention. If this is correct, it tells us little about the existence of the sort of transient introspective awareness of phenomenal (rather than bodily) properties for which Fumerton wants to make the case.

In contrast, if we consider the more relevant question of whether one could continue to exhibit the same pain phenomenology whilst one's awareness of this awareness drops in

and out of “introspective sight”, Fumerton’s positive verdict on this matter does not strike me as very convincing, for the essentially the same reasons which I already discussed in more general terms above; it simply doesn’t seem to be the case that there is an extra layer of higher-order phenomenal appearances of exhibiting pain phenomenology. Admittedly, one might again point out that whether one introspectively attends to one’s pain phenomenology makes a phenomenal difference, but as before, I think it is possible to account for this in purely doxastic terms.

In addition to the direct appeal to phenomenology, one can follow the hint of Siewert (2012, 144-6) and pursue a different strategy for supplementing one’s assessment of the claim that we enjoy noncoincident introspective awareness, namely, by reflecting on the apparent (in)coherence of cases in which one’s noncoincident awareness fails to match one’s phenomenology. That is to say, one could approach this issue by evaluating the coherence of cases of “inner blindsight” – cases in which a phenomenal property is instantiated but not noncoincidently experienced as such – or of “inner hallucination” – cases in which no such phenomenal property is instantiated, but one still has the relevant sort of introspective experience.

If one deemed such cases to be coherent, one could then try to discern the distinctive phenomenological contribution made by introspective appearances. Perhaps this would then even allow one to supplant the original “no extra quality”-intuition. In contrast, if it is not possible to make coherent sense of such scenarios – this is the assessment reached by Siewert when formulating his case against views which appeal to noncoincident introspective awareness – this arguably puts further pressure on views on which we enjoy “introspective appearances”. In fact, it would seem to cast doubt on the very coherence of the idea of a noncoincident introspective appearance. After all, provided these introspective appearances and their objects (the relevant first-order phenomenal properties of which they supposedly make us aware) are conceived as metaphysically “distinct existences”, such scenarios of introspective appearance/reality-mismatch presumably should be perfectly intelligible.

I am inclined to side with Siewert here, and hence think that this line of reasoning puts further pressure on the idea of there being noncoincident introspective awareness. Admittedly, this line of reasoning for obvious reasons remains unsuccessful as an argument against views like Bonjour's on which (as we shall see below) these sorts of scenarios are ruled out by intimate modal connections between introspective appearances and their objects. However, not only do standard concerns about the desirability of minimising the postulation of necessary connections of this sort arguably render such views unattractive from the outset,¹⁰⁷ but as I shall argue later, they also face serious further objections. Accordingly, Siewert's line of argument could arguably be used in order to cast further doubt on the idea that introspection involves noncoincident "introspective appearances."

I think there is also a more flat-footed but nonetheless effective way to put pressure on the very intelligibility of noncoincident introspective awareness of phenomenal properties. Presumably, to be consciously aware of some property-instance is a matter of things subjectively being as if it were really instantiated. But arguably, it seems impossible to conceive of a property which not only characterises what it is like for things to be as if one instantiated some phenomenal property – say, phenomenal redness – but is also distinct from that phenomenal property itself. For things to be, subjectively, just as if one instantiated phenomenal redness presumably is just to instantiate phenomenal redness! It therefore strikes me as very difficult indeed to see how one could make coherent sense of the very idea of noncoincident introspective awareness of one's phenomenology.

Accordingly, the idea that we enjoy the sort of noncoincident awareness of our phenomenal properties to which many acquaintance theorists in effect appeal strikes me as one which should be resisted.

¹⁰⁷ Pautz (2011, 393) objects to Chalmers' and Fumerton's acquaintance accounts by problematising the kinds of necessary connections to which he takes them to be committed.

1.2.3.2. The explanatory impotence of noncoincident awareness

In the previous section, I identified some deep worries about the idea that we enjoy noncoincident experiential introspective awareness. I moreover think that even if we bracket these worries, further serious concerns regarding those acquaintance views which assign a central role to such introspective awareness can be identified once we target what plausibly constitutes much of the initial rationale of this commitment.

In particular, many acquaintance theorists' invocation of a distinctive form of awareness seems to be at least in part driven by the aim of explaining the distinctive nature of introspective justification. Yet insofar as the acquaintance theorist claims such explanatory benefits for her appeal to a form of introspective awareness, it seems legitimate to demand from her an explanation of what it is about this distinctive awareness that allows it to play a valuable role in elucidating the nature of introspective justification. Moreover, since the acquaintance theorist wants to maintain that there is something distinctive about introspective justification in particular, there is pressure on her to pinpoint what it is specifically about introspective awareness that allows it to play an epistemological role to which other forms of awareness – e.g. mundane perceptual awareness – are somehow unsuited.

When they touch on this issue, acquaintance theorists often invoke the Russellian claim that acquaintance awareness is somehow especially direct. However, given that in Russell's work, this "directness" seems to itself have been cashed out in inherently epistemic terms (cf. e.g. his 1912, 74; see also section 2.1, fn. 140 below), this suggestion is, without further elucidation, not very informative in the present context.

In order to explore the acquaintance theorist's options in working towards an answer to this question, it will be useful to start off by continuing to loosely follow the thread laid out by Bonjour's and Fumerton's respective views on these matters. This will end up

leaving us with a fairly comprehensive sense of the main relevant theoretical avenues in this context.

In his attempt to explicate the epistemology of introspection and the role he believes introspective awareness to play in that context, Bonjour emphasises that since one's state of "built-in" introspective awareness is "infallible" in virtue of constituting the truth of its content, it therefore amounts to the "direct confrontation" with a "chunk of reality" (2003a, 74) which puts one "in an ideal position to judge whether or not [the] description [embodied by the corresponding introspective belief] is true" (64; cf. 74). In his view, as a result of this, introspective awareness is as a result capable of playing a central role in the foundational justification of this introspective belief.

However, for reasons closely related to considerations touched upon in chapter 3, this line of reasoning strikes me as unconvincing. To see why, note that having a veridical perceptual experience (or, for that matter, a true conscious belief), is also a state of awareness which is infallible in the sense that "there is simply no logical room for this awareness to be mistaken about the content in question" (ibid, 70). So for all Bonjour has said, his reasoning would similarly seem to entail that veridical perceptual experience construed e.g. in mundanely Representationalist terms puts one "in an ideal position to judge" that things are as they perceptually appear to be – even if, for example, one has strong prior reasons to expect one's experience to be nonveridical. For reasons extensively discussed in chapter 3, this seems very implausible, and I doubt that Bonjour would himself welcome this conclusion. Accordingly, Bonjour's position does not seem to be an attractive one.

Moreover, Bonjour's view regarding the role of built-in awareness in grounding first-order conscious experience seems unappealing, if not even outright incoherent. As Fumerton (2001, 72) points out in criticising Bonjour's view, the claim that conscious states are constituted by states of conscious awareness of those states leads to a vicious infinite regress. After all, it would seem that on Bonjour's view, the conscious awareness

which constitutes, say, one's instantiation of phenomenal redness, would itself have to be constituted by a third-order state of conscious awareness of one's awareness of phenomenal redness, and so on, *ad infinitum*.

Note that this is not just an *ad hominem* point which turns merely on Bonjour's idiosyncratic commitments regarding the constitution of phenomenology; on any view on which first-order phenomenal properties necessitate higher-order phenomenal properties (whether for reasons to do with their constitution or for some other reason), it would seem objectionably *ad hoc* to claim that this necessary link somehow gives out at the level of second-order properties. Accordingly, on any view on which there are essential links between phenomenal properties and subjects' noncoincident awareness of them, serious regress worries arise.

Having thus rejected Bonjour's approach for explaining how noncoincident awareness plays a role in grounding introspective justification, let us consider Fumerton's alternative account. On Fumerton's view, introspective awareness plays a role in enabling foundational justification because it contributes to bringing "everything that is *constitutive* of a thought's being true" "immediately before consciousness" (1995, 78), or, as Fumerton sometimes puts it, "directly before the mind" (2008).

Unfortunately, the idea of "immediacy" or "directness" associated with introspective acquaintance is, as far as I am aware, never explicitly unpacked in Fumerton's work.¹⁰⁸ Accordingly, for all we have been told, Fumerton's account does not make it transparent why the nature of the respective ways in which introspective and perceptual experience bring properties "before the mind" should lead us to consider introspective awareness as epistemologically more potent than perceptual awareness.

¹⁰⁸ In fact, Fumerton himself sometimes speaks as if he thinks this does not allow for further explication; cf. e.g. his (1995, 76). Similarly, in another relevant passage, Fumerton (2009, 382) resorts to an explicitly epistemological claim (the claim that perceptual justification in veridical cases is no better than it is in corresponding hallucinatory cases) in explaining why he thinks acquaintance is involved in introspection but not in veridical perception. This also suggests that he does not consider a more informative characterisation of his notion of "acquaintance" in nonepistemological terms feasible.

In fact, for all Fumerton tells us, it is not even clear why, on his view, there couldn't be "inner illusions" or "inner hallucinations." That is to say, it is not obvious why his view would rule out scenarios in which subjectively, things are, in some robust sense, as if one were acquainted with, say, phenomenal redness, even though one does not instantiate phenomenal redness. After all, Fumerton does not, in contrast to Bonjour, explicitly commit himself to the view that higher-order phenomenology as of phenomenal redness also necessitates the instantiation of phenomenal redness. And if it is in principle possible for there to be such introspective illusions or hallucinations, it would arguably behove Fumerton to explain why these possibilities do not give rise to the sort of sceptical concerns to which they seem to give rise in the perceptual context.

One response which Fumerton might want to offer here is that of claiming that when one is actually aware of phenomenal redness, an instance of this property plays a constitutive role in one's higher-order phenomenology as of being aware of phenomenal redness, so that one's phenomenology in a sense guarantees its veridicality.¹⁰⁹ However, not only would this be a highly non-trivial commitment which would seem to stand in need of further elucidation and support, but it would also seem epistemologically impotent without the addition of further commitments. After all, in discussing the potential epistemological significance of Naïve Realist views of perception in chapter 3, we already saw that claims about whether one's phenomenology is constituted by an instance of a certain property does not seem to come with any sort of direct epistemological import with regards to one's justification for believing that it is instantiated.

As a further conceivable response which one might advance on Fumerton's behalf, one could point to a salient contrast between the case of Naïve Realism and the introspective

¹⁰⁹ Stoljar (2012, 402) notes in passing that in explaining in what respects they take introspective acquaintance to differ from perception, "[a]cquaintance theorists typically insist ... that the state of perceiving something is in some sense metaphysically distinct from the thing perceived", and that "acquaintance ... is not like that", and raises the concern that this points to a disanalogy only if a specific conception of perception is presupposed (408, fn. 15).

case with respect to the phenomenal indistinguishability of corresponding forms of nonveridical experience.¹¹⁰ In particular, one could note that in contrast to the case of perceptual experience construed in Naïve Realist terms, a crucial difference present in the introspective case is that there is no conceivable state that is subjectively just like being aware, introspective-acquaintance-wise, of P and yet does not involve P's instantiation. After all, since P is itself a phenomenal property, being in a state of actually being introspectively aware of P (in a factive sense) will differ phenomenologically from the state of merely enjoying awareness as of P at least with respect to P. In contrast, as I repeatedly noted in chapter 3, in the perceptual case, it is plausible that for each veridical experience (whether constituted in Naïve Realist or some other manner), there is a possible nonveridical experience which is a perfect phenomenal duplicate of it.

Prompted by the observation of this asymmetry, the acquaintance theorist might be tempted to argue as follows: In the introspective context, one can defend the claim that actually being introspectively aware of P can provide one with stronger justification for believing that one instantiates P than mere introspective awareness as of P by appealing to the necessary difference in these states' associated P-phenomenology. This observation does not have an analogue in the perceptual case, and this, so this line of thought goes, accounts for why introspective awareness is suited to play an epistemological role which mere perceptual awareness cannot fill.

Crucially, however, I think that claiming that this line of argument successfully rehabilitates the suggestion that the distinctive nature of phenomenal-introspective awareness grounds the distinctive epistemic role played by phenomenal properties would be implausible, or at the very least greatly misleading.¹¹¹ After all, what would be doing the real explanatory work in this imagined story would be the claim that differences with

¹¹⁰ This mirrors the response on behalf of the Naïve Realist about hedonic-evaluative awareness considered in section 4.2.4 of chapter 3.

¹¹¹ My reasoning here in many respects mirrors the reasoning I presented, in greater detail, back in section 4.2 of chapter 3 in justifying my rejection of a particular way of defending the Naïve Realist Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis. See also section 1.3.5.3 below.

respect to whether one actually instantiates P make a phenomenal difference – which is itself a trivial consequence of the fact that P is, by stipulation, a phenomenal property – combined with an implicit background commitment to the idea that justificatory differences should be grounded in phenomenal differences. The relevant claims about the nature of our introspective awareness (that veridical and nonveridical awareness would as a matter of necessity differ phenomenally) would drop as trivial consequences, but it would be these more basic claims which would be the primary carriers of the explanatory burden here. Accordingly, I think that the claim that the distinctive nature of introspective awareness accounts for the distinctive features of introspective phenomenology remains a red herring.

Having gone through these various salient proposals for pinpointing a distinctive feature of introspective awareness that allows it to also play a distinctive epistemological role, I find it very difficult to discern any other way in which the acquaintance theorist might hope to deliver on this task. Of course, at the end of the day, it is always open to an acquaintance theorist who wants to assign a central theoretical role to the some form of noncoincident introspective awareness to take the claim that introspective awareness has a certain unique epistemic significance as primitive; after all, as I shall repeatedly emphasise in defending my own preferred view below, epistemological explanation must bottom out somewhere. The main point I nevertheless want to drive home here is that this theorist should then be under no illusion that one's claim that we enjoy a special form of introspective awareness provides one with explanatory benefits over someone who takes simply it as basic, for example, that phenomenal properties or phenomenal belief are distinctive in certain epistemological respects.

This puts us in a position to summarise the key upshots of the discussion of introspective awareness up until this point: First, in section 1.2.2, we saw that claims about coincident awareness of phenomenal properties are of little explanatory value when it comes to matters of introspective epistemology. As a result, acquaintance theorists' talk of a pre-doxastic conscious awareness of phenomenal properties which they take to explain the

special epistemic status of phenomenal beliefs is naturally understood as committing them to the belief in the existence of a layer of introspective experiences. In section 1.2.3.1, I noted that the endorsement of this commitment faces serious phenomenological and possibly even conceptual obstacles. Moreover, in section 1.2.3.2, I supported my resistance to the postulation of noncoincident introspective awareness by explaining why I consider it doubtful that an appeal to such a notion could result in genuine epistemological purchase.

This takes us part of the way towards my thesis that acquaintance theorists of phenomenal introspection should stop assigning the notion of a pre-doxastic awareness a central theoretical role. In the next sub-section, I try to bolster the case for this claim by addressing a number of potential objections on my opponents' behalf.

1.2.4. Pre-doxastic introspective awareness: Objections and responses

In this section, I consider some important potential objections to the claim that acquaintance theorists should dispense with the appeal to a pre-doxastic awareness of one's phenomenal properties. In particular, I shall comment on claims to the effect that such a notion must be invoked in order to offer a convincing theory of introspective epistemology and of the nature of introspective attention.

1.2.4.1. Epistemological need

In section 1.2.2, we saw that an appeal to a distinctive form of introspective awareness of phenomenal properties which precedes introspective belief does not seem to get us much closer to accounting for the distinctive nature of phenomenal-introspective epistemology. However, one might argue that even if the previous section showed that an appeal to such a form of awareness is not sufficient for the purposes of arriving at a satisfactory account of introspective justification in the acquaintance-theoretic tradition, it will still be a necessary component of any such theory. On such a view, one concedes that an appeal to a pre-doxastic awareness by no means allows one to explain everything that is distinctive about introspective justification, and yet maintains that any account of introspective

justification will be implausible if it altogether dispenses with the idea that phenomenal properties somehow first need to be brought “before the mind” in order to play a role in introspective justification.

This sort of constraint on one’s account of introspective epistemology would stand in direct conflict with an alternative picture, to which I shall refer as the “Undemanding View” in what follows. According to

the Undemanding View, justification regarding the instantiation of a particular phenomenal property is simply a matter of instantiating that property.

In other words, on the Undemanding View, the mere instantiation of phenomenal properties suffices to ground introspective justification, without the need for the relevant subject’s satisfaction of any further conditions, such as the presence of a further awareness of these properties. Since this is the sort of picture I shall advocate in more detail in later sections, this makes pressing the question of whether this constraint should be considered legitimate.

My suspicion is that many of those who conceive of introspective acquaintance as a form of awareness are driven by an implicit endorsement of such a constraint. Moreover, I suspect that it derives much of its appeal from the superficial plausibility of Awareness Internalist principles,¹¹² such as

Awareness Internalism: if something is a factor which contributes to the determination of a subject’s justificatory status, then it cannot lie beyond the reach of her conscious awareness.

Provided we read Awareness Internalism as invoking a noncoincident understanding of “awareness”, then it entails that the mere instantiation of a phenomenal property is not enough to ground the justification of a corresponding phenomenal belief; at the very least, (noncoincident) awareness of that property instance would also be required.

¹¹² The desire to square an acquaintance account of introspection with such principles takes centre stage in Hasan (2011).

I admit that Awareness Internalism has a certain *prima facie* appeal. However, I think there is a good chance that this can be explained away. In particular, I suspect that Awareness Internalism probably derives its air of plausibility from the initial appearance of capturing a certain broader intuition, and I think this broader intuition turns out to be perfectly compatible with my preferred view regarding the nature of introspective intuition.

More specifically, it seems to me that Awareness Internalism's superficial appeal in large part stems from the initial impression that it captures the broader intuition that differences in justificatory status should be appropriately reflected in the relevant subject's subjective perspective, to which I referred as the Basic Internalist Intuition in section 4 of chapter 3. What allows for this impression to arise is that in a vast range of cases, namely cases involving any kind of non-phenomenal property, Awareness Internalism and the Basic Internalist Intuition will, for obvious reasons, give equivalent verdicts; presumably, the only way in which a non-phenomenal property can become reflected in the subject's subjective perspective in the relevant sense is for her to become consciously aware of that factor. So in ordinary cases, Awareness Internalism in a way simply amounts to a different way of giving expression to the Basic Internalist Intuition, and to me, this is plausibly the source of Awareness Internalism's appeal.

Now crucially, when it comes to the limiting case of phenomenal properties and their putative epistemological role, these properties will – *qua* properties characterising what it is like, subjectively, to be the subject in question at the time in question – in one sense satisfy the Basic Internalist Intuition trivially, without the need of a further awareness of their instantiation. As a result, in the special case of phenomenal properties, satisfaction of the Basic Internalist Intuition arguably does not require satisfaction of corresponding Awareness Internalist principles. Moreover, since it seems to me that it is the Basic Internalist Intuition which is playing the most fundamental role here, I think that the violation of Awareness Internalism does not cast serious doubt on the idea that

phenomenal properties can play a more direct epistemological role which is not mediated by a further form of introspective awareness.

Of course, one's mileage may vary here. One may resist this way of explaining away the source of Awareness Internalism's *prima facie* appeal, and insist that it should be assigned a more autonomous status which would allow one to hold its violation against any conception of introspective justification which, like the Undemanding View, does not assign a central role to some form of introspective awareness. However, not least since the idea that being justified in believing that one instantiates phenomenal property P is largely just a matter of instantiating P (whether or not it is accompanied by a corresponding act of awareness) really strikes me as an intuitive one (more on this in section 1.3 below), I ultimately don't think this constitutes a strong objection to such a view.

As an alternative diagnosis, one could simply note that if the notion of "awareness" invoked by Awareness Internalism is left uninterpreted, then given the fact that we are, as a matter of necessity, always aware of our phenomenal properties at least in the trivial coincident sense, a view on which merely instantiating a phenomenal property (without accompanying noncoincident awareness) suffices to ground corresponding introspective justification is in fact compatible with Awareness Internalism. In order to lend further support to this line of response, one could argue that although the opponent might try to force a noncoincident reading, Awareness Internalism would then become a highly theoretical thesis, and arguably lose much of its initial intuitive appeal. This suggests another way in which one could discharge the need to appeal to noncoincident awareness in the face of an objection from Awareness Internalism.¹¹³

¹¹³ Personally, it strikes me as more natural to view the case of phenomenal properties as an exception to the Awareness Internalist requirement, and hence to primarily draw on the first diagnosis. In part, this is because it would be misleading to think of the disjunction of coincident and noncoincident awareness as a single genus of phenomena which has two different species falling under it – after all, coincident awareness of some (phenomenal) property isn't really a "phenomenon" of any sort over and above one's instantiation of that property.

Another way in which my opponent could try to make the case for an appeal to a pre-doxastic awareness relation which she believes to play a role in grounding introspective justification would be to turn to intuitions about particular cases.

As an example, Fumerton (2005, 135) floats the idea that the absence of the right form of selective introspective awareness should be invoked in order to account for the facts about introspective justification in cases involving introspective beliefs with contents so specific that they outstrip the relevant subject's powers of introspective discrimination. For instance, some would hold that when one instantiates phenomenology as of a hen with exactly 48 speckles, one is typically justified only in one's beliefs regarding broader determinables, such as the belief that one enjoys many-speckle-phenomenology. As Fumerton in effect argues, one way to account for this is to say that one lacks (noncoincident) introspective awareness of fine-grained phenomenal properties like 48-speckledness (whilst enjoying such awareness of coarser-grained features like many-speckledness). If one agreed with the judgement regarding the lack of subjects' justification regarding their 48-speckle phenomenology and came to reject alternative explanations of why the extent of introspective justification is constrained by our powers of discrimination, this would form another conceivable basis for rejecting my recommendation to do without the appeal to a distinctive form of noncoincident introspective awareness. However, for reasons I shall outline in great detail in section 1.3 below, I myself find such arguments unconvincing, and hence remain unconvinced by the claim that an appeal to introspective awareness is indispensable as far as the formulation of a satisfactory epistemology of introspection is concerned.¹¹⁴

Fumerton (2001, 9-10) provides a further argument for thinking that becoming justified in believing that one exhibits a given phenomenal property requires one to bear a special kind of awareness relation to one of its instances. This turns on the observation that a subject's instantiation of, for example, pain phenomenology, will only justify that very

¹¹⁴ My point here accords with Smithies' (2012a, 282) assertion that an appeal to "introspective seemings" is in this sense "epistemologically redundant."

subject and no one else in believing that she is in pain (or at least only justify that subject in a certain unique way). According to Fumerton's view, the relation we should here invoke as accounting for this justificatory asymmetry is that of being brought, acquaintance-wise, "before consciousness", which only the experiencing subject bears to the relevant phenomenal property.

In response to this argument, we simply have to note that in order to play the specific epistemological explanatory role which Fumerton here wants the relation of acquaintance to play, there seems to be no particular need to invoke a relation of awareness. In fact, it would appear that the appeal to the very minimal relation of being instantiated by the relevant subject suffices to account for the relevant datum. On this sort of proposal, the reason why Fumerton's pain phenomenology justifies his introspective beliefs in a way in which it does not justify the corresponding beliefs regarding Fumerton's phenomenology of other people is the fact that Fumerton is the unique bearer of the relevant phenomenal property instance. This allow one to maintain, for example, that it is subjects' mere instantiation of phenomenal properties, whether or not it is accompanied by a corresponding act of awareness, that can provide them (and only them) with introspective justification.

Accordingly, I cannot discern any obvious compelling constraints on plausible theories of introspective epistemology which would require acquaintance theorists to invoke a special sort of introspective awareness, despite the fact that I would expect many acquaintance theorists to be inclined to think otherwise.

1.2.4.2. Attention

Another way in which those acquaintance theorists who are differently inclined might try to make the case for positing a pre-doxastic introspective awareness is by claiming that one needs to do so in order to make sense of the possibility of introspective attention.

As an example, Feldman (2004, 216-7) argues that we must make room for “another kind of experience” which involves “more than mere experiential [i.e., roughly, coincident introspective] awareness but is less than, or at any rate different from, noticing [i.e. the formation of the relevant introspective belief]”. Similarly, Chalmers is committed to the idea that introspective attention enables and is therefore prior to introspective belief (cf. e.g his 2010, 269, fn. 15), and that the ability to attend in such a manner is itself best explained by the presence of a “constant acquaintance” with phenomenal properties, where this acquaintance is a kind of “background awareness” (2013a, 348).

In order to properly evaluate this line of argument, it would be helpful to get a clearer handle on how we are to understand talk of introspective attention as distinct from introspective belief in this context. One helpful way to explore the different options here is to start by considering the more straightforward case of talk of attention in the perceptual context. In that context, it seems to me that talk of attention typically attempts to get at one of two distinct broad notions (cf. Smithies 2011). Firstly, talk of attention is sometimes used to talk about a certain contrastive phenomenological phenomenon which has to do with foreground and background experience. Secondly, talk of attention is also sometimes used to invoke a certain functional notion, which has to do, broadly speaking, with selectively enhanced processing of information, which may take place at an entirely subpersonal level.

In the present context – the context of assessing whether the existence of introspective attention gives us reason to posit a distinctively introspective form of conscious awareness which precedes introspective belief – I think it must be the former, phenomenological notion which would have to be invoked. After all, there is no particular reason to believe that if selective enhancement of sub-personal processing were involved in introspection (which in any case looks like it would be hard for anyone to deny), this would somehow push us towards an appeal to a distinctively introspective form of pre-doxastic conscious awareness. In contrast, if what one has in mind is a phenomenological notion of attentive foreground and background and makes the case that it has application

in the introspective context, this clearly would push us in that direction; it would suggest that there is a basic form of conscious awareness which can occur in both focal and peripheral form.

In my view, however, there is no convincing reason for believing in a form of distinctively introspective attention which structures experience into introspective foreground and background. As mentioned above, Feldman (2004) is one example of an acquaintance theorist who believes otherwise. He explicitly makes the case for a distinctively introspective form of attention. Since I think it will prove instructive to see where Feldman goes wrong, I shall briefly discuss his remarks on this issue.

In supporting his assertion that there is a form of distinctively introspective attention, Feldman presents us with a case in which his telephone's red light comes on upon the arrival of a message and he as a result experiences phenomenal redness at the periphery of his phenomenal field, even though this initially isn't noticed by him. Feldman then writes, regarding introspective attention, that

“[i]n that sense, I had not attended to the light on my phone. Or more precisely, I had not attended to the patch of red in my image. Then I did. And the difference was not just a difference in belief.” (ibid., 216-7)

In my view, reflection on Feldman's example does not reveal a convincing case for his desired conclusions. As opponents will be quick to point out, the fact that Feldman initially puts things in terms of his attention to the light, i.e. the external object of his perceptual experience, is telling. For in order to convince us of the existence of distinctively introspective attention, he would have to make the case that the phenomenal contrast between the pre- and post-attentive experiences is not just a difference in outward, perceptual attention. In fact, one central intuition emphasised in many discussions on introspection (cf. e.g. Shoemaker's seminal 1994, 219) is precisely that there are no such distinctly introspective changes in introspective attention, but only perceptual ones. Since cases like Feldman's in no way suggests otherwise – for all

Feldman has argued, it could be that at bottom, all that really goes on in a case like the one he describes is a change in the visual perceptual attention to the red light on his phone – they strike me as dialectically unhelpful, and his case for a distinctively introspective form of attention remains unsuccessful.

Chalmers (2013), another enthusiast regarding the idea of introspective awareness who particularly emphasises the role of introspective attention in the formation of phenomenal belief, is more sensitive to such concerns, and is willing to concede that we typically attend to phenomenal properties by “looking through” them and attending to their external objects (see also his 2004, 176). Nevertheless, it seems that Chalmers still thinks that there are clear cases involving a distinctively introspective form of attention.

One of the examples (2013, 347) to which he appeals in supporting his views on this issue involves the experience of looking around a still room whilst “[i]n a normal perceptual mode”, during which “[n]othing seems to change”, and then again looking around the room in an attentive “introspective mode.” According to Chalmers, when one comes to look around the room in an attentive “introspective mode”, this will clearly involve the attentive awareness of changes. Moreover, Chalmers argues, given that “nothing in the world seems to change” since the room is perceived as perfectly still,¹¹⁵ the attention to changes which comes about when one switches into “introspective mode” must involve the attention to phenomenal changes, and therefore makes plausible the idea that we are capable of introspective attention to our phenomenology.

Now I am actually fairly sympathetic to Chalmers’ idea that whether one looks around in purely perceptual or introspective “mode” makes a phenomenal difference and is naturally described as involving a difference in attention. However, it seems implausible to me that it specifically involves a second layer of phenomenal foregrounding distinctive to introspection; in fact, it is not even clear how to make coherent sense of such a

¹¹⁵ Chalmers presents more complicated but otherwise largely parallel cases for those who would here insist that his case still involves a change in the position of one’s head or eyes.

possibility. Accordingly, I think that there is no real need to appeal to a notion of pre-doxastic introspective awareness that can be present in attentive and inattentive “modes” (*pace* Bonjour 2003b, 192). As a more plausible alternative, it strikes me as quite natural to conceive of whether one is in “introspective mode” as being essentially a cognitive matter – i.e. a matter of the sorts of introspective beliefs one forms. On this sort of view, the phenomenal contrast highlighted by Chalmers is primarily due to a difference in cognitive phenomenology, and no further form of pre-doxastic introspective awareness needs to be posited.¹¹⁶¹¹⁷ As far as I can see, nothing in Chalmers’ discussion of such cases rules out this possibility.

Feldman (2004, 217) makes some further remarks with the aim of pre-empting such a primarily doxastic account of introspective awareness. He argues that in his purported case of a shift in introspective attention discussed above, the phenomenological difference associated with the shift in attention to his red-light-phenomenology

“was not just a difference in belief. It is not the case that I just came to believe that I was experiencing red. I could in principle have come to believe that because someone told me that something red was here.”

The thought here is presumably that the phenomenal contrast induced by the shift in attention in cases like his case involving the red light introduced above differs profoundly from the phenomenal contrast that would result from coming to believe that one instantiates phenomenal redness through testimony.

¹¹⁶ Curiously, some things Feldman says themselves seem to fit better with a doxastic account of introspective attention. For instance, he asserts that one can only attend to phenomenal properties for which one possesses corresponding phenomenal concepts (2004, 218, fn. 9). I find it difficult to see how this to be explained unless introspective attention is essentially a cognitive exercise.

¹¹⁷ Similarly, Chalmers (2003, 37) at one point states that differences in introspective attention will be due to “differences in the cognitive backgrounds” of the relevant individuals, and that he is neutral about “whether such cognitive differences are themselves constituted by underlying functioning, aspects of cognitive phenomenology, or both.”

This is somewhat puzzling, in at least two respects.

Firstly, if introspective attention is a matter of cognitive phenomenology, then presumably, it’s a matter of introspective cognitive phenomenology, and hence not really prior to introspective belief. Yet in the same paper, Chalmers states explicitly (2003, 237, fn. 9) that, contrary to what he takes to be Gertler’s view, he himself takes attention to play a role in grounding (special kinds of) introspective beliefs.

Secondly, insofar as introspective attention were just a matter of “underlying functioning”, it is not clear why it would require any conscious background awareness of phenomenal properties; it would seem that a subpersonal story would suffice in accounting for the relevant facts about “underlying functioning.”

However, even bracketing the obvious point that for all Feldman has said, this observation could arguably once again be accounted for simply by an appeal to a difference in perceptual attention (which the subject who learns about her redness-phenomenology through testimony does not need to exercise), I think that the proponent of a doxastic account of introspective attention can accommodate this observation perfectly well. This is because she can simply claim – as a number of theorists, including Chalmers, have in fact argued for independent reasons – that the spontaneously formed beliefs involved in introspection are of a special kind, and can therefore quite plausibly be claimed to come with a special sort of phenomenology.¹¹⁸ This would account for the contrast between introspective attention and introspective belief formed through testimony which Feldman highlights.

Accordingly, I think that sufficiently careful reflection on the nature of introspective attention shows that one can offer accounts of these phenomena which do not require the appeal to a pre-doxastic form of introspective awareness.

1.2.5. Concluding remarks regarding introspective awareness

Before moving on to discuss various different candidate views regarding the specific workings of introspective justification, it is worth briefly bringing together the main upshots of the discussion of introspective awareness in this sub-section.

In section 1.2.2, we saw that there is a sense in which it is uncontroversial that we enjoy experiential awareness of our phenomenal properties, namely the trivial coincident sense in which we can be said to experience our experiences. Unfortunately, the tautological claim that we are so aware of our phenomenology is clearly impotent when it comes to shedding light on the distinctive epistemic features associated with phenomenal

¹¹⁸ In a similar spirit, Siewert (2012, fn. 9), in defending his what he calls his “double duty/cognitive attention view” of introspective attention, points out that the differences in thinking that distinguish between cases of introspective attention and inattention “are not just any old differences in thinking”, but rather differences of a particular sort.

properties. In section 1.2.3, I further argued that construing acquaintance as a pre-doxastic form of conscious awareness is both phenomenologically and conceptually very problematic. Moreover, upon examination, it also does not seem to be capable of doing the epistemological work which some acquaintance theorists want it to do. I suggested that acquaintance theorists should therefore stop assigning the notion of a pre-doxastic awareness a central theoretical role. Finally, in section 1.2.4, I considered some objections and argued that they turn out not to succeed in overturning this impression.

For reasons touched upon at the outset of this section, I think these arguments regarding the indefensibility of the construal of introspective acquaintance of a form of awareness have significant implications for how we should go about assessing claims about acquaintance with pleasure's value is concerned. In particular, my conclusions here strongly suggest that in evaluating whether the best account of phenomenal-introspective justification in the acquaintance-theoretic tradition should be extended to the hedonic-evaluative case, the question of whether we have the same special type of awareness of both properties is likely to prove to be a red herring.

1.3. The mechanics of introspective justification

In section 1.1, I noted that acquaintance theorists typically hold that phenomenal introspective beliefs sometimes enjoy a distinctive kind of foundational justification, and, more specifically, that this is foundational justification is grounded in a special sort of relation – usually, a special kind of awareness – which we bear to our phenomenal properties.

The arguments of section 1.2 cast doubt on the latter more specific claim about the theoretical role that one should assign to introspective awareness in one's account of the epistemology of introspection. Nevertheless, they clearly fall short of discrediting the broader underlying idea that phenomenal properties in some way or other play a fundamental epistemological role in grounding the distinctive foundational justificatory status of introspective beliefs about their instantiation. Moreover, an account which

respects this more general idea arguably still stands a good chance of capturing much of the spirit of the acquaintance approach.¹¹⁹ In addition, most importantly for our present purposes, it would certainly be of great interest to see to what extent the best such view of phenomenal introspection could be claimed to call for its extension to the hedonic-evaluative case. So it seems likely that even if the conception of introspective acquaintance as a form of awareness is jettisoned, there remain to be versions of the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis that are worth exploring.

In this section, I investigate what the most attractive acquaintance-theoretic proposals regarding the way in which phenomenal properties help justify beliefs about them might look like. Obviously, this question is of immediate relevance where the assessment of the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis is concerned. For insofar as we manage to whittle down the list of proposals which are attractive in the original phenomenal introspective context, this will allow us to sharpen our focus in evaluating the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis. After all, it will allow us to zero in on the core issues pertaining to the question of what would be required in order to allow for the extension of the most defensible such proposals to the hedonic-evaluative case. Moreover, it seems worth reducing the risk of tilting at windmills by ruling out the limiting case in which, as some have in fact argued, no approach in the acquaintance-theoretic tradition will yield a satisfactory account of introspective epistemology and the

¹¹⁹ This is also reflected in the fact that for many of those theorists who are typically located in the acquaintance-theoretic camp, this shift in emphasis may not, perhaps contrary to first appearances, have to entail any very consequential revisions to their view.

For instance, Chalmers sometimes characterises the notion of acquaintance in play in his account of introspection as picking out an epistemic (2012, 403) or evidential (1996, 197) relation. Moreover, in his work, the notion often seems to act just as a sort of theoretical placeholder for whatever it is that explains the distinctive doxastic and epistemic phenomena distinctively associated with phenomenal properties (cf. 2010, 289; also see section 2.4 below).

Similarly, while Gertler has in earlier work (2001, 326-7) in effect argued, against Shoemaker, that in introspection, pre-doxastic “awareness of” the objects of introspection precedes corresponding doxastic “awareness that”,¹¹⁹ this commitment does not seem to play a central role in more recent expositions of her views, where she takes a more non-committal, or even deflationary attitude towards claims about the role of the subjects’ awareness of the objects of introspection (cf. e.g. 2011, 97; 2012a, fn. 8). Instead, her focus is now on certain distinctive doxastic and epistemic features of phenomenal belief, which she characterises in more neutral terms. This supports the impression that even if one drops the commitment introspective acquaintance as a distinctive form of noncoincident awareness, one may very well be able to capture much of the spirit of the acquaintance approach.

case for the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis is thereby nipped in the bud.

In investigating what the most attractive accounts of introspective epistemology in the acquaintance-theoretic tradition might look like, I adopt a divide-and-conquer approach. Specifically, I shall structure my assessment of various different versions of the acquaintance approach around the discussion of different strategies for responding to what is generally considered the key problem case for such views in the contemporary literature, namely Sosa's (2003, 121) version of Chisholm's (1942) case of the speckled hen. In section 1.3.1, I introduce the problem which Sosa's case seems to pose for acquaintance theories of introspection, and consider two flat-footed ways of responding to it. I argue that the second of these proposals – on which the acquaintance theorist concedes that the mere instantiation of phenomenal properties does not suffice to ground doxastic justification but maintains that it nevertheless suffices for propositional justification – in fact seems rather plausible. In sections 1.3.2-1.3.5, I then consider a range of other (in some respects potentially complementary) proposals, and in doing so, bolster the case for preferring the aforementioned view over its alternatives. Finally, in section 1.3.6, I explain in some detail where I think this leaves us vis-à-vis the assessment of the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis, and thereby set the scene for the final assessment of this proposal in section 2.

1.3.1. The speckled hen and the Undemanding View

In discussing various views regarding the epistemology of phenomenal belief in the acquaintance-theoretic tradition, we can draw a distinction between what we might call the “Undemanding View”, which was already introduced in section 1.2.4.1 above, and various “Demanding” views.¹²⁰

According to

¹²⁰ The Undemanding View corresponds to Smithies' (2012a) “simple theory of introspection.”

the Undemanding View, justification regarding the instantiation of a particular phenomenal property is simply a matter of instantiating that property.

In contrast, according to “Demanding” versions of the acquaintance approach, further conditions need to be satisfied for one’s phenomenal belief to enjoy the distinctive kind of foundational justification. For instance, as later sections will illustrate in much greater detail, a proponent of a Demanding view might hold that the presence of introspective justification further requires the relevant subject to exhibit the right kind of introspective awareness or attention, and/or to possess or form the right kind of special (phenomenal) concept or belief.

An obvious and popular way to put pressure on crude versions of the Undemanding View is to point to cases in which some truths about subjects’ phenomenology are so specific as to outstrip powers of discrimination. A classic case which Sosa (2003, 121) employs for precisely this purpose is Chisholm’s (1942) case of the speckled hen: Suppose a subject undergoes experience as of a hen with 48 speckles, but is simply unable to tell whether she isn’t in fact having a 47-speckle-experience or a 49-speckle-experience instead. Sosa argues that intuitively, the subject’s belief that she has an experience as of 48 speckles would not be justified. This contradicts what the prediction of the Undemanding View, on which merely exhibiting 48-speckle-phenomenology should suffice to provide one with the corresponding introspective justification.

One flat-footed response to this case, embraced by Smithies (2012b, 729) and sympathetically discussed by Fumerton (2005, 126-7), consists in holding that the subject in a case like Sosa’s really exhibits phenomenology which is indeterminate between a range of many-speckledness properties.

Unfortunately, even bracketing the to my mind non-trivial issue of whether phenomenology which is indeterminate in this manner is even conceivable, I think this response is clearly unsuccessful. This is because it seems to involve a change of the subject: Presumably, theorists like Sosa can simply stipulate that, in the version of

Chisholm's case they are discussing, phenomenology is determinate in the relevant respects (which is clearly conceivable), and then problematise the verdict which the Undemanding View entails with respect to that case.

However, I think there is a second similarly flat-footed response on behalf of the Undemanding View which is more promising. This consists in rejecting the Undemanding View as a thesis regarding doxastic justification, whilst holding on to it as a theory of propositional justification.¹²¹ On this view, whilst the subject's belief in her experiencing 48 speckle phenomenology is not justified as a result of his failure to meet further conditions on doxastic justification, the subject is nonetheless justified in believing this proposition in virtue of her instantiation of 48-speckle-phenomenology. In other words, on the version of the Undemanding View I am here advertising, the subject is in a sense in possession of the relevant justification, but her limited discriminatory capacities prevent her from exploiting it through the appropriate basing of her belief on the justificatory grounds with which her phenomenology provides her.¹²²

This combination of views strikes me as an elegant and natural one. I therefore find it disappointing that those who make heavy weather over cases like Sosa's in the context of assessing theories of introspective justification typically don't make it explicit whether, and if so why, they reject the Undemanding View more specifically about propositional justification, or whether their rejection of an Undemanding View is instead limited to the case of doxastic justification.¹²³

Now, provided one thus doesn't consider implications of the Undemanding View about propositional justification regarding the speckled hen case as a deal breaker, the question

¹²¹ This distinction was introduced in section 4.2.3.1 of chapter 3.

¹²² This is essentially the treatment which Smithies (2013b) explicitly advocates for some other kinds of cases of limited introspective discrimination. Similarly, although Chalmers does not explicitly use the distinction between propositional and doxastic justification in his work on introspection, it is also naturally read into his work (cf. e.g. his 1996, 196, 197-8; 2010, 288, fn. 5).

¹²³ Feldman (2004) is an exception, although his objection to what I am calling the Undemanding View regarding propositional justification ultimately comes down simply to an opposing case-based judgement rather than a more elaborate argument.

arises of what considerations count in the thesis's favour. In my view, a number of desirable features are easily identified.

Firstly, the idea that merely exhibiting a phenomenal property gives you reason for believing that this is the case simply seems very intuitive. As Chalmers (1996, 196) puts it nicely, there does indeed seem to be something “intrinsically epistemic” about phenomenal properties. The Undemanding View about propositional justification, on which phenomenal properties are assigned a certain kind of direct justificational significance, is naturally regarded as capturing this intuition.

Secondly, the Undemanding View gives expression to the thought that when, for example, a subject first comes to believe that she is conscious, she in doing so responds to a justification that is already there waiting to be exploited. This seems exactly right; it would be somewhat odd to think, for example, that this justification only comes about as the result of some prior psychological effort on behalf of the relevant subject, such as, as proponents of some Demanding views about propositional introspective justification maintain, an appropriate act of introspective attention, or the formation of the right sort of belief. Instead, it strikes me as far more natural to regard such further psychological accomplishments as playing the role of allowing the subject to respond to and capitalise upon the epistemic basis she has for the corresponding introspective belief.

Thirdly, a closely related point which will become evident in what follows is that against the background of the Undemanding picture, the most plausible candidates among the Demanding conditions which are typically invoked by acquaintance theorists do look a lot like basing conditions, and this makes the package of views formed by the Undemanding View of propositional introspective justification and a Demanding view about doxastic introspective justification seem like a very natural one. To see why, note that these candidate Demanding conditions could naturally be viewed as conditions which play the role of ensuring that there is an appropriate connection between the subject and the relevant phenomenal property which makes it the case that the subject could not have

easily have formed a corresponding belief that failed to match the underlying property. Through the lens of the Undemanding View, this means that where these conditions obtain, the relevant subject could not easily have formed a propositionally unjustified belief. And such a modal condition seems like a very likely candidate for featuring, in some form or other, in a general account of epistemic basing, which is why there is an attractive sense of internal coherence to this package of views; its components seem to fall into place in a very natural fashion.

Fourthly, as a closely related point, it seems to at least some extent desirable in itself to uphold the distinction between propositional and doxastic justification in the phenomenal introspective case. Since many candidate Demanding conditions already look like precisely the sorts of conditions which we would want to invoke in an account of introspective doxastic justification, an account which moreover imposes these as conditions on propositional justification threatens to collapse this distinction. All this makes it very natural to assign such conditions a role in a layered account of justification of which the Undemanding View regarding propositional justification forms a component.

Fifthly, on the Undemanding View, compatibility with the relevant local versions of Access Internalism (Access Internalism regarding phenomenal-introspective justification) drops out as a trivial consequence.

As the reader will recall from my discussion in chapter 3, according to Access Internalism, facts which determine subjects' justificatory status are reflectively accessible to them, i.e. such that the subject is in a position to achieve justified belief that they obtain simply through introspection and/or *a priori* reasoning. This seems like a very appealing principle.

To see why the Undemanding View entails a version of Access Internalism, note that on the Undemanding View regarding propositional justification, if you propositionally

introspectively justified in believing that you instantiate P, the sole determinant of your introspective justification is your instantiation of P. Moreover, if the Underdetermining View regarding propositional justification is correct, your instantiation of P automatically provides you with propositional introspective justification that you instantiate P, and thereby makes this sole determinant of your introspective justification reflectively accessible.¹²⁴

In contrast, when it comes to Demanding views of propositional justification, there may often be no particular reason for thinking that the obtaining of the Demanding conditions which supposedly help ground propositional justification is itself always introspectively accessible. For example, if one takes the view that exhibiting phenomenal property gives a subject the corresponding propositional introspective justification only if she is already in the possession of the right sort of phenomenal concepts, then it is at the very least far from obvious that whether this condition is satisfied is always something that the subject can in principle ascertain by reflection alone. As a result, if one goes down this route, there is a risk that one's account of propositional introspective justification may fail to verify Access Internalism.

Of course, as long as we combine the Underdetermining View about propositional justification with a Demanding view about doxastic justification, we may have to accept the violation of a corresponding Access Internalist principle regarding doxastic introspective justification. However, as I argued in section 4.2.3 of chapter 3, I think that in contrast to the violation of Access Internalism about propositional justification, this does not constitute a genuine theoretical cost.

Sixthly, although this may at first sound trivial, it is also worth noting that the Underdetermining View is also by default compatible with Phenomenal Mentalism about

¹²⁴ A very closely related observation, regarding the reflective accessibility of introspective justification rather than of the determinants of introspective justification, plays a central role in Smithies' (2012a) defence of his "simple theory of introspection."

propositional introspective justification, another *prima facie* attractive principle a more general version of which was already discussed in section 4.2.2 of chapter 3. This principle states that facts about subjects' propositional justificatory status supervene on what phenomenal properties they instantiate, i.e. that any two phenomenal duplicates are also duplicates with respect to the introspective propositions they are justified in believing. For if one's propositional introspective justification is simply a matter of the phenomenal qualities one instantiates, it will be impossible to come up with examples of phenomenal duplicates which differ in their introspective justificational status.

This is worth noting, since once again, it may be that the additional conditions imposed by the most attractive Demanding views end up being at least partly “phenomenally subterranean.” For example, if exhibiting P yields justification only if the relevant subject is in the possession of the right sort of corresponding concept of P but her phenomenology underdetermines whether she possesses such a concept, then Phenomenal Mentalism will be violated.¹²⁵ Since Phenomenal Mentalism is also an intuitively appealing principle, this points to a significant potential advantage of the Undemanding View about propositional introspective justification.

Seventhly, a final consideration becomes pertinent if one moreover wants to maintain, in a traditional foundationalist spirit, that phenomenal-introspective justification plays a role as the only, or at the least primary source of foundational justification across the board. For if one has such wider-ranging ambitions for one's acquaintance account of introspective justification, then various candidate Demanding conditions threaten to make the justificational basis for many of our ordinary beliefs implausibly thin.

For instance, if one adhered to a Demanding view on which introspective propositional justification requires an accompanying act of introspective attention, then plausibly, many of our ordinary perceptual beliefs couldn't be claimed to be founded on relevant

¹²⁵ Feldman (2004, 213-4) seems to explicitly embrace this implication.

introspective evidence stemming from our instantiation of the corresponding perceptual phenomenal properties. After all, it is widely agreed that introspective attention, whatever precisely one takes this to involve, seems to be the exception rather than the rule; under ordinary circumstances, we seem to uncritically “look through” our perceptual phenomenology, in the sense that most perceptual beliefs are not accompanied by corresponding acts of introspective attention to one’s perceptual phenomenology. As a result, if the proponent of the Demanding view in question further wants to maintain that only acquaintance justification is fundamental and therefore that perceptual justification is ultimately based on introspective justification, this sort of Demanding view would push her to the uncomfortable conclusion that most of our perceptual beliefs do not enjoy any substantive propositional justificatory support.

In contrast, if one opts for the Undemanding View of propositional introspective justification and holds that merely instantiating the right kind of perceptual phenomenology suffices to render one justified in believing the corresponding introspective propositions, then this problem does not arise. For it allows one to maintain that perceptual experience provides one with corresponding introspective propositional justification even if the one does not exercise introspective attention. This greatly widens the introspective evidence base to which one can in principle appeal in accounting for perceptual justification.

Accordingly, even before engaging in a detailed assessment of the various specific flavours of Demanding views about propositional justification, we can discern strong considerations which point in the Undemanding View’s favour.

I shall now enter into a more detailed assessment of a number of specific candidate “Demanding” conditions on introspective acquaintance justification which have featured in the literature. In many cases, the insights from section 1.2 allow us to quickly put such views to one side.

Note that I have not yet said much about the question of with what particular Demanding view about doxastic introspective justification my preferred Undemanding View about propositional introspective justification is to be complemented. Accordingly, where an appeal to these extant candidate Demanding conditions are not outright implausible for independent reasons, I shall discuss them both as candidate conditions on doxastic and on propositional justification.

1.3.2. Awareness

One family of Demanding views assigns a justificatory role not just to the instantiation of the relevant phenomenal property, but also to further accompanying forms of awareness, either of that property instance or more complex related entities.

For example, in dealing with the speckled hen case, Fumerton (2005, 133-5) argues that the acquaintance theorist may be able to explain the absence of justification in that scenario by blaming it on fact that the relevant subject only bears his pre-doxastic acquaintance-awareness relation to broad determinable phenomenal properties. In other words, the idea is that the subject is acquaintance-aware of coarse-grained properties like that of being many-speckled, but not of the very fine-grained determinate properties like that of being 48-speckled. Accordingly, Fumerton is in effect suggesting that in addition to the instantiation of the relevant phenomenal property, introspective acquaintance justification further requires a certain sort of awareness of its instantiation. As we saw in section 1.2., however, the appeal to this kind of transient introspective awareness seems highly problematic. Therefore, I shan't pursue this suggestion any further.

1.3.3. Attention

According to another version of the Demanding approach, introspective acquaintance justification is partly a matter of mustering the right kind of introspective attention. On this view, the subject in the speckled hen case lacks justification with respect to those true introspective propositions the specificity of which goes beyond the limitations in her discriminatory abilities because of her inability to introspectively attend to highly specific

phenomenal properties. For example, on this view, the reason why the subject is not introspectively justified with respect to her phenomenology as of a 48-speckled hen is that she cannot attend to this phenomenal property.

This sort of approach is explicitly advocated by Feldman (2004, 216-8) and Hasan (2013b, 127-131). A version of it also plays a role in Chalmers' (2010, 288) treatment to the speckled hen case. Moreover, given the shape of her overall account, I think it would also be a natural approach to adopt for Gertler, who however officially remains noncommittal on this issue (2012, 103).

This proposal once again allows for different more specific interpretations which correspond to different conceptions of introspective attention.

Firstly, if talk of introspective attention is – as I recommended above – cashed out in doxastic terms, then this treatment of the speckled hen claim reduces to the claim that the subject does not form the sort of introspective belief that could ground introspective justification. Since it seems that we could in principle simply stipulate that the subject in the speckled hen case forms a belief with the relevant content, i.e. a belief in her instantiation of 48-speckle phenomenology, the idea here would presumably have to be that her belief-token is in some other respect not of the right kind, where being of the right kind must involve more than having the right content. This would bring us to essentially the sort of response which I consider in section 1.3.5, which is why I shall bracket this proposal for now.

Secondly, on a related way of developing this kind of Demanding view, introspective attention is cashed out as a matter of exhibiting the right kind of subpersonal processing which features in the genesis of one's introspective belief. I think it is quite clear that the resulting account would really be plausible only as an account of doxastic justification. The idea that facts which would in this way be largely "hidden from view" could make a difference to what introspective propositions the subject is justified in believing would

clearly run counter to strong internalist intuitions. Moreover, it is hard to see how one could assign a fundamental role in propositional justification to the subpersonal processing involved in the genesis of introspective belief without invoking a more general externalist model of justification, such as some version of reliabilism. Unfortunately, if one opted for this route, one would thereby give up the intuition that introspective justification is distinctive in a profound way, which I identified as one of the core ideas associated with the acquaintance approach back in section 1.1.¹²⁶

Thirdly, on a further variant of this approach, introspective attention is instead understood as an autonomous kind of phenomenal feature which structures acts of conscious introspective awareness into phenomenal foreground and background.¹²⁷ Unfortunately, we already saw in section 1.2.3.2 above that there is little reason to believe in a kind of pre-doxastic “phenomenal foregrounding” which is independent from externally directed, perceptual attention. Accordingly, I think we can reject this specific version of the approach under discussion.

Fourthly, even if one concedes that there is no phenomenal feature of introspective attention besides externally directed, perceptual attention, one could of course still assign external perceptual attention the relevant justificatory role in the introspective context. On this modification of Feldman’s version of the Demanding approach, the reason why a subject in a case like that of the speckled hen lacks propositional justification regarding overly specific true propositions about her phenomenology is that she isn’t capable of attending sufficiently closely to the relevant features of the external object that she experiences (or, in the case of a nonveridical experience, merely seems to experience). So for instance, on this approach, the reason why the subject in Sosa’s case isn’t justified

¹²⁶ I shall also return to the idea of assigning wholly sub-personal facts a role in grounding doxastic justification in section 1.3.5.2 below, esp. fn. 137.

¹²⁷ As I noted above, Feldman seems committed to this kind of view, and I suspect it is also what Hasan has in mind when he invokes a notion of introspective attention for epistemological purposes (cf. e.g. his 2013b, 127).

in believing that she exhibits phenomenology as of 48 speckles is that she isn't capable of (perceptually) attending to the hen's fine-grained speckle-properties.

However, I suspect that while formally available, this candidate modification of Feldman's account would fail to remain true to the underlying motivations which drive his approach. My reasons for thinking this stem from the observation that there are some differences in introspective discrimination which plausibly aren't attributable to differences in perceptual discrimination in any straightforward way, such as attention to phenomenal blurring. Moreover, it seems to me that a different treatment of these phenomena should appear unappealing to those attracted to a treatment of the case of the speckled hen which appeals to facts about attention, which suggests that the version of the Demanding view which appeals to perceptual attention should be rejected across the board.

One way to bring out this point is to return to a modified version of another of Chalmers' (2013) "switching" cases to which I already referred above. Consider the case of subjects who are looking at a perfectly still scene when experimenters induce, through neural manipulation, small changes in the degree of blurring involved in their visual experience. There will be some threshold for when such a change in blurring is noticed by a given subject, and this threshold may vary across subjects.

Presumably, someone sympathetic to Feldman's attention-based approach would hold that a subject is only justified in believing that such a change has occurred if she also notices, in the relevant sense, that this is the case. Crucially, however, it strikes me as unpromising to try to trace back the existence of such introspective discriminatory thresholds, and the interpersonal differences in the precise location of these thresholds, to corresponding facts regarding thresholds in subjects' capacities for perceptual attention. After all, when a subject's vision becomes blurred, nothing in the world seems to change; the blurring merely induces a difference in the nature of her awareness (she is now no longer aware of the finest-grained properties of which she was previously aware), not a

difference in the (apparent) objects of awareness (it does not have to be the case that the external world now seems different to her in some respect). Accordingly, it would be implausible to say that the threshold for when a subject notices, in the relevant sense, the blurring of her experience corresponds to a threshold in her abilities for perceptual attention. For perceptual attention only allows her to pick up on (apparent) changes in the environment, and such changes are plausibly absent in the case at hand.

If this is correct, it entails that the assumed differences in the justificatory status of beliefs regarding noticeable and sub-noticeable changes phenomenal blurring on which someone sympathetic to Feldman's attention-based approach would insist could not be claimed to be grounded in facts about the limits of subjects' capacity for perceptual attention. Instead, it would seem that if an appeal to attention is needed to give a satisfactory treatment of such a case, it really calls for the appeal to a distinct form of introspective attentive discrimination. Accordingly, I think the proponent of a Demanding view of introspective justification would be ill-advised to assign externally directed perception the role of accounting for how limitations of one's discriminatory abilities translate into corresponding justificatory differences.

Now to be clear about the structure of my argument, I should flag that since I am sympathetic to the Undemanding View, I do not myself believe that whether a change in blurring is noticeable or not makes a difference to whether one is propositionally justified in believing that such a change has occurred. Instead, my point here is that it would be very odd to reject this claim if one also holds, regarding the speckled hen case, that limitations of the subject's discriminatory abilities bar her from being propositionally justified in true but very fine-grained propositions about her speckle-phenomenology; a uniform treatment of these cases would clearly be desirable. I just argued that the relevant claim regarding differences in propositional justification induced by discriminatory limitation in the hypothetical cases involving small changes in phenomenal blurring cannot be attributed to differences in externally directed, perceptual attention. Accordingly, this means that a Demanding acquaintance approach which appeals to facts

about perceptual attention in its treatment of the speckled hen case commits one to a view that is non-uniform in this regard, and which we therefore have reason to reject.

As a more basic point, one could argue that there is something inherently odd about the thought that attention to one sort of feature (namely features of external objects) can have anything more than an indirect bearing in one's justification regarding the nature of a completely different kind of feature (namely the phenomenal features associated with one's experience). Accordingly, I think acquaintance theorists would be ill-advised to opt for this variant of the attention-based Demanding approach.¹²⁸

To briefly summarise this discussion of the alleged justificatory role of introspective attention, we saw that the version of the Demanding approach on which acquaintance justification requires the presence of the right sort of attention admits for four different interpretations. I left the discussion of two of these views – on which acquaintance justification respectively requires the formation of a special kind of introspective belief, or the presence of enhanced subpersonal processing – for section 1.3.5.2 below. However, we already saw that the appeal to enhanced subpersonal processing is unappealing when it comes to giving an account of propositional introspective acquaintance justification. The third view, which appeals to a distinctive form of introspective phenomenal foregrounding, could quickly be put to one side, in the light of my earlier arguments against the existence of such a phenomenon in section 1.2.3 above. This left a fourth view, on which a fundamental role in introspective justification is assigned to corresponding acts of externally directed, perceptual attention. I argued that the idea that perceptual attention plays such a direct role in introspective justification is not only inherently somewhat odd, but also runs into serious difficulties when it comes to cases in which

¹²⁸ Of course, it may, for all I have said, still be the case that perceptual attention plays a fairly indirect, nonfundamental role in grounding justificatory facts. This is an idea to which I am very much open. For instance, perhaps focal perceptual awareness enables the functional processes which help to ground the kind of subpersonal processing which plays a role in enabling the genesis of doxastically justified introspective belief.

breakdowns of introspective discrimination seem to occur in the absence of corresponding breakdowns of perceptual attention.

1.3.4. Feldman's phenomenal concepts

Prior to introducing introspective attention into his account of acquaintance justification, Feldman (2004, 214) endorses another, largely independent sort of treatment of the speckled hen case. This approach involves an appeal to special concepts – “phenomenal concepts”, as Feldman calls them – which a subject must possess in order to be justified (whether doxastically or even just propositionally) in a corresponding introspective proposition. According to Feldman, in a case like Sosa's, it is the lack of the right sort of phenomenal concept of 48-speckledness which accounts for the subject's justificatory inadequacy.

Of course, in order to assess this sort of proposal, it would be very helpful to be provided with some kind of informative characterisation of what makes Feldman's “phenomenal concepts” distinctive in such a way as to plausibly allow them to play this role in grounding justification.

Feldman sometimes speaks as if he, following Sosa, takes the possession of a phenomenal concepts to be a matter of having the right kind of recognitional capacities. The idea here would be that having a phenomenal concept of property P is a matter of having the right kind of ability to recognise P's instantiation. Unfortunately, the resulting proposal looks like it would be bound to be either implausible or unhelpful. For in this context, talk of “recognition” would seem to allow for two main relevant readings, namely a functional and an epistemic one. Moreover, I think that when we in turn consider the corresponding readings of relevant version of Feldman's proposal to invoke phenomenal concepts, we can identify a serious dilemma faced by any such view.

To discern the first horn of the dilemma, suppose that recognition is here supposed to be merely a functional matter, i.e. a matter of having the capacity of reliably forming beliefs

about the relevant property's instantiation and noninstantiation with the right content under a range of circumstances. Unfortunately, it would then seem very implausible that recognition would ground the attribution of special concepts. After all, suppose someone is "blindly" introspectively reliable due to some deviant causal mechanism which leads her to be reliable in her beliefs regarding the instantiation of P. Whilst it may admittedly very well be the case that this would not automatically render her doxastically unjustified, I find it very hard to see how such deviantly ensured reliability could ground the attribution of a special kind of concept to this subject.

In response to such concerns, Feldman might want to rule out cases like the latter one by requiring recognition to be not just a crudely functional matter, but rather a matter of being able of reasonably classifying P-experiences as involving P and non-P-experiences as involving not-P. This would arguably explain why the hypothetical deviantly reliable subject in the example I adduced in criticising the previous proposal should not be attributed special kinds of concepts merely in virtue of her blind reliability. However, this now brings us to the second horn of the dilemma: It would appear that on this kind of inherently normative construal of what it is to be a phenomenal concept, the notion of a phenomenal concept can no longer, at pain of circularity, do the relevant work in explicating introspective justification. For if possessing a phenomenal concept is a matter of rationaly classifying one's P-experience as involving P, then one cannot (informatively) appeal to the fact that a subject possesses such a concept in accounting for why she is introspectively justified – i.e. rationally warranted – in her introspective belief that she instantiates P.

Perhaps Feldman ultimately wants to treat the notion of a phenomenal concept as a primitive (cf. Fumerton 2005, 130), and simply maintain that some such class of special concepts plays the fundamental epistemological role he has in mind. In my view, however, the prior appeal of this idea isn't great enough to make this an attractive theoretical option; before I would consider embracing such a proposal, I would at the very least need to be told a lot more about the nature of Feldman's phenomenal concepts.

Accordingly, whether or not Feldman ultimately wants to commit himself to a form of primitivism, I don't consider his approach to formulating a Demanding view of introspective justification promising.¹²⁹

1.3.5. Conceptual constitution

1.3.5.1. Constitutivism

According to another important class of views which is typically seen as falling into the acquaintance-theoretic tradition, phenomenal beliefs can come to enjoy foundational introspective justification in virtue of involving a particular kind of phenomenal concept whose content is constituted by the underlying phenomenal property to which it refers – a “direct” phenomenal concept, to borrow a term from Chalmers’ terminology. I shall refer to this approach as “Constitutivism.”¹³⁰

In indicating the content of the beliefs which they take to be so justified, Constitutivists often make use of glosses involving demonstratives, such as “I am experiencing *this*” (McGrew 1999, 228), “*this* phenomenal property is instantiated (in me, now)” (Gertler 2012, 106), “this quality is *this* quality” (Chalmers 2010, 258) or “This experience has *this* feature” (Horgan & Kriegel, 129), where the italicised demonstrative gestures at the relevant direct phenomenal concept. As proponents of these responses are well aware, however, there must at the very least be important differences between our ordinary demonstrative concepts and our direct phenomenal concepts if the belief that one’s

¹²⁹ It is also worth noting that whatever Feldman takes phenomenal concepts to be, his account, if applied to propositional introspective justification (as he in fact intends it to be), is likely to fail to exhibit some of the desirable features of the Undemanding View about propositional justification which I identified at the end of section 1.3.1. For instance, as I already suggested above, there is no particular reason to assume that facts regarding which phenomenal concepts one exhibits should be phenomenally manifest or reflectively accessible (cf. Feldman 2004, 213-4). As a result, Feldman’s approach threatens to violate both Phenomenal Mentalism and Access Internalism about propositional introspective justification.

¹³⁰ Versions of Constitutivism are advocated by McGrew (1995, 1999), Chalmers (2003, 2010), Gertler (2001, 2011, 2012) and Horgan & Kriegel (2007).

occurrent experience involves *this* quality is supposed to provide one with substantive information.¹³¹¹³²

Although all of the prominent Constitutivists further elucidate what they take to be the differences between ordinary demonstrative and direct phenomenal concepts, I shall here primarily concentrate on Chalmers' account, given that it is the clearest and most developed, and I think it is in any case likely to capture the key ideas at which the other Constitutivists like McGrew, Gertler and Horgan & Kriegel gesture.

In order to work towards an understanding of the specifics of Chalmers' account, we can follow him by considering the case of Jackson's (1982) Mary, a brilliant colour scientist who has full knowledge of all physical truth about colour processing but has never enjoyed any colour experience, and who now experiences phenomenal redness for the first time. Chalmers holds that Mary can form true beliefs about phenomenal redness under a number of different concepts. For instance, she can think about phenomenal redness under various relational concepts, e.g. a concept that picks out whatever phenomenal property is typically caused in normal subjects in her community when they are in visual contact with paradigmatic red objects, which Chalmers calls "*red_C*", or a concept that picks out whatever phenomenal property is typically caused in her by paradigmatic red objects, which Chalmers calls "*red_I*". Similarly, she can think about her experience under a demonstrative concept, such as a concept that picks out whatever quality she is ostending at that time, which Chalmers calls "*E*."

Crucially, Chalmers makes a case for the further claim that in addition to thoughts about phenomenal redness under these broadly relational concepts, Mary can, after experiencing phenomenal redness for the first time, also think about this property under

¹³¹ This issue has been problematised, *inter alia*, by Wittgenstein (1953, §279), Wright (1989) and Sosa (2003).

¹³² In fact, whilst other proponents of this approach still sometimes draw certain parallels between direct phenomenal concepts and ordinary demonstratives, Chalmers (2003, 244-5) goes so far as to explicitly refrain altogether from speaking of direct phenomenal concepts as kinds of demonstrative concepts.

what he calls a “pure” phenomenal concept, which Chalmers calls “*R*.” Roughly speaking, a pure phenomenal concept is one that picks out the relevant quality via its intrinsic phenomenal nature. The need to posit such a concept in addition to the aforementioned relational concepts becomes clear when it is noted that when Mary first experiences phenomenal redness, it is cognitively significant for her to learn that the property which is caused in normal subjects in her community by paradigmatic red objects is such-and-such a quality, that the property which is typically caused in her by paradigmatic red objects is such-and-such a quality, and that the property she is currently ostending is such-and-such a quality. As Chalmers argues, the role of the “such-and-such”-concept here is plausibly played by the pure concept *R*.

Chalmers illustrates the difference between the various phenomenal-redness-concepts using his two-dimensional framework.¹³³ The basic idea behind this framework is that belief- and concept-tokens are identified with two sorts of intensions, i.e. functions from possible worlds to their truth-value (in the case of beliefs) or their extension (in the case of concepts) at that world. The primary intension of a belief or concept takes a world considered as actual as its argument and its truth-value/extension at that world as its value, whereas the secondary intension operates on worlds considered as counterfactual. In order to evaluate the truth-value or extension of a given belief- or concept-token at world *W* considered as actual, you ask yourself what truth-value/extension that belief- or concept-token has if *W* actually obtains; in order to evaluate its truth-value or extension at *W* considered as counterfactual, you ask yourself what truth-value/extension the belief- or concept-token would have had if *W* had obtained.

Chalmers notes that whereas all of *red_C*, *red_I*, *E* and *R* have necessary secondary intensions in the sense that they pick out phenomenal redness in all worlds considered as counterfactual, they differ in their primary intensions, which explains the cognitive significance of *red_C=R*, *red_I=R* and *E=R*. *R* stands out in virtue of being “1-rigid” in the

¹³³ See Chalmers (2006b) for a helpful overview of two-dimensionalism.

sense of having a necessary primary intension; it picks out phenomenal redness at every world considered as actual. On Chalmers' view, when we form a direct phenomenal redness concept (by properly attending to the relevant quality), it expresses R , and on the basis of additional considerations that are not directly relevant to our present concerns,¹³⁴ arrives at the view that it is in fact constituted by the underlying phenomenal property. The relevant "direct phenomenal belief", i.e. the phenomenal belief that is foundationally justified in virtue of this constitution relation, expresses $E=R$. Learning $E=R$ clearly amounts to learning a substantive piece of information, since it rules out all those epistemically possible worlds in which one's currently ostended phenomenal quality is something other than phenomenal redness (e.g. phenomenal greenness). In virtue of the thesis that R is constituted by the underlying phenomenal property, the view also verifies the traditional claim that foundational beliefs are infallible – if one's current experience did not involve phenomenal redness, one wouldn't be able to form the belief $E=R$ under the same direct R -concept, which means that this particular belief couldn't possibly be false.

1.3.5.2. Constitutivism and justification

Having arrived at a somewhat clearer picture of the Constitutivist conception of the metaphysics of phenomenal belief, the question now arises what specific epistemic role Constitutivists should assign to the phenomenon involving the distinctive constitution of "direct" phenomenal concepts which they take themselves to have identified.

Here, a natural starting point is once again to consider the different types of treatment of cases like the speckled hen available to the Constitutivist. The obvious suggestion on behalf of the Constitutivist is that in the speckled hen case, the subject fails to form a foundationally justified belief because she does not succeed forming a direct phenomenal belief about 48-speckledness in the way that would be required for the formation of the relevant direct phenomenal belief.

¹³⁴ These arguments turn on the way in which it, in hypothetical scenarios in which Mary's phenomenology is altered, content and phenomenology appear to co-vary (234-5).

Chalmers (2010, 288) explicitly advocates this sort of response. In his view, this failure to form the relevant direct phenomenal belief is itself due to – and hence presumably something distinct from – the failure to exercise the necessary introspective attention. But even if we collapse this distinction (as I recommended above), the basic structure of the account can remain intact.

Once again, however, there is a choice to be made with respect to whether one wants to put forward Constitutivism as an account of propositional justification or of doxastic justification. Although Chalmers does not himself use this specific terminology, it is most natural to read him as favouring the role of constitution as having to do only with doxastic justification.¹³⁵ For example, he writes that on his view, “it is [in his view ubiquitous] acquaintance with the quality or experience itself that does the crucial justifying work”, whereas the attention which allows for the formation of direct phenomenal belief plays merely an “enabling role” (2010, 288; see also his 1996, 196, 197-8) (although he also points out that it would be easy to modify his account in this specific respect). In the light of such statements, I think that Chalmers is naturally interpreted as advocating something very much like the combination of the Undemanding View of propositional justification with a Demanding view of doxastic justification on which direct phenomenal belief plays a central role.

For reasons upon which I partly already touched above, the version of Constitutivism which is restricted to the case of doxastic justification in this way does indeed strike me as the most attractive variant of the approach. For instance, as I noted in section 1.3.1, it strikes me as natural to think that when a subject first comes to believe she is conscious, she in doing so responds to a justification that is already there waiting to be exploited; it would be odd to think that this justification only comes about in the process of forming a

¹³⁵ Gertler (2012, fn. 20) seems to remain officially neutral on the matter. It is worth noting, however, that she sometimes speaks as if the distinctive doxastic features associated with direct phenomenal belief are primarily what explains its epistemic status, without an appeal to an intrinsic evidential dimension of phenomenal properties.

corresponding introspective belief (of a special sort). Similarly, the aforementioned point about the desirability of upholding the distinction between propositional and doxastic justification is pertinent in this context. The current combination of views allows for this. In contrast, if one applied the Constitutivist approach to the case of propositional introspective justification as well, it is not clear what additional condition on doxastic introspective justification one could invoke in a non-ad-hoc manner in order to be able to uphold the distinction. Moreover, since it may well be that relevant facts about the constitution of one's phenomenal beliefs may in part be "phenomenally subterranean" and as a result reflectively inaccessible, building constraints on subjects' possession or deployment of direct phenomenal concepts into one's account of propositional justification would be likely to come into conflict with both Access Internalism and Phenomenal Mentalism about propositional justification. In addition, insofar as one took the occurrence of direct phenomenal belief to be restricted to cases involving introspective attention and therefore fairly rare, this would leave one with a thinner evidence base when one sets out to account for the justification of ordinary perceptual belief.

Accordingly, I think that even if one buys the Constitutivists' metaphysical claims regarding the constitution of certain kinds of phenomenal beliefs, I don't think one should assign these sorts of facts a fundamental role in one's account of propositional justification; the Undemanding View seems more appealing here.

This leaves the evaluation of the Constitutivist proposal as an account of doxastic justification. In my view, whilst an appeal to constitution in one's account of doxastic introspective justification is not outright implausible (although presumably, considerations of parsimony provide a reasonably weighty *prima facie* reason against its endorsement), it is not clear to me whether it is really required. It would seem to me that something far more mundane, like a sufficiently robust causal connection between the realisers of the relevant phenomenal property and the corresponding phenomenal belief, could in principle equally well do the job. Now, as I shall explain shortly, this has an

important bearing on how we should go about our assessment of the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis in section 2, and it is therefore worth spelling out my basis for this contention in some detail.

When Chalmers (2003, 2010) comes to supplement his earlier account of introspective justification (proposed in his 1996) by giving a more prominent role to claims about the constitution of phenomenal belief, he seems to be in large part motivated by the desire to be able to formulate a better response to familiar worries, influentially raised by Shoemaker (1975), to the effect that epiphenomenal dualism is difficult to reconcile with the idea that we are ever justified in our ordinary first-personal phenomenal-introspective beliefs (cf. Chalmers' 2003, 253, fn. 15). (Dualism entails the possibility of zombies – perfect physical duplicates of ours without our phenomenology. Epiphenomenal dualism further entails that phenomenal properties do not have causal effects on the physical domain.)

In a nutshell, the worry Chalmers hopes to address stems from the appearance that if epiphenomenal dualism were true, we would have possible zombie twins who would have the same beliefs formed by the same mechanisms, that their beliefs would be unjustified, and that this would cast serious doubt on the justificatory status of phenomenal beliefs in the actual world. The challenge this poses for epiphenomenal dualists is to propose a picture of introspective justification on which the possibility of zombies does not cast doubt on the justificatory status of our actual phenomenal beliefs in this manner.

The appeal to the Constitutivist account of the metaphysics of phenomenal belief sketched in section 1.3.5.1 allows Chalmers to deny that zombies would have the same phenomenal beliefs formed by the same mechanisms. After all, zombies won't have direct phenomenal beliefs in the sense defined above, since they don't instantiate phenomenal properties which could do the relevant constituting work. More specifically, Chalmers holds that it allows him to maintain that there are important differences in both the content and the genesis of our zombie twins' phenomenal belief, and to thereby dispel the air of paradox

which initially surrounds the epiphenomenalist proposal, which in part stemmed from the assumption that our zombie twins would have the same beliefs formed by the same mechanism. If Chalmers' reasoning here is sound, then one could make the case for an appeal to doxastic constitution precisely because it allows the acquaintance theorist to solve the puzzle which Chalmers here hopes to address.

However, in response to this line of argument, it strikes me as doubtful – *pace* Chalmers – that there is really any air of paradox left to be dispelled once it is accepted that zombies lack the evidential, i.e. propositional justificatory, basis for their phenomenal beliefs which we enjoy in virtue of our instantiation of (or, on Chalmers' picture, acquaintance with) phenomenal properties.¹³⁶ If this is correct, then arguably, a central motivation for assigning facts about the constitution of phenomenal belief a more foundational role thereby disappears. After all, the Undemanding View about propositional justification already entails as much.

MacPherson (2010, 232) disagrees with this assessment. In her opinion, a mere appeal to an evidential difference between us and our zombie twins does not suffice to overcome the (supposed) problem posed by the Shoemakerian considerations, and something like the Constitutivist response is therefore needed. Her case for this contention turns on the observation that, unless something like the Constitutivist approach is embraced, we are left with the conclusion that the evidential difference between our epistemic situation and that of our zombie twins is “screened off” from us in a problematic manner. According to MacPherson, this is because we would have to concede that the evidential difference between our zombie twins and us would not be reflected in a corresponding difference in belief.

¹³⁶ Note that this is the approach is adopted by Chalmers himself in his (1996). Moreover, although he has more recently sometimes described previous treatment it as “at best suboptimal” (2003, 254, fn. 16), he on other occasions speaks as if he still thinks that it takes one at least some of the way towards addressing Shoemaker's argument, e.g. when he describes the Constitutivist proposal to make his earlier reply “even stronger” (256). So the difference in our take on this matter may to some extent be one of emphasis rather than opinion.

In response to MacPherson's argument, I think it should be noted here that even if epiphenomenalism is true, zombie possibilities are extremely remote possibilities – they are possibilities which require the world to differ from ours in very fundamental respects. Moreover, it would clearly be overly demanding to hold that for a belief to be justified by a piece of evidence, there mustn't be any possibility, however remote, that some possible being could have had this belief even in the absence of the relevant evidence. After all, it is not clear that any beliefs based on evidence could pass this test! MacPherson's argument, which seems to apply precisely this sort of overly Demanding criterion to the specific case of phenomenal belief, therefore strikes me as unconvincing.

Accordingly, since I think that there is no further mystery to be dispelled by our account of doxastic justification which has not already been dispelled by the Undemanding View of propositional justification, the Constitutivist story strikes me, *qua* account of doxastic introspective justification, at best optional. For if we are simply looking for an acceptable story about how phenomenal beliefs are based on our evidence for them, then I think it is not clear that anything more than the right kind of modally reasonably robust causal connection between the realisers of the relevant phenomenal property and the corresponding phenomenal belief would be needed.¹³⁷ Given that, even if epiphenomenalist dualism is true, both the relevant phenomenal property and the relevant belief will presumably still be linked to its realiser as a matter of nomological necessity, such a comparatively mundane causal connection should, against the background of the Undemanding View, typically suffice to ensure that the relevant belief is modally "safe" in the sense that the subject could not easily have formed this belief in the absence of propositional justification for it. I don't see any very strong reason for thinking that anything more than this is needed.

¹³⁷ Note that one could very well hold that this causal connection holds in virtue of the operation of a mechanism for enhanced processing of information, and in that sense is a matter of the exercise of introspective attention. Accordingly, my approach may be compatible with such a version of the attention approach.

Hence, whilst Chalmers' story about constitution might make it plausible that our phenomenal beliefs are based on their justifiers in an even fancier way, the plausibility of adopting an acquaintance approach of which the Undemanding View of propositional introspective justification is a component in my view plausibly does not stand and fall with the success of the Constitutivist account of the metaphysics of phenomenal belief.

If what I have here been suggesting is correct and only something fairly mundane, like a sufficiently robust modal connection between the subject's belief and the corresponding source of propositional justification is in principle required in order to supplement the Undemanding View of propositional introspective justification with a satisfactory account of doxastic justification, then it has significant bearing on what approach we should take in assessing the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis, in at least two respects.

Firstly, if some much more commonplace mechanism could in principle play the epistemic role which belief-constitution plays on a Constitutivist account of doxastic phenomenal introspective justification – namely, that of securing the right kind of modal connection – then arguably, the truth of such a Constitutivist view would not really render our epistemic relationship to our phenomenal properties any more intimate than it would be on any of these alternative views. Accordingly, it would seem that in this sense, irrespectively of whether Constitutivism is true, it would be the truth of the Undemanding View of propositional introspective justification which forms the central acquaintance-theoretic element of the most viable acquaintance accounts of phenomenal introspective justification. If this is correct, it seems fair to say that whether or not our epistemic relationship to hedonic-evaluative properties can be said to mirror our especially intimate relationship to our phenomenal properties – in such a way that the best acquaintance account of phenomenal introspection should be extended to the hedonic evaluative does – does not crucially hinge on whether the Constitutivist account of the metaphysics of phenomenal belief could be extended to the hedonic-evaluative case. It would therefore seem that in order to cast doubt on the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance

Thesis, one would have to make the distinct claim that the Undemanding View of propositional justification doesn't apply in the hedonic-evaluative case.

Secondly, in a sense more straightforwardly, I think that in essence, the very reasoning I just presented as applied to the phenomenal introspective case could simply be transposed to the hedonic-evaluative case: Suppose that one could conceive of zombie duplicates of ours who, whenever we undergo a pleasant experience and come to the spontaneous belief that it is good, form corresponding beliefs, despite altogether lacking hedonic phenomenology. Then it would seem to me that as long as one can – in accordance with the relevant instance of the Undemanding View about propositional justification – defend the claim that these zombie duplicates lack the propositional justificatory basis for their hedonic-evaluative beliefs which we enjoy in virtue of our experiences' instantiation of hedonic value, this fact would not cast serious doubt on the justificatory status of our hedonic-evaluative beliefs in the actual world. If this is correct, then an appeal to Constitutivism about doxastic justification is not needed to address the challenge which such cases pose;¹³⁸ as in the phenomenal introspective case, it would seem that something fairly mundane, like a sufficiently robust modal connection, may very well suffice for doxastic justification.¹³⁹ Accordingly, the Undemanding View about propositional justification to the hedonic-evaluative case does not stand and fall with the defensibility of a further commitment to a Constitutivist account of the metaphysics of hedonic-evaluative belief.

To briefly summarise the discussion of the Constitutivist approach up until this point, the conclusion which seems to have emerged so far is that the most appealing version of the

¹³⁸ Presumably, in this context, the proponent of the Undemanding View regarding the hedonic-evaluative case could also adopt a variant of Chalmers' strategy without committing herself to a version of Constitutivism, simply by making the (rather plausible – cf. section 1 of chapter 1) claim that hedonic-evaluative phenomenology plays a central role in grounding hedonic-evaluative belief, and that since our zombie duplicates by definition lack this phenomenology, their corresponding beliefs will, whatever their exact nature, differ from ours in both their genesis and content.

¹³⁹ If one's hedonic-evaluative belief is based on the appearance that one's occurrent pleasant experience is good, then provided that both the Self-Experiential View defended in chapter 2 and hedonism's positive claim are true, such a modal stability condition will presumably, in a rather straightforward way, be satisfied in the hedonic-evaluative case under ordinary circumstances.

acquaintance account of phenomenal introspective justification is still one on which it is the basic evidential significance of phenomenal properties which does most of the explanatory work. It may be that facts about the constitution of phenomenal belief may help support certain modal facts which underwrite subjects' doxastic exploitation of the propositional epistemic support provided by the instantiation of the relevant phenomenal properties, but this epistemological role played by facts about doxastic constitution looks fairly superficial, derivative and quite plausibly ultimately dispensable. As a result, the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis does not stand and fall with the claim that Constitutivism applies to hedonic-evaluative belief.

In the next sub-section, I shall briefly comment on one potential source of resistance to the acceptance of this fairly deflationary perspective on the significance of the Constitutivist account of the metaphysics of phenomenal belief.

1.3.5.3. Constitution, infallibility, and epistemological significance

Some acquaintance theorists in effect hold that the commitment to the Constitutivist account of the metaphysics of phenomenal belief provides one with greater epistemological purchase than my discussion so far would suggest. The reasoning behind their position revolves around the idea that the Constitutivist story about phenomenal belief would, as I briefly noted above, entail the truth of certain infallibility claims about phenomenal belief. In particular, if the Constitutivists are right about the existence of direct phenomenal beliefs, then (some of) our introspective beliefs in the instantiation of a given phenomenal property will be constituted by an instance of the relevant phenomenal property, and will hence be guaranteed to be true. According to some acquaintance theorists, such claims can be put to explanatory epistemological work in accounting for the distinctive nature of phenomenal belief.

Horgan & Kriegel explicitly push the view that the truth of such infallibility claims can help account for the special epistemic status of phenomenal belief (2007, 139). Chalmers (2003, 246) remains open to the idea that the infallibility theses which his Constitutivist

conception of direct phenomenal belief entails could do “epistemological work”, provided that certain further claims about phenomenal belief can be established. Similarly, Gertler (2011, 125) points to the fact that on the Constitutivist story, direct phenomenal beliefs are entailed to be “more secure” than other sorts of belief in trying to justify the claim that they are also “more strongly justified.”

I am very sceptical of such claims; I simply find it hard to see how a belief’s infallibility should be considered to be of any kind of direct import with regards to its justificatory status.

An obvious initial problem case for the claim that infallibility can help ground justification is posed by necessary *a posteriori* truths, like the proposition that water is H₂O. It seems quite clear that one could have an unjustified belief that water is H₂O, even though this belief is, assuming that its content plays a central role in its individuation, necessarily true.

Horgan & Kriegel are responsive to this worry, and seem to suggest that the infallibility of phenomenal beliefs predicted by their account can be claimed to be epistemically more valuable than that at play in the water/H₂O-case, since on their view, the relevant experiences that are the objects of these beliefs “are constituents of the very *vehicles* of the relevant phenomenal beliefs” (2007, 138).

Unfortunately, it strikes me as very doubtful that this insistence improves the plausibility of their position. To see why, note that there are presumably all sorts of factors which contribute to the constitution of the “vehicles” of a given belief, but which are, in an important sense, completely “hidden from view” for the relevant subject. Intuitively, this renders these factors epistemically ineffective, despite the fact it is easy to cook up examples of beliefs about these vehicles which give rise to analogous infallibility phenomena.

For instance, it is evident that there will be facts about the physical realisation of any given belief by a subject's brain to which, intuitively, the subject has no real epistemic access, at least under normal circumstances. Now consider the case of a subject which comes to form, through mere lucky guesswork and without any prior basis, the true occurrent belief B, where B is the belief that the vehicle of her occurrent belief (i.e. the vehicle of B itself) is partly constituted by the instantiation of some complex physical state R by her brain. This B-belief-token would seem to exhibit essentially the same sort of infallibility which Horgan and Kriegel identify as being present in the case of phenomenal belief: The B-belief's object (state R) is a constituent "of the very *vehicle*[]" of this belief. However, this by no means seems to render the subject's belief B justified. Intuitively, this is because facts about B remain, under ordinary conditions, completely beyond this subject's ken. So the type of doxastic constitution which Horgan & Kriegel isolate does not seem to be of any direct epistemic import, either.

If this is correct, then Horgan and Kriegel still owe us an independently plausible explanation of why the sort of infallibility supposedly exhibited by phenomenal beliefs helps to render them justified despite the fact that the sort of infallibility exhibited by belief B clearly fails to render it justified in any way. Since I simply don't see, as mentioned above, how infallibility is ever supposed to be of any sort of reasonably direct epistemological import, I am very sceptical that such an explanation can be provided, and therefore consider approaches of this kind as unpromising.

Seemingly more responsive to worries of this kind, Chalmers (2003, 246) holds, more cautiously, that whether theses regarding infallibility of phenomenal belief may be capable of doing "epistemological work" is conditional on whether these constitute "a class of beliefs that can be distinctively and independently characterised in cognitive and phenomenological terms." Chalmers' idea here is presumably that if direct phenomenal beliefs are phenomenologically distinctive, then the fact that one exhibits such a belief is, in the above terminology, not something which is entirely beyond the boundaries of one's subjective perspective, and hence apt to play an epistemological role.

Chalmers moreover holds that this condition is satisfied if the possibility of “pseudo-direct beliefs” – beliefs which are “quasi-direct” in the sense that they have the same “cognitive structure” as direct phenomenal beliefs, but which differ from genuine direct beliefs in that they are not constituted by the relevant underlying property – is “restricted to cases in which no phenomenal quality is demonstrated.” It seems that the category of introspective beliefs which this condition rules out is the category of pseudo-direct beliefs which are accompanied by the instantiation of a corresponding phenomenal property and formed in a manner much like the way in which a genuine direct phenomenal belief would be formed, but which for some reason or other end up misclassifying this property. Presumably, the idea here is then something like this: Provided that the class of pseudo-direct beliefs is so restricted, whether one undergoes a genuine direct belief or a pseudo-direct belief in the instantiation of phenomenal property P makes a phenomenal difference because in the first case one instantiates P and in the second case one does not. Somehow, this is supposed to make it more plausible that having a direct phenomenal belief also confers distinctive epistemological benefits.

I find this line of reasoning is odd, for reasons which mirror the considerations touched upon in my discussion of the supposed epistemological distinctiveness of introspective awareness back in section 1.2.3.2 above (as well as section 4.2 of chapter 3). Suppose one’s defence of the epistemological distinctiveness of a direct phenomenal belief that one instantiates P is based on the claim that it differs phenomenally from a pseudo-direct belief with the same content precisely with respect to P. Then arguably, what is doing the real fundamental explanatory work in one’s defence of this claim is a background commitment to the claim that a difference in one’s phenomenology is a plausible candidate for grounding an epistemological difference when it comes to one’s corresponding introspective beliefs. Moreover, this is precisely the sort of claim to which the Undemanding View of propositional justification amounts. In other words, it seems to me that for the story about the epistemological significance of direct phenomenal belief to work out, a prior commitment to something like the Undemanding View about

propositional justification is required. And if the proponent of Chalmers' suggestion thus from the outset accepts (something like) the Undemanding View of propositional introspective justification as a fundamental ingredient of one's account of introspective epistemology, it seems like the epistemological significance of direct phenomenal belief would be a fairly mundane corollary, and not something that will itself end up playing any sort of profound explanatory work in her account of introspective phenomenology.

As a result, I remain doubtful of the claim that the infallibility theses which the Constitutive account of the metaphysics of phenomenal belief promises to entail are of any sort of fundamental epistemological significance.

1.3.6. Taking stock

The picture which I think emerges from the preceding discussion of introspective justification is this:

Firstly, contrary to what has sometimes been argued, it is not the case that accounts of introspective justification in the acquaintance-theoretic tradition are conclusively refuted by cases like Sosa's version of the case of the speckled hen; as long as one concedes that cases like Sosa's force one to accept a Demanding view of doxastic introspective justification, holding on to the Undemanding View about propositional introspective justification – on which merely instantiating a phenomenal property gives one corresponding propositional introspective justification – seems defensible. With respect to the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis, this means that there is at least one version of the thesis which warrants further investigation, namely the proposal that this package of views should be extended from the phenomenal introspective to the hedonic-evaluative case.

Secondly, we saw that the package of views I advertised – which combines the Undemanding View of propositional introspective justification with a Demanding view of doxastic introspective justification – is far more attractive than the competing proposals

in the acquaintance-theoretic tradition. As a result, having gone through the arguments against the various rival proposals will allow us to significantly limit our focus in assessing the merits of the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis; now that we have shown these proposals are unattractive in their original context, there is no longer any need to assess whether analogues of such views have plausibility in the hedonic-evaluative case.

Thirdly, in my discussion of Constitutivism (esp. section 1.3.5.2), I provided some support for the claim that, assuming the truth of the Undemanding View about propositional justification, nothing too fancy should in principle be required to enable phenomenal introspective doxastic justification – in principle, something like a sufficiently robust modal connection between the relevant phenomenal property instance and one’s true introspective belief should suffice, even if Constitutivists are right about there in fact being something more distinctive involved. As I explained above, this arguably means that the central issue when assessing the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis now becomes that of settling whether the Undemanding View regarding propositional justification is as plausible in the hedonic-evaluative case as it is in the phenomenal case.

In other words, the key upshot of this section is that if my arguments here hold up, then the question which we primarily need to evaluate in order to determine the plausibility of the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis is now this: How plausible is it that a subject comes to be justified in believing that she instantiates evaluative property V simply in virtue undergoing an experience which exhibits V?

2. Hedonic-evaluative acquaintance as introspective acquaintance

The task which remains is to bring to bear the foregoing insights on the evaluation of

the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis: Subjects bear the same kind of special relation – “introspective acquaintance” – to their phenomenal

properties and their pleasures' value, and this fact accounts for the distinctive epistemic status of our hedonic-evaluative beliefs.

In the previous section, I narrowed down the list of defensible accounts of phenomenal introspection to those views which combine the Undemanding View of propositional introspective justification – on which one's merely instantiating a phenomenal property suffices to provide one with propositional justification for believing that one does so – with a Demanding view of doxastic introspective justification – on which some further conditions need to be satisfied in order to render a phenomenal belief doxastically justified. Moreover, as I explained above, it seems plausible that the correct Demanding condition which places additional constraints on doxastic justification is likely to be relatively trivial in nature. As a result, obstacles to extending the core acquaintance-theoretic element of such an account to the hedonic-evaluative case are far more likely to stem from difficulties in defending the extension of the Undemanding View of propositional phenomenal introspective justification to the hedonic-evaluative case. Assessing the feasibility of this latter proposal should hence be our primary focus in further assessing the prospects of the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis. I shall therefore concentrate on this task in this second main section of this chapter, which is structured as follows.

In section 2.1, I distinguish between several different ways of viewing the explanatory status of the Undemanding View in the phenomenal-introspective context. In particular, I distinguish between different claims about the extent to which this view's truth – i.e. the fact that merely instantiating a phenomenal property provides one with corresponding propositional justification – allows for further explanation. I describe how the choice between the different answers to this question affects what sorts of considerations one will consider pertinent to the assessment of whether the Undemanding View can and should be extended to the hedonic-evaluative case. The material in that section will also help to shed some light on the different roles theorists of introspection could defensibly

continue to assign to the notion of “acquaintance” in the lights of the arguments in section 1, an issue which I did not try to settle there.

In sections 2.2-2.4, I then consider and dismiss three salient arguments for the claim that if the Undemanding View applies in the phenomenal case, it plausibly also applies in the hedonic-evaluative case. These will allow us to revisit two of the motivating considerations for the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis which were already mentioned in the introduction of this chapter.

Finally, in section 2.5, I adduce a number of considerations which in my view bring out the implausibility of the claim that the Undemanding View should be extended to the hedonic-evaluative case in a more direct way.

Consequently, I shall conclude that the Undemanding View does not seem to apply in the hedonic-evaluative case in anything like the way in which it applies to the case of phenomenal properties. Hence, even if one endorses what I identified as the most attractive acquaintance view about phenomenal introspection, one should conclude that the respective epistemologies of phenomenal and hedonic-evaluative belief differ in fundamental respects. The Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis should therefore be rejected.

2.1. The explanatory status of the Undemanding View

In section 1, I argued that the best view in the acquaintance-theoretic tradition will have to include the Undemanding View regarding propositional phenomenal introspective justification. One question which I did not directly address there is that of why this view applies in the phenomenal introspective case (assuming that it in fact does). In other words, I did not address the question of what makes it the case that merely instantiating a phenomenal property provides one with corresponding propositional justification. In fact, there are a number of different attitudes which the proponent of this view could conceivably adopt here, which also loosely correspond to different types of conceivable

attitudes which the acquaintance theorist could take towards talk of “acquaintance.” Moreover, importantly, which of these views one endorses will affect how one should view the dialectic regarding the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis. Accordingly, I shall here briefly pause in order to provide a preliminary discussion of these approaches.

Let’s begin with my preferred view. On this proposal, one simply treats the truth of the Undemanding View regarding phenomenal-introspective propositional justification as, at bottom, brute, i.e. not amenable of further explanation in more fundamental terms; merely instantiating a phenomenal property provides one with corresponding propositional justification, but there is no further feature associated with phenomenal properties to which one could point in accounting for this fact. This view is naturally combined with taking the claim that we are acquainted with phenomenal properties as mere shorthand for the claim that they exhibit the epistemic features in question (i.e. that the Undemanding View about propositional justification is true of them). Alternatively, one may perhaps even want to hold this view whilst eschewing talk of acquaintance altogether.¹⁴⁰

Of course, this approach may initially strike one as unsatisfactory – after all, doesn’t the fact that the Undemanding View is true of phenomenal properties but not of all sorts of other properties cry out for an explanation? On the other hand, however, it seems to me that whatever further features of phenomenal properties one hopes to invoke in order to account for their epistemological distinctiveness, epistemological explanation will in the

¹⁴⁰ The decision between these two ways of developing the view is largely a notational one, so I won’t invest too much effort into trying to definitively adjudicate this issue.

In favour of the second, eliminative approach towards acquaintance-talk, the proponent of the first approach could make the case that it is analytic that acquaintance is some form of pre-doxastic awareness relation which grounds and hence precedes introspective justification. In the light of my arguments against the instantiation of such a relation back in section 1.2, this would suggest the eliminative reading. In favour of the first, reductive attitude towards acquaintance-talk, on which it is retained but treated as mere shorthand for corresponding epistemological claims, one could note that already in Russell’s original discussion of “acquaintance”, one can arguably discern traces of this kind of conception of acquaintance. For example, when it comes to spelling out what his notion of “direct awareness” involves, Russell resorts to claims about rational dubitability regarding its objects (cf. e.g. his 1912, 74). This supports a reading on which from the outset, acquaintance is itself taken to be an inherently normative-epistemic notion.

end have to bottom out somewhere; at some point, the claim that something exhibits such-and-such an epistemological feature if and only if it also exhibits such-and-such a non-epistemological feature will defy further explanation in more basic terms, and we will be forced to accept some bridge principle or other which commits us to brute connections between some set of non-epistemic features and the relevant epistemic features. So the fact that it lacks a certain kind of explanatory value does not strike me as a decisive objection to the view in question.

On a second, alternative proposal, one points to some distinctive non-epistemological feature or relation which one believes phenomenal properties to instantiate, and argues that it is this feature or relation which explains their distinctive epistemological role as captured by the Undemanding View. Against the background of this sort of position, it is natural to treat talk of acquaintance as referring to the non-epistemic feature or relation which one has identified as doing the relevant explanatory work. In other words, on such an approach, it would be natural to use the claim that we enjoy acquaintance with phenomenal properties to express the claim that phenomenal properties exhibit or partake in some particular non-epistemic property or relation, where this feature or relation explains why the Undemanding View is true of them (and not of (most) other properties).

It is worth further distinguishing between two more specific flavours of this strategy which correspond to whether one takes talk of “acquaintance” to refer to some antecedently countenanced feature or relation, or whether one newly postulates a (non-epistemological) feature or relation specifically for the purpose of doing the relevant explanatory work.

On the latter variant of the approach, one maintains that the reason why the Undemanding View is true of phenomenal properties but not most other properties is that they exhibit some newly postulated feature, or because we bear some newly postulated relation (“acquaintance”) to them. This approach strikes me as particularly unpromising. After all, it merely seems to amount to explanatory buck-passing: Whilst this approach enjoys the

apparent advantage of providing us with an answer to the question of why phenomenal properties are distinctive in epistemological respects – on the view in question, this is because we bear the relevant special relation of acquaintance to them but not to most other properties – this simply raises the further question of why we are only acquainted with phenomenal properties but not with others.¹⁴¹ Accordingly, the answer that the Undemanding View is true of phenomenal properties because we bear the newly posited relation of acquaintance to them strikes me as lacking any genuine explanatory advantages over an approach on which this is treated as an at bottom brute epistemological principle. Moreover, since postulating a novel relation of acquaintance comes at costs in terms of theoretical parsimony, I think that we have reason to reject it.¹⁴²

This leaves the second variant of the approach in question, on which the role as the reference of talk of “acquaintance” is not assigned to some newly posited feature or relation, but rather to one that is antecedently countenanced and characterisable in terms independent from its (alleged) epistemological role. So for instance, to illustrate this idea with one of its more concrete instances, someone in this camp might want to argue that the reason why the instantiation of phenomenal properties automatically provides one with corresponding propositional justification is that phenomenal properties come with a special form of “built-in” awareness, where this kind of awareness enjoys the relevant kind of epistemic significance.

Clearly, whether this approach should be accepted or not ultimately comes down to whether one can identify some non-epistemological feature or relation plausibly exhibited

¹⁴¹ An analogue of this objection could be levelled against Chalmers’ approach, which involves the postulation of an acquaintance relation in order “to explain why we are in a position to form Lagadonian concepts of phenomenal properties but not other properties” (2013, 349). After all, it would similarly seem to leave us with the question of why we are acquainted with phenomenal properties but not other properties.

¹⁴² In fact, the approach in question threatens to commit us to unattractive brute necessary connections not just between certain natural features on the one hand and epistemic features on the other, but also between phenomenal properties and whatever non-epistemic feature or relation is wheeled in in order to explain why whenever we instantiate a phenomenal property, we also enjoy the corresponding introspective propositional justification.

by phenomenal properties that bears a more transparent (or at least comparably transparent) link to the epistemic domain than phenomenal properties do themselves. After all, unless this is the case, it is hard to see any ground for preferring such a view to one on which the truth of the Undemanding View – and hence the link between phenomenal and corresponding epistemological properties – is treated as a brute epistemological principle.

In my view, there is at least some reason to see the search for such a further feature or relation which accounts for the distinctive epistemic status of phenomenal properties as unmotivated from the outset. This is because firstly, as I noted above, the proponent of either view will have to countenance some brute natural-epistemological bridge claim, and secondly, it seems to me that the claim that phenomenal properties are of fundamental epistemic significance in the way captured by the Undemanding View – i.e. in that instantiating a phenomenal properties gives one propositional justification for the corresponding introspective proposition – is at least on the face of it a perfectly deserving candidate to play this role. Moreover, the arguments in section 1 already implicitly discredited some of the popular rival proposals in this context, such as the common idea that the epistemological distinctiveness of phenomenal properties is grounded in the special relation of awareness we bear towards them. Nevertheless, as we shall see in the next section, there are some further relevant suggestions to be explored here, which means that it would at this point be premature to definitively take the option of providing further explanation of the Undemanding View's truth in more fundamental terms off the table.

Now the main reason why I took the effort to make these distinctions is that they help us get a clearer grip on the shape of the dialectic regarding the question of whether the Undemanding View applies to the hedonic-evaluative case. In particular, depending on whether one takes the truth of the Undemanding View in the phenomenal case as explanatorily basic or not, different types of arguments will count as pertinent to the evaluation of the corresponding claim regarding the hedonic-evaluative case.

To see why this is the case, suppose that one takes the epistemological distinctiveness of phenomenal properties to be grounded in their instantiation of such-and-such a further feature or relation, where this relation can be characterised in terms independent of this role in grounding introspective justification. Then presumably, one can argue for or against the corresponding epistemological claim regarding the hedonic-evaluative case by arguing for or against the view that hedonic-evaluative properties also exhibit this feature. In other words, if one takes this particular attitude towards the explanatory status of the Undemanding View in the phenomenal case, there is scope for these kinds of indirect arguments for or against the truth of the Undemanding View regarding the hedonic-evaluative case.

In contrast, suppose one takes the truth of the Undemanding View in the phenomenal case as basic. Then the only real way to assess the plausibility of the Undemanding View in the hedonic-evaluative case is to assess directly the claim that merely instantiating a given hedonic-evaluative property provides one with the corresponding propositional justification.

In the next three sub-sections, I shall consider and reject three arguments of the former, indirect type for the applicability of the Undemanding View to the hedonic-evaluative case. Their failure will further support the initial case for taking the truth of the Undemanding View about propositional justification in the phenomenal case as explanatorily basic which I already began to sketch above. Finally, in section 2.5, I offer direct support for the conclusion that the Undemanding View does not apply in the hedonic-evaluative case in anything like the way in which it, on the most plausible view in the acquaintance tradition, applies in the phenomenal case. This leads me to reject the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis.

2.2. The simple argument

As I already mentioned in the introduction, those attracted to the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis might be tempted to emphasise that hedonic-evaluative

properties would, just like phenomenal properties, be properties which characterise the intrinsic nature of our conscious experiences, and insist that it is therefore natural for someone who endorses an acquaintance view of phenomenal introspection to extend their view to the hedonic-evaluative case.

This idea is closely related to the observation that in the case of phenomenal introspection, one thought which drives acquaintance accounts is the intuition that experiencing subjects enjoy a kind of epistemic authority regarding the relevant proposition because they are in some sense especially “close” to the objects of predication. Arguably, some version of this intuition is also present in the hedonic-evaluative case, presumably precisely because hedonic-evaluative properties similarly qualify subjects’ experiences in intrinsic respects.

My impression is that this basic line of thought operates in the background of many of the extant discussions in which sympathy towards claims in the ballpark of the hedonic-evaluative acquaintance thesis is expressed.¹⁴³ Accordingly, whilst I have no doubt that this will strike some readers as an in some ways trivial exercise, I think it is important to bring out why this line of reasoning is unconvincing.

First of all, we must note that not all of an experience’s properties, not even all of its intrinsic properties, are phenomenal properties; that is, not all of its properties characterise what it is like for a subject to undergo the experience in question.

To bring this out, consider the case of properties which characterise how an experience is constituted. As we saw in chapter 3, there is a question of whether perceptual phenomenology is constituted by the sort of mechanism to which Naïve Realist about perceptual experience appeal, or instead by a relation to a representational content. This is not a dispute over the phenomenal properties which experiences exhibit, but rather about the grounds of their phenomenal features.

¹⁴³ Cf. e.g. Lewis (1946, 397); Bond (1983, 128); Hewitt (2008, 139-147); Lazari-Radek & Singer (2014, 215); Sinhababu (ms, 23).

Now importantly, it strikes me as in principle perfectly consistent to hold that whilst the instantiation of phenomenal properties comes with foundational epistemic significance in the sense captured by the Undemanding View, this is not true of some or all of its other intrinsic properties. To stick with my earlier example, as we in effect already saw in chapter 3, this is plausibly the case for “phenomenally subterranean” features that characterise one’s phenomenology with respect to its constitution – even if your perceptual phenomenology were constituted by your perceptual relation to its external object, you would not automatically be justified in believing this. Accordingly, the Undemanding View does not apply to such features; despite the fact that experiencing subjects are in a sense maximally “close” to their phenomenology, some of its properties do not appear to be evidentially self-intimating in the way the Undemanding View suggests.

As a result, whilst I personally remain sympathetic to the basic idea that there is an important sense in which the nature of conscious experience is somehow automatically conclusively “laid bare” or “fully revealed” to the experiencing subject (e.g. in the way captured by the Undemanding View about propositional phenomenal introspective justification), in my view there is no obvious pre-theoretical support for the idea that this thesis applies to anything more than its phenomenal nature.¹⁴⁴ Crucially, I therefore think that there is no obvious reason for thinking that accepting the Undemanding View about propositional phenomenal-introspective justification pushes one in the direction of

¹⁴⁴ Cf. Chalmers’ (forthcoming, sect. 4.6) response to the argument that since according to panpsychism, consciousness is constituted by microexperiences, and microexperiences are not revealed to us in introspection, panpsychism is false. In that context, Chalmers argues analogously that panpsychists should be unimpressed by this objection to their view.

In sketching his response to this argument, he tentatively suggests maintaining that the relevant facts pertain not to the nature but to the grounds of consciousness, and that it is only facts pertaining to the nature of consciousness of which a corresponding “revelation”-thesis is true. In contrast, I would simply say that the relevant kind of “revelation” is a phenomenon unique to phenomenal properties, i.e. applies only to an experience’s phenomenal nature.

I suspect that this is little more than a verbal difference, attributable to the indeterminacy inherent in talk of “nature” and “essences”; the basic underlying point is that it is quite consistent and in fact plausible that facts about an experience’s constitution don’t come with any special “epistemic glow” and yet to acknowledge the sense in which intuitively, the nature of one’s phenomenology is somehow completely laid bare to one.

holding such a view regarding the hedonic-evaluative case merely because they both in some sense pertain to the intrinsic nature of conscious experience.

Part of the appeal of the fallacious line of reasoning under discussion may stem from the attachment to an old-fashioned picture, inherited from the days when people believed in sense-data, on which phenomenal properties are fundamentally properties of certain phenomenal individuals (sense-data/experiences) to which we are related in experience, and our special epistemic relationship (“acquaintance”) with these phenomenal properties is made possible by our special relationship with these phenomenal individuals. If one endorsed such a picture, one could then perhaps get a glimpse of some hint of a temptation to think that the special relation one bears to the phenomenal individual might thus also ground a derivative special epistemic relation to other intrinsic properties that it exhibits, such as its evaluative properties.

However, first of all, an acquaintance view of introspection is perfectly compatible with a picture on which phenomenal properties are most fundamentally properties of their experiencing subjects, the relevant special epistemic relationship is most fundamentally an affair linking subjects and those very properties (or their instances), and phenomenal individuals exist only in the sense in which there are instantiations of phenomenal properties by subjects (where these phenomenal individuals only exhibit phenomenal properties derivatively in sense that they are instantiations of those properties). In fact, as number of contemporary proponents of acquaintance views about phenomenal introspection have pointed out (e.g. McGrew 1995, 93-4, Fumerton 2008, Chalmers 2010, 291), acquaintance theorists who adhere to the now popular adverbial conception of experience will prefer this latter sort picture.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁵ On the adverbial picture, to undergo e.g. a phenomenally red experience does not, most fundamentally, consist in bearing the “undergoing-relation” to some thing that is the phenomenal red experience, but rather consists in experiencing “redly” – just as dancing a tango does not, most fundamentally, consist in bearing the “dancing-relation” to some object, a tango, but rather consists in dancing “tangoly”.

At any rate, even if one accepts a picture on which the fundamental special relationship in the story is one between oneself and phenomenal individuals, and on which the special epistemic relationship to one's phenomenal properties is somehow only a derivative consequence of this more fundamental relationship, the proponent of the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis would still have to make the case that we should expect to bear the sort of (derivative) special epistemic relation that links us with phenomenal properties also with respect to our experiences' evaluative properties, even though we don't bear that sort of relation to other non-phenomenal properties of our experiences. This is a substantive claim which would require much further argument; it in no way drops out as any sort of immediate consequence of an acquaintance view of phenomenal introspection and the acknowledgement of the fact that both phenomenal properties and hedonic-evaluative properties would characterise the intrinsic nature of conscious experiences. As a result, I think that the imagined line of reasoning brings us back to square one; a better argument is required in order to support the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis.

In a passage which is highly germane to the issue under discussion, Nagel (1986, 156-63) defends the view that in the case of "the most direct and immediate subjective value judgments we make concerning the contents of our own consciousness", "[w]e [legitimately] regard ourselves as too close to these things to be mistaken in our immediate, nonideological evaluative impressions" (158). Nagel is naturally read as here endorsing something very close to the "simple argument" for the Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis I just discussed.

What exactly is Nagel's line of reasoning in this passage? Importantly, upon close inspection, it turns out that Nagel's basis for this assertion does not seem to be a commitment to the idea that our proximity to their objects renders the presence of misleading "evaluative impressions" regarding our own phenomenology

inconceivable.¹⁴⁶ This seems like a prudent theoretical choice, since it is difficult to see how one could go about defending this contention.

Instead, the idea seems to be that our hedonic-evaluative appearances are unthreatened by certain forms of epistemic defeat. He writes: “[N]o objective view we can attain could possibly overrule our subjective authority in such cases. There can be no reason to reject the appearances here” (158). This in turn seems to trace back to the idea that “[W]hen the objective self contemplates pain, it has to do so through the perspective of the sufferer, and the sufferer’s [negative evaluative] reaction is clear” (161).¹⁴⁷

However, even without invoking broader misgivings about broadly defeat-based or “dogmatist” approaches to epistemology¹⁴⁸ – on which, absent defeaters, we have “immediate justification” to endorse the content of our experiences (contrary to what, say, more orthodox broadly Bayesian approaches would suggest) – I think that close analogues of some of the considerations touched upon in section 4.3 of chapter 3 (on Naïve Realism and defeat) raise obvious problems for what I take to be Nagel’s approach here. After all, at least *prima facie*, it would seem that if the instantiation of evaluative properties is *a priori* unlikely, this could in undermine the epistemic support provided by the relevant evaluative appearances here. In addition, crucially, it is difficult to parse the claim that the “[w]hen the objective self contemplates pain, it has to do so through the perspective of the sufferer” in a manner that allows it to speak to this concern. Accordingly, I think that it is doubtful that Nagel succeeds in explaining why it is the case that a subject

¹⁴⁶ In fact, Nagel even seems to go so far as to say that mistaken hedonic-evaluative experiences are perfectly conceivable (157, §3, 159, §4).

¹⁴⁷ Nagel’s point here resonates with some of the points I made towards the end of section 1.2.5 of chapter 2, where I appealed to a similar observation in identifying a way in which the Self-Experiential View regarding the nature of pleasure could potentially help to debunk modal intuitions regarding pleasure’s evaluative properties.

¹⁴⁸ Although I think that dogmatism is open to damning objections – e.g. developments of the argument in White (2006), and possibly of some of the considerations I raised in section 4.3 in chapter 2 – I’m quite open to the idea that it does a reasonable job in capturing some important elements of our folk epistemological appraisals (cf. Chalmers 2012, 440). The line of reasoning Nagel sketches might therefore still help to explain the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis’s initial appeal.

undergoing a pleasant or unpleasant experience is justified in rejecting the possibility that all that is happening to her is that she is undergoing a misleading evaluative experience.

Moreover – again in a way that loosely mirrors the dialectic explored back in chapter 3 – although Nagel could counter this sceptical threat by holding that the instantiation of hedonic-evaluative properties is *a priori* probable (e.g. because it is *a priori* entailed by the instantiation of the corresponding phenomenal properties which ground them), this would seem to render the previous story regarding the special status of our hedonic-evaluative appearances which is claimed to derive from our proximity to their objects epistemologically idle.¹⁴⁹

Accordingly, I think that arguments from the observation that the subject matter of phenomenal and hedonic-evaluative beliefs overlaps in an important sense, or the related observation that when subjects form such beliefs, they are in some sense especially “close” to the relevant objects of predication do not provide convincing bases for endorsing the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis.

2.3. The argument from the collapse of appearance and reality

A common theme in extant discussions of phenomenal introspective acquaintance is the idea that part of what makes phenomenal epistemology unique is the way in which in the case of phenomenal properties, appearance and reality coincide.

This thought is commonly linked to the often-emphasised idea that phenomenal knowledge is distinctive in that it can, in an important sense, amount to knowledge that is immune from certain types of sceptical challenges, i.e. to what Chalmers (1996, 195) calls “knowledge beyond scepticism” (cf. Gertler 2000, 126, Horgan et al 2006, Siewert 2012, 145). The way this is typically explicated is via something like the claim that there is an important respect in which a Cartesian demon could – by suitably manipulating

¹⁴⁹ I think that similar things apply to Rachel’s (2002, 204-8) Nagel-inspired “Argument from Introspection” for realism about agent-neutral reasons to end people’s unpleasant experiences.

one's epistemic situation – deceive one about how things stand with the external world, he couldn't possibly deceive you in an analogous manner about the make-up of your phenomenology, which is why scepticism about our phenomenology does not tend to grip us, or at least doesn't grip us in the same way. In that sense, it is often argued, our epistemic situation vis-à-vis our own phenomenology is better than our epistemic situation with respect to the rest of the world.

As noted in chapter 1 as well as the introduction to this chapter, one could try to support the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis by arguing that the same sorts of intuitions pertaining to a collapse between appearance and reality apply in the hedonic-evaluative case. After all, there is a case to be made that it is hard to conceive of a scenario in which one's pleasure strikes one as good in the way in which one's pleasure typically strike one as good without at the same time really being (at least *pro tanto*) good in that way; intuitively, in the case of pleasure's value, its *esse* is *percipi* (cf. Lewis 1946, 407; Sprigge 2000, 120). So one might be tempted to think that if this sort of phenomenon accounts for the distinctive epistemology of phenomenal belief and is moreover mirrored in the hedonic-evaluative case, this observation can form the basis for another indirect argument for extending the Undemanding View of propositional phenomenal introspective justification to the hedonic-evaluative case.

To evaluate this line of argument, let's begin by considering the ways in which the case of phenomenal properties plausibly involves a collapse of appearance and reality, and the extent to which this could be thought to explain the unique features of phenomenal introspective epistemology. In doing so, we will be able to draw heavily on insights from section 1.

The first sense in which the case of phenomenal properties is one in which appearance and reality collapse is that in the coincident sense, one experiences all and only the phenomenal properties which one actually exhibits, and it will appear to one that one exhibits a given phenomenal property if and only if that is actually the case; it is

incoherent to suppose that a Cartesian evil demon could alter your state of coincident awareness in such a way as to fail to match your actual phenomenology. However, as I argued in section 1.2.1 above, the claim that we are so aware of our phenomenal properties is really a very trivial one and unlikely to be of any explanatory value in accounting for the distinctive epistemic phenomena associated with phenomenal properties. Accordingly, we can put it to one side for the present purposes.

The second way to capture the claim of there being a collapse of appearance and reality in the case of phenomenal properties is the thesis that one enjoys noncoincident awareness as of instantiating a given phenomenal property if and only if one really instantiates that property. However, as we saw in section 1.2.2 above, it is implausible that we are ever so aware of our phenomenal properties. Moreover, in the discussion of Bonjour's view, we saw that the strong claim about an essential link between first-order phenomenal properties and higher-order noncoincident awareness of them not only commits one to peculiar necessary connections, but also gives rise to damaging regress worries. Moreover, it is once again not clear how such a claim would help to shed light on the distinctive epistemological features of phenomenal introspection. Accordingly, this second sense is once again unlikely to be the one we are here trying to identify.

The third candidate way of capturing the idea that in the phenomenal case, appearance and reality coincide, is in doxastic terms, i.e. in terms of the impossibility of a mismatch between the content of one's phenomenal belief and one's actual phenomenology (under certain conditions). In fact, this is how e.g. Gertler (2000, 2001, 2012), Horgan & Kriegel (2007) and Horgan et al. (2007) cash out the idea that in the phenomenal case, certain types of scepticism do not become pressing because certain types of deception are unavailable to the Cartesian demon. They try to capture this intuition by maintaining that (under certain conditions) the Cartesian evil demon could not have fed you the (kind of) belief that you have in the instantiation of a phenomenal property if it weren't for the fact that you actually instantiated that property. However, for reasons already explored in greater detail above (esp. in section 1.3.5.3), I doubt that identifying a sense in which

there is, in certain cases, no gap between phenomenal belief and its object, really gets at the underlying intuition here. After all, it is not clear how the way a belief is constituted is in any sort of direct way supposed to render it – in the relevant sense – epistemically better. Perhaps it bestows on the belief certain modal features which enable more robust basing on the available justification, but this does not seem to fully capture the intuition at issue.

These first three attempts to substantiate the idea of a collapse of appearance and reality in a way that is both plausible and epistemologically significant in a way relevant to our current discussion therefore fail. It appears to me that the only salient interpretation of the claim regarding an appearance/reality collapse which this leaves on the table is in explicitly evidential (or, slightly more broadly, epistemic) terms. In particular, I think the underlying intuition here is that when one instantiates a given phenomenal property, one's – to use Chalmers' (1996, 195) phrase – “core epistemic situation” conclusively rules out epistemic possibilities in which it is not instantiated.¹⁵⁰ In other words, according to this view, in the case of our phenomenal properties, how things evidentially appear to be is how things really are, and this is why it is not conceivable that a Cartesian demon should deceive one about how things stand with the “internal world” in anything like the way in which he seems to be able to deceive one about the external world.

I think that this idea enjoys significant intuitive support. However, the claim regarding the absence of an appearance/reality contrast in the phenomenal case in this sense is clearly itself already far too close to the Undemanding View regarding phenomenal-introspective justification to be of any help in explaining its truth. After all, the claim that phenomenal properties serve as conclusive evidence for their instantiation, and hence that if one instantiates a phenomenal property, one's “core epistemic situation” conclusively rules out possibilities in which it is not instantiated, is most naturally regarded as a simple

¹⁵⁰ Once again, note here the aforementioned link between the notion of acquaintance and the “method of doubt” which plays a role in Russell's work; see section 2.1, fn. 140 above.

restatement the Undemanding View about propositional phenomenal-introspective justification.

For the purposes of evaluating the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis, this means that an appeal to the idea that in the hedonic-evaluative case, appearance and reality collapse in a relevantly similar fashion, won't give one the independent dialectical support for this thesis which one might have hoped it would provide. After all, I have just argued that the only discernible plausible and epistemically significant sense in which the phenomenal case involves an appearance/reality collapse is more or less equivalent to the claim that the Undemanding View about propositional justification applies in that case. Accordingly, claiming that a relevantly similar phenomenon of appearance/reality collapse occurs in the hedonic-evaluative case simply begs the question.

Now one might still argue that whilst the claim regarding an analogous appearance/reality collapse in the hedonic-evaluative case cannot, for the reasons just given, be of help in formulating an entirely separate argument for the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis from independent premises, the fact that it is attractive still helps to reinforce the direct intuitive case for that thesis. In other words, the enthusiast regarding the idea of hedonic-evaluative acquaintance could argue that whilst the idea that both the phenomenal and the hedonic-evaluative case involve a collapse of appearance and reality does not explain the supposed epistemological parallel at issue, it still allows us to come to see the thesis that there is such a parallel as the appealing hypothesis which it really is.

However, my sense is that what primarily renders the thesis regarding an apparent collapse of appearance and reality intuitive in the hedonic-evaluative case is a very different one, namely one that is not bound up with the idea of the intrinsic epistemic significance of hedonic-evaluative properties. In particular, I think what lends such a thesis credence in the hedonic-evaluative case is the thought that when one enjoys (the right kind of) noncoincident awareness of a pleasant experience's value, then it will also

in fact exhibit this evaluative property, and that if an experience exhibits the value that typically comes with being a pleasure, it will also be experienced as such. Of course, this is exactly what we should expect if both the Self-Experiential View of chapter 2 – on which being pleasant is a matter of being quasi-perceptually experienced as good – and hedonism’s positive claim – according to which experiences are good to the extent to which they are pleasant – are both true.

Moreover, importantly, since, as I argued above, the phenomenal introspective case does not involve noncoincident awareness, this sort of claim does not have a plausible analogue in the phenomenal case, and hence does not point to an analogy between the phenomenal and the introspective case which would suggest that if the Undemanding View applies to the phenomenal case should be extended to the hedonic-evaluative case.¹⁵¹ Accordingly, I think the idea of trying to argue for the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis along these lines is not a promising one.

2.4. The argument from doxastic constitution

In section 1.3.5, we encountered the idea that phenomenal properties play a special sort of constitutive role in the formation of phenomenal belief, with Chalmers (2003, 2010) providing the most sophisticated elaboration of this sort of view. For those acquaintance theorists who assign such claims about the metaphysics of phenomenal belief a central role in their epistemological theory of phenomenal introspection, a natural approach in evaluating the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis would be to assess the extent to which these distinctive doxastic phenomena which feature in the phenomenal case are mirrored in the hedonic-evaluative case.

However, as I suggested in that section, I don’t find it plausible that these constitutive phenomena themselves play a very fundamental role in the epistemology of phenomenal

¹⁵¹ As we shall see in section 2.5 below, there is a certain trivial sense in which the relevant claim about a collapse of appearance and reality in the hedonic-evaluative case entails something like the Undemanding View regarding that context. However, as I shall explain, this is not the sense in which the proponent of the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis would be interested.

introspection. Firstly, as we saw in section 1.3.5.3, attempts to put the infallibility theses which they entail to explanatory epistemological work seem unpromising. Secondly, although I noted in section 1.3.5.2 that the Constitutivist story regarding the metaphysics of phenomenal belief may still play a role in explaining how we can come to obtain doxastic introspective justification, I also explained why I think that this role is at best a fairly derivative one; provided the Undemanding View of propositional introspective justification is indeed true, it could plausibly be played by far more mundane links between phenomenal properties and phenomenal belief. Those who think that the Constitutivist picture plays a significant role in addressing Shoemakerian causal-explanatory concerns regarding our phenomenal beliefs will think otherwise, and as I noted in the introduction, these concerns have their analogue in the evaluative context. However, as I explained in section 1.3.5.2, I think their reasons for holding that anything more than the Undemanding View of propositional justification is required to silence these concerns are unconvincing. Accordingly, if what I suggested in section 1 holds up, then contrary to what one might first have thought, whether the same doxastic phenomena occur in the hedonic-evaluative case does not in fact have this kind of direct relevance to the evaluation of the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis.

One might think that this leaves open the possibility that there are less direct ways in which one's view on whether the distinctive Constitutivist doxastic phenomena can with equal plausibility be claimed to occur in the hedonic-evaluative case impinges on the plausibility of the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis. For even if one agrees that the doxastic features associated with phenomenal properties do not play a fundamental role in accounting for their epistemic features, one might take the view that the distinctiveness of phenomenal properties in both doxastic and epistemic respects calls for or at least suggests the existence of a common explanation. Since a lack of analogous doxastic phenomena in the hedonic-evaluative case would prevent the extension of this explanation to that context, its identification would, against a background of such a view, therefore indirectly cast doubt on the existence of the relevant epistemic parallels.

In fact, something like the picture which underlies this imagined line of reasoning is suggested by Chalmers' (2003) discussion of phenomenal introspection. On his approach, the relation of "acquaintance" is first postulated in order to account for the fact that we can form "direct" beliefs of phenomenal properties but not of other properties (2003, 248; 2013, 349). Chalmers then goes on to claim that since this relation is one which makes "a certain sort of lucid understanding of phenomenal properties ... possible", it can plausibly be "put to work" in the epistemic domain (ibid.), namely, by being assigned the role of accounting for the distinctive epistemic features associated with phenomenal properties. Presumably, if one adopted this sort of approach, whether one thought that the special doxastic phenomena familiar from the case of phenomenal properties have their analogues in the hedonic-evaluative case will have at least some bearing on one's view regarding a potential epistemic parallel between the two cases.

In the light of earlier remarks, the reader will already be able to anticipate some of my misgivings about this sort of background view. For one thing, as I suggested in passing in section 1.3.5.2 above, it is not clear to me why the distinctiveness of phenomenal properties in doxastic respects should prompt the postulation of a special relation in the first place; positing a fancy new relation for this purpose seems to achieve little more than explanatory buck-passing, since it begs the question of why we bear this special relation only to phenomenal properties. Secondly, it is not clear to me why the link between the relevant epistemic properties and the newly posited relation which enables "a certain sort of lucid understanding" should be any more transparent than a link between the relevant epistemic properties and phenomenal properties itself. In other words, it is not clear to me why a theory which bottoms out in the claim that properties which enable "lucid understanding" can ground introspective justification is to be preferred, *ceteris paribus*, to a theory which takes the claim that phenomenal properties justify as basic. Accordingly, I remain reluctant to place much weight on this more recherché proposal for generating indirect evidence for or against the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis.

2.5. Basic evidential significance

In the previous three sub-sections, we just witnessed the failure of three indirect arguments for extending the Undemanding View about propositional justification from the phenomenal to the hedonic-evaluative case. This further supports my earlier contention, expressed back in section 2.1 above, that we shouldn't expect the truth of the Undemanding View about propositional justification in the phenomenal case to be explicable with reference to some further feature or relation instantiated by phenomenal properties; instead, it is best treated as explanatorily basic.

If the truth of the Undemanding View about propositional justification regarding the phenomenal-introspective case really is explanatorily basic in this way, it would mean that the only remaining way to argue for or against extending it from the phenomenal-introspective to the hedonic-evaluative case is to consider directly whether it retains its plausibility when it is applied to the hedonic-evaluative case. In my view, at least once we have left the ultimately fallacious arguments discussed in sections 2.2-2.4 behind us and consider the Undemanding View regarding the hedonic-evaluative case in isolation, it simply seems implausible; intuitively, it just does not seem to be the case that one attains propositional justification for believing that one instantiates a certain hedonic-evaluative property merely by actually instantiating it.

Of course, there may be a looser and more mundane sense in which the Undemanding View about propositional justification may have plausibility in the hedonic-evaluative case, insofar as hedonism's positive claim has plausibility. To see why, note firstly that it seems plausible that if pleasures have the value they appear to have, they possess it in virtue of their phenomenal properties.¹⁵² This would mean that whenever one instantiates

¹⁵² In fact, not only does this seem like the most plausible view here, but it would also seem that if one were to reject such a view and instead hold that pleasures were good in terms of some "phenomenally subterranean" feature – like, say, some feature about the relevant subject's disposition to act towards the continuation or cessation of her experience – the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis would be doomed from the outset. After all, if one's hedonic-evaluative properties were grounded in such features, then given that one clearly cannot attain "knowledge beyond scepticism" regarding their instantiation, this would presumably similarly rule out that hedonic-evaluative properties are epistemologically distinctive in this way.

a hedonic-evaluative property, one will instantiate a corresponding phenomenal property. From the Undemanding View about propositional phenomenal introspective justification, it follows that one would therefore also possess propositional justification for the claim that one instantiates the relevant phenomenal property. Moreover, secondly, as noted in chapter 3, it seems reasonable to assume that insofar as hedonic-evaluative properties obtain in virtue of the corresponding phenomenal properties, the former supervene on the latter in a way that involves their *a priori* entailment by the latter.¹⁵³ Taken together, these assumptions therefore imply that whenever one instantiates a hedonic-evaluative property, one has propositional justification for an introspective proposition which *a priori* entails the corresponding hedonic-evaluative property. Presumably, this would mean one thereby also possesses, at least in some broad sense, propositional justification for believing that one instantiates the corresponding hedonic-evaluative property. So in a sense, insofar as pleasures do have the value which they appear to have, it is rather plausible that whenever one instantiates the relevant hedonic-evaluative property, one would also possess propositional justification to that effect.

This may seem to trivialise the claim that the Undemanding View of propositional justification should be extended to the hedonic-evaluative case. However, I think we can still draw a meaningful distinction between, on the one hand, the claim that whenever one instantiates a given property, one also possesses the corresponding propositional justification for believing that one does, and, on the other hand, the stronger claim that whenever one instantiates a given property, one possesses the corresponding

This point is closely related to the point regarding the epistemology of pleasure and the problems this poses for certain versions of the Desire View about the nature of pleasure which I discussed in much greater detail back in section 2.2.2 of chapter 2: If being a pleasure/exhibiting hedonic value were (even just partly) a matter of, say, occurring in a certain motivational context, then since there will be “sceptical hypotheses” regarding her motivation which a subject cannot rule out, there must similarly be sceptical hypotheses regarding the evaluative status of her experience which she cannot rule out. After all, if the subject could conclusively rule out that her experience did not exhibit the hedonic-evaluative property which it does exhibit, then she could, through simple *a priori* inference, also rule out sceptical scenarios in which the grounds of this evaluative property are different from what they actually are.

¹⁵³ Of course, one may be sceptical of the existence of such an *a priori* connection. However, insofar as this scepticism is warranted, we have a simple way of establishing that V is not instantiated, which does not require us to engage in any further sophisticated epistemological theorising of the sort in which I engaged in much of this thesis: Given the plausibility of the conditional at issue, we could arguably simply reason from the implausibility of such *a priori* connections to V’s non-instantiation.

propositional justification in virtue of that fact. This stronger latter thesis is not trivialised by the line of reasoning sketched in the previous paragraph; on that story, it was not in virtue of one's instantiation of the hedonic-evaluative property that one attained propositional justification for the corresponding proposition, but rather in virtue of one's instantiation of the corresponding phenomenal property, combined with the *a priori* connection it bears to that evaluative property.

Moreover, crucially, I think it is the stronger latter claim that the proponent of the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis needs to establish regarding the hedonic-evaluative case in order to establish an interesting analogy with the phenomenal introspective case, and, crucially, in order to uphold the epistemic distinctiveness of our hedonic-evaluative as compared to other positive evaluative beliefs. After all, as I already noted in section 2 of chapter 1, if the only route towards justified hedonic-evaluative belief were via the doxastic exploitation of an *a priori* connection between the relevant natural and evaluative properties, and the only distinctive feature of the hedonic-evaluative case is the fact that we have a unique way of latching on to the natural base-facts, this would hardly be a revolutionary conclusion as far as normative epistemology is concerned.

Accordingly, I think what the proponent of the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis needs to show is that hedonic-evaluative properties are also capable of playing a more direct role in justifying hedonic-evaluative belief. In other words, they need to show that hedonic-evaluative properties bring with them corresponding propositional justification not just indirectly – by downward-necessitating phenomenal properties which exhibit the relevant *a priori* connections to the relevant phenomenal-evaluative properties – but also in the kind of direct way in which phenomenal properties provide propositional justification, according to the Undemanding View.

In a sense, the fact that if there are hedonic-evaluative properties, they would plausibly enjoy *a priori* connections with certain phenomenal properties, makes it harder to

establish this conclusion. For in the light of the preceding considerations, it is now clearly insufficient to show that instantiating a hedonic-evaluative property comes with the possibility of “knowledge beyond scepticism” of the proposition that one instantiates that property. After all, in order for this observation to support the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis, it would further have to be shown that this fact is not just owed to the special nature of phenomenal epistemology, combined with the *a priori* links between phenomenal and hedonic-evaluative properties.

So is it plausible that hedonic-evaluative properties have this direct sort of epistemic significance? To my mind, after properly digesting the insights and qualifications made throughout this chapter, this simply does not appear to be the case; whereas there seems to be, as Chalmers (1996, 196) nicely puts it, something “intrinsically epistemic” about phenomenal properties and this makes them apt for playing the sort of foundational epistemic role assigned to them by the Undemanding View about propositional phenomenal introspective justification, this intuition simply does not carry over to the case of evaluative properties, including the case of hedonic-evaluative properties.

Although I do not expect the opposing position of accepting the foregoing arguments but parting ways with me at this specific juncture to attract many adherents, I do not claim to have any knock-down argument against such a hypothetical opponent. In a sense, given the shape the dialectic has taken, this is unsurprising; if my suggestion that the truth of the Undemanding View about propositional justification in the phenomenal case is not to be explained by more fundamental non-epistemic features exhibited by phenomenal properties, we should expect the question of whether the view should be extended to the hedonic-evaluative case to ultimately come down to a brute epistemological intuition.

Accordingly, I take the main dialectical value of this chapter to be contained in the arguments which have allowed me to reduce the issue to this particular question, by firstly showing us what versions of the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis are left open by the reflection on the nature of phenomenal introspection, and by moreover

demonstrating the flaws in various tempting arguments for an epistemic parity between the phenomenal and the hedonic-evaluative case. Nevertheless, it is worth trying to formulate supporting considerations which might help to bring out the basic intuition which determines my take on it, and before closing, I shall here briefly sketch two further such considerations.

One potential way to reinforce the intuition that the (stronger, more interesting) version of the Undemanding View does not apply in the hedonic-evaluative case trades on the Basic Internalist Intuition that for the instantiation of a given (non-phenomenal) property to become evidentially relevant, it must first become reflected in our conscious perspective of the world. As I noted in section 1.2.4.1 above, it seems that in the special case of phenomenal properties, becoming reflected in a subject's perspective of the world requires nothing more than being instantiated by that subject. In contrast, for most non-phenomenal properties, there is an intuition to the effect that in order for their instantiation to become appropriately reflected in the subject's perspective on the world in the relevant sense, the subject needs to be aware of their instantiation; they hence owe their evidential relevance (insofar as they have any) to subjects' awareness of them. Crucially, I think that intuitively, evaluative properties also fit in this second category; the only way in which the instantiation of evaluative properties, including hedonic-evaluative properties, would become evidentially relevant is through one's conscious awareness of them. If this way of applying the Basic Internalist Intuition is appropriate, this suggests that hedonic-evaluative properties are not of the same basic evidential significance as phenomenal properties plausibly are.

Secondly, we may be able to support this pessimistic contention by going into greater detail with respect to the specific way in which hedonic-evaluative experience intuitively seems to provide the basis for evaluative "knowledge beyond scepticism." To do so, let's begin by considering the case of someone who undergoes an intense pleasure. Admittedly, there is an intuition here that her "core epistemic situation" rules out possibilities in which the relevant hedonic-evaluative property is not instantiated, and this

in one sense points to an analogy to the phenomenal case. However, as I noted earlier, in order to assess whether this analogy is a deep and significant analogy or a merely superficial one, we would have to know whether this observation is merely owed to the distinctive epistemology of (hedonic) phenomenology combined with its *a priori* links with the evaluative domain, or whether this could also be attributed to the fact that the mere instantiation of the relevant hedonic-evaluative property directly grounds the subject with propositional justification for the corresponding evaluative proposition.

One potential way to tease this out is to consider a modified case, in which the subject in question is stipulated to be unable, due to a highly localised lapse in her reasoning ability, to perform the *a priori* reasoning that would allow her to justifiably come to believe that the instantiation of the relevant phenomenal properties without the corresponding evaluative properties is not a genuine possibility, and hence suspends judgement on the matter. Further suppose that this subject is otherwise a highly idealised reasoner and introspector. We can now ask: As far as the subject's local rationality is concerned, is she justified in conclusively ruling out a scenario in which the evaluative property is not instantiated? Intuitively, I think this question should be answered in the negative; if the subject takes it to be a genuine epistemic possibility that things could be subjectively just as they are without the relevant evaluative property actually being instantiated, then she should clearly not conclusively rule out this possibility. And given how the case is set up, this suggests that insofar as we are ever in a position to rule out scenarios in which the hedonic-evaluative property in question is not instantiated, it is precisely in virtue of intellectually exploiting a phenomenal-evaluative *a priori* connection. If this *a priori* connection played a role in providing one of several sources of the subject's propositional justification for her hedonic-evaluative beliefs, and another such source were provided by her mere instantiation of the relevant hedonic-evaluative property, this would be difficult to explain. Accordingly, this observation suggests the Undemanding View has application in the hedonic-evaluative case at best in the aforementioned loosened and comparatively trivial sense which would fail to capture the basic idea behind the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis.

Of course, with both of these arguments, one could legitimately raise concerns about whether their premises are too close to the conclusion about hedonic-value's lack of fundamental epistemological significance which I am here trying to establish. In essence, as I mentioned before, I concede that I don't claim to have any further knock-down objections which would allow me to gain dialectical leverage over someone who digs in his heels here and insists that hedonic-evaluative properties really are "intrinsically epistemic" in the way in which phenomenal properties plausibly are. Nevertheless, I think they may help to reinforce the intuition that they are not "intrinsically epistemic" in the relevant way, which strikes me as compelling.

3. Conclusion

In this chapter, I set out to assess the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis, which states that by extending an acquaintance account of phenomenal introspection to the case of our experience of pleasure's value, one can vindicate claims regarding the distinctive, unusually scepticism-proof epistemic status of hedonic-evaluative belief.

In section 1, I critically discussed various extant proposed acquaintance accounts of phenomenal introspection, with the primary aim of providing us with a better sense of what extending such an account to the hedonic-evaluative case would involve. I argued, firstly, that acquaintance theorists would be well-advised to give up the conception of introspective acquaintance as a special form of awareness, and, secondly, that on the most attractive account of phenomenal-introspective epistemology in the acquaintance-theoretic tradition, merely instantiating a phenomenal property suffices to provide one with corresponding (propositional) introspective justification.

In section 2, I then tried to assess whether the attempt to extent this picture of phenomenal introspective epistemology to the hedonic-evaluative case holds any promise. I explained why I think that three important indirect arguments that one may want to use to support

such an extension fail, and that there are in fact fairly robust intuitive grounds for resisting this move. As a result, I believe that the Introspective Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis should be rejected.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

In this chapter, I shall briefly summarise the key upshots of this dissertation, and identify some issues raised in the course of my discussion which strike me as worthy subjects for further exploration.

The overall focus of the preceding chapters was on a number of interrelated metaphysical and epistemological issues regarding pleasure, suffering, and their apparent value and disvalue, thematically tied together by the broad idea that pleasant and unpleasant experiences are, respectively, experienced as good and bad.

More specifically, I argued, firstly, for what I called the “Self-Experiential View” – the view that the manner in which we experience pleasant experiences as good is what makes them pleasant; and, secondly, assessed the merits of the “Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis” – the conjecture that our especially intimate experiential relationship (“acquaintance”) with the evaluative features of our hedonic experiences grounds a particularly robust kind of epistemic status enjoyed by our hedonic-evaluative beliefs, which makes them less vulnerable to sceptical doubt.

In much of chapter 1, I argued for a number of preliminary claims. I began by making the case that, when we experience hedonic experiences as good or bad in the way we typically do, this evaluative awareness is not merely of a mundane doxastic or quasi-doxastic kind, but rather nonconceptual in nature.

I suspect that this claim could be of broader significance for the metaethical debate, and may hence warrant further investigation, independently of the role it played in my argument in this dissertation. In particular, it would appear rather natural for someone who accepts that hedonic experience involves a form of nonconceptual awareness of evaluative features to assign hedonic experience an important role in allowing subjects to

grasp (some of) our evaluative concepts, perhaps in something like the way in which our perceptual experience is naturally taken to ground our grasp of many of the concepts we use to think about our physical environment. This move could be of particular interest to proponents of “robust non-naturalist” forms of realism about value, who will resist any attempt to identify some set of more mundane concepts as the basis of our evaluative thought (cf. Parfit 2006, 331) and hence stand in need of an alternative account.¹⁵⁴

In chapter 2, I built on the insights from chapter 1 by arguing for the neglected Self-Experiential View regarding the nature of pleasure, the view that pleasant experiences are pleasant in virtue of being experienced as good. After motivating the view, I explained how a number of objections which have either implicitly or explicitly been levelled against it in the literature can be addressed. I then investigated the Self-Experiential View’s relationship with the two accounts which currently dominate this debate, the Felt-Quality View and the Desire View. I argued that the Self-Experiential View is not only compatible with the Felt-Quality View, but also naturally seen as complementing it in important respects. Furthermore, I made the case that whilst the Desire View is naturally understood in such a way as to render it a rival to the Self-Experiential View, there are good reasons to favour the Self-Experiential View.

A particular avenue for further research which I want to highlight relates to the Self-Experiential View’s potential, briefly touched upon in section 1.2.5 of chapter 2, to explain not just why it seems plausible that our actual pleasant experiences are good, but also why it seems intuitively plausible that any hypothetical pleasant experience would also be (at least *pro tanto*) valuable. If the Self-Experiential View does possess this potential, then it is very natural to ask whether – somewhat ironically given the original set-up of my discussion – it thereby provides novel resources to debunk some of our most dearly held evaluative beliefs. In essence, the broad idea here was this: It seems plausible that in order to fully imagine a particular kind of experience with the aim of adequately

¹⁵⁴ In fact, critics (e.g. Gibbard 2011, 35-6) sometimes explicitly challenge non-naturalists by asserting that they will find it hard to identify such an account (cf. fn. 29 of chapter 2).

assessing its hypothetical evaluative import, we have to imagine it from the experiencing subject's perspective.¹⁵⁵ If the Self-Experiential View is true, this means that in order to imagine a pleasant experience in the relevant manner, we have to imagine experiencing it as good, whether or not this is actually the case. On the face of it, it is not unnatural to suspect that this could lead to a "modal illusion" regarding the connection between pleasantness and hedonic value. Not least since, as touched upon in chapter 1, the case of hedonic experience is often seen as the ultimate obstacle for wide-ranging versions of evaluative error theory, it seems well worth investigating whether this conjecture has merit.

In chapter 3, I turned to the assessment of what I had earlier identified as one important version of the Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis. In particular, I argued against the view that Naïve Realist acquaintance with pleasure's evaluative nature – the constitution of hedonic-evaluative phenomenology by corresponding evaluative properties – grounds a distinctive, especially robust kind of epistemic status enjoyed by our hedonic-evaluative beliefs. After further unpacking and presenting motivations for the proposal, I pinpointed a number of serious drawbacks, which turned on the way in which the Naïve Realist model constrains one's options in providing a defensible account of hedonic value's metaphysical ground. I also explained how the "problem of bad cases" familiar from discussions of Naïve Realism about perceptual experience poses additional challenges for some versions of Naïve Realism about hedonic-evaluative experience. I then went on to argue that even if the Naïve Realist metaphysical picture is applied to hedonic-evaluative experience, it would have very limited epistemological import – upon closer inspection, the view that Naïve Realism has profound anti-sceptical implications turns out to lack proper motivation, and additional considerations regarding the workings of epistemic defeat cast further doubt on its applicability in contexts like that of hedonic-evaluative experience.

¹⁵⁵ Cf. Nagel's (1986, 161, §2) remark, discussed in section 2.2 of chapter 4.

Finally, in chapter 4 I assessed the attempt to vindicate the Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis by extending an acquaintance account of phenomenal introspective justification to the hedonic-evaluative case. A significant portion of the work here consisted in unpacking various conceptions of introspective acquaintance and assessing their plausibility in the phenomenal context, not least because the key positions in this area have remained significantly less crystallised than in the perceptual context. As a by-product, I hope that my arguments will help to advance this more general debate in a number of respects. Having narrowed down the space of plausible acquaintance accounts of phenomenal introspection to a unique candidate, I argued both that the most important indirect arguments that one may want to use to support its extension to the hedonic-evaluative case fail, and that there are in fact fairly robust intuitive grounds for resisting this move.

In my view, the considerations presented here shatter the hope of vindicating the Hedonic-Evaluative Acquaintance Thesis, by eliminating the only candidates for its development which appear to hold any initial promise. Of course, this leaves it open that the epistemic pedigree of our hedonic-evaluative beliefs is distinctive in some other way, for example because pleasantness and hedonic value are connected by an especially obvious *a priori* connection. However, as I explained in a number of places in the preceding chapters, the proponent of such a view would find himself in a dialectical position which is far less interesting and distinctive than we might initially have hoped.

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