



PROJECT MUSE®

Kant's Idealism and the Secondary Quality Analogy

Lucy Allais

Journal of the History of Philosophy, Volume 45, Number 3, July 2007,
pp. 459-484 (Article)

Published by The Johns Hopkins University Press
DOI: [10.1353/hph.2007.0050](https://doi.org/10.1353/hph.2007.0050)



➔ For additional information about this article

<http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/hph/summary/v045/45.3allais.html>

Kant's Idealism and the Secondary Quality Analogy

LUCY ALLAIS*

That one could, without detracting from the actual existence of outer things, say of a great many of their predicates: they belong not to these things in themselves, but only to their appearances and have no existence of their own outside our representation, is something that was generally accepted and acknowledged long before *Locke's* time, though more commonly thereafter. To these predicates belong warmth, color, taste, etc. That I, however, even beyond these, include (for weighty reasons) also among mere appearances the remaining qualities of bodies, which are called *primarias*: extension, place, and more generally space along with everything that depends on it (impenetrability or materiality, shape, etc.), is something against which not the least ground of uncertainty can be raised; and as little as someone can be called an idealist because he wants to admit colors as properties that attach not to the object in itself, but only to the sense of vision as modifications, just as little can my system be called idealist simply because I find that even more, *namely, all of the properties that make up the intuition of a body* belong merely to its appearance: for the existence of the thing that appears is not thereby nullified, as with real idealism, but it is only shown that through the senses we cannot cognize it at all as it is in itself.¹

I

KANT'S TRANSCENDENTAL IDEALISM DISTINGUISHES between things in themselves (*Dinge an sich*) and things as they appear to us or appearances (*Erscheinungen*), and makes a claim with respect to each side of this distinction. With respect to things as they are in themselves, Kant claims that we can have no cognition (*Erkenntnis*). Things as they appear to us, Kant argues, are mind-dependent, in some sense, and to some extent—they are empirically real and transcendently ideal. This paper is concerned with one part of this position—the mind-dependence of appearances. In the *Prolegomena*, Kant suggests that his idealism² about appearances

¹ Immanuel Kant, *A Prolegomena to any Future Metaphysics that will present itself as a science* [*Proleg.*], ed. and trans. Gary Hatfield (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 4: 289.

² Although, for Kant, it is only the appearances of things which are transcendently ideal and empirically real, he calls his position as a whole—which includes his realism about things as they are in themselves—“transcendental idealism,” so I will simply refer to Kant's idealism about appearances.

* **Lucy Allais** is Senior Lecturer in Philosophy at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

can be understood in terms of an analogy with secondary qualities like color. The aim of this paper is to argue that this analogy is extremely helpful for understanding Kant's idealism, once we have the appropriate account of secondary qualities. Some commentators have rejected this option because they have assumed that the analogy should be read in terms of either a Lockean or a Berkeleian account of qualities such as color, and because they have argued, rightly, that neither account can provide the basis for a coherent interpretation of Kant's position.³ I argue that the account of color that the analogy requires is one within the context of a direct theory of perception, as opposed to Locke's representative account. I show how reading the analogy in terms of an account of color situated within a direct theory of perception allows us to give a sense in which the appearances of things are mind-dependent, which does not involve seeing them as existing in the mind.⁴

Interpretations of Kant have tended to polarize into two extremes: phenomenalist and merely epistemological or methodological interpretations of Kant's idealism about appearances. Both these extremes are problematic, and one of the aims of this paper is to develop the basis of an interpretation that charts a middle course between them. I use 'phenomenalist' to refer to views which see Kantian appearances as some kind of mental entity, or as having no existence apart from subjects being in certain mental states.⁵ This kind of view has been called a "two-world"⁶ interpretation of transcendental idealism, as it tends to see things as they are in themselves and appearances as distinct kinds of entities. However, there are many subtle variations on the two-world theme, and it is a controversial question whether all two-world interpretations of transcendental idealism are committed to phenomenism about appearances, and vice versa. My concern is not to argue that there is no sense at all in which the term 'two worlds' could be appropriately applied to Kant's position, but rather to reject phenomenist interpretations of appearances. There are many objections to such an interpretation, including Kant's

³ See, for example, James Van Cleve, "Putnam, Kant and Secondary Qualities" ["Putnam, Kant"], *Philosophical Papers* 24 (1995): 83–109.

⁴ Understanding Kantian appearances in terms of an analogy with a direct realist account of secondary qualities enables us to avoid the Cartesian framework in which that with which the mind is primarily and immediately in contact is something mental. The rejection of this framework is arguably one of Kant's main aims in the *Critique*, and it is essential for a full account of the public character of Kantian empirical judgments. However, this paper does not attempt to give such an account, so much as to clarify the necessary foundations it requires (I take the lack of convergence in the area to justify moving slowly). For further discussion of Kant's rejection of the Cartesian framework, see Arthur Collins, *Possible Experience* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999); Paul Abela, *Kant's Empirical Realism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); John McDowell, "The Woodbridge Lectures 1997" ["Woodbridge"], *The Journal of Philosophy* 95 (1998), 431–92.

⁵ See, for example, Jonathan Bennett, *Kant's Analytic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966); Paul Guyer, *Kant and the Claims of Knowledge* [*Kant and the Claims*] (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Peter F. Strawson, *The Bounds of Sense* (London: Methuen, 1966); Colin Turbayne, "Kant's Refutation of Dogmatic Idealism" ["Kant's Refutation"], *Philosophical Quarterly* 20 (1955): 225–44; James Van Cleve, *Problems from Kant* [*Problems*] (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999). Characterizing 'phenomenalism' is itself controversial, and I do not claim that my account applies to all possible versions of phenomenism.

⁶ Karl Ameriks, "Recent Work on Kant's Theoretical Philosophy" ["Recent Work"], *American Philosophical Quarterly* 19 (1982): 1–24.

repudiation of it (B70, B274;⁷ *Proleg.*, 293, 374), which I will not discuss here.⁸ I will simply state that I regard the most serious objection as being that phenomenalism about appearances conflicts with Kant's metaphysics of experience—one of the central concerns of the *Critique*.⁹ For example, in the Analogies, Kant claims that empirically real objects exist unperceived, endure or persist through time, are made up of permanently existing stuff, and are in causal relations with each other. These conditions of the possibility of experience are not supposed to be mere ways of organising sense-data or constructing experience; rather, Kant thinks that they are actually true of empirically real objects.¹⁰ However, they could not be true of sense data.¹¹ If Kant were a phenomenalist about appearances, this

⁷ All references to the *Critique* are to Immanuel Kant, *The Critique of Pure Reason*, ed. and trans. Paul Guyer, and Allen Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), and will be given in the text, with 'A' and 'B' referring to the first and second editions respectively, as is standard.

⁸ See Abela, *Kant's Empirical Realism*; Henry Allison, *Kant's Transcendental Idealism* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1983); Graham Bird, *Kant's Theory of Knowledge [Kant's Theory]* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962); Collins, *Possible Experience*; Rae Langton, *Kantian Humility* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); Arthur Melnick, *Kant's Analogies of Experience [Kant's Analogies]* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1973); H. E. Matthews, "Strawson on Transcendental Idealism" ["Strawson"] in *Kant on Pure Reason*, ed. R. C. S. Walker, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982); Robert Pippin, *Kant's Theory of Form* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1982); Gerold Prauss, *Kant und das Problem der Dinge an sich [Kant und das Problem]* (Bonn: Bouvier Verlag Herbert Grundmann, 1974); Gerold Prauss, *Erscheinung bei Kant [Erscheinung]* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1971). See also my "Kant's One World: Interpreting 'Transcendental Idealism,'" *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* 12 (2004): 655–84.

⁹ Ironically, this is clearly seen by two phenomenalist readers of Kantian appearances who are sympathetic to Kant's metaphysics of experience: Guyer (*Kant and the Claims*, pt. IV) and Van Cleve (*Problems from Kant*, chs. 8–9). Both deny that they have a two-world interpretation in one sense: Van Cleve argues that seeing Kant as a phenomenalist does not involve a commitment to two realms of entities, and Guyer denies that Kant postulates a second realm. However, both see Kantian appearances as purely mental—as existing only in subjects' mental states. Van Cleve says that, for Kant, "objects in space and time are logical constructions out of perceivers and their states. That makes Kant a phenomenalist" (*Problems from Kant*, 11). Guyer says that Kant identifies "objects possessing spatial and temporal properties with mere mental entities" (*Kant and the Claims*, 335).

¹⁰ It might be argued that this can be incorporated by versions of phenomenalism which stress that what is required for empirically real objects is *possible* rather than *actual* sense experience. For example, the permanence of substance could be understood in terms of the idea that if there were subjects (who had space and time as their forms of intuition and applied the categories) they would see an object. However, this cannot do justice to Kant's statement of the permanence of substance—that substance persists through time, and its quantum is never increased nor diminished in nature. He says that "we can grant an appearance the name of substance only if we presuppose its existence at all time" (A185/B228). He contrasts the idea of substance, which endures through time, with actual and possible perceptions, which are always changing: "our apprehension of the manifold of appearance is always changing" (A182; see also A183/B227). He argues that there must be something which always exists—"something **lasting** and **persisting**, of which all change and simultaneity are nothing but so many ways (*modi* of time) in which that which persists exists" (A182/B225–26). While phenomenalists can give an account of what we mean when we talk about permanence in terms of possible perceptions, or an account of how we must construct experience out of sense data, Kant is not concerned merely with how we construct experience, but also to argue that there must actually be substance that endures through time and is not created or destroyed.

¹¹ This is argued by Van Cleve, who says that the First Analogy is a reasonable argument, but not for an idealist: "logical constructions are precisely modes and not substances—they are adjectival on the entities out of which they are constructions. So, it appears that for Kant, nothing in the world of space and time qualifies as a substance, and there can be no hope of establishing the First Analogy in its intended sphere" (*Problems from Kant*, 120). Similarly, Guyer argues that the Refutation of Idealism is incompatible with transcendental idealism, on his mentalized interpretation of appearances. In the Refutation, Kant rejects an indirect view of perception which he associates with Berkeley and Descartes,

would not be a minor inconsistency, but a glaring one, between two of the most important parts of the *Critique*: transcendental idealism and Kant's account of the conditions of the possibility of experience.

Given the problems with this interpretation, its persistence must be due, at least in part, to the perceived inadequacy of the alternatives. In response to the extreme idealism seen in Kant by phenomenalist views, a family of interpretations have been put forward which barely see Kant as any kind of idealist at all. Epistemological or methodological interpretations of transcendental idealism claim that Kant's distinction is between two ways of considering the same things,¹² or between two perspectives on the same world,¹³ or between the world and perspectives on it.¹⁴ Others simply assimilate Kant's transcendental idealism to his alleged rejection of "the given."¹⁵ These kinds of view have been called "deflationary," as they aim to deontologize Kant's distinction.¹⁶ They often deny that Kant is committed to there actually being something about reality of which we cannot have knowledge,¹⁷ and see his idealism in terms of such claims as that we cannot have knowledge of things apart from the conditions of knowledge. There are many objections to this kind of interpretation, not the least of which is that they tend to *trivialize* Kant's position.¹⁸ Kant repeatedly says that appearances are mere representations (*bloße Vorstellungen*), which have no existence apart from our possible experience of them. Here is a sample passage: "Space itself, however, together with time, and,

and argues that we have immediate experience of external objects. The external objects that Descartes doubts and Berkeley denies are not mental entities, and Kant does not suppose that they are. This makes the Refutation inconsistent with a phenomenalist-type reading of appearances.

¹² Henry Allison, "Transcendental Idealism: A Retrospective" ["Transcendental Idealism"], in *Idealism and Freedom: Essays on Kant's Theoretical and Political Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 3; see also Allison, *Kant's Transcendental Idealism*.

¹³ Hoke Robinson, "Two Perspectives on Kant's Appearances and Things in Themselves" ["Two Perspectives"], *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 32 (1994): 411–41.

¹⁴ Matthews, "Strawson"; see also R. C. S. Walker, *Kant* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978), 125, 135.

¹⁵ Abela, *Kant's Empirical Realism*.

¹⁶ Prauss argues against what he calls "transcendent-metaphysical" interpretations of Kant, but whether his position is a deflationary reading is a complex question which cannot be resolved here. For an introduction to this discussion, see Karl Ameriks, "Current German Epistemology: The Significance of Gerold Prauss," *Inquiry* 25 (1982): 125–38; Ameriks, "Recent Work"; and reviews by R. B. Pippin in *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 12 (1974): 403–05, and 14 (1976): 374–78.

¹⁷ See, for example, Angela Breitenbach, "Langton on Things in Themselves: A Critique of *Kantian Humility*" ["Langton"], *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science* 35 (2004): 137–48. In this paper, I am concerned with interpreting Kantian appearances, and I do not discuss Kant's notion of things in themselves. However, in the latter case, too, it seems to me that what is needed is a middle road between the extremes of seeing Kant as committed to the existence of supersensible, non-spatio-temporal objects distinct from the things of which we have experience (noumena, in the positive sense), and denying that Kant has any real metaphysical commitment to the existence of things in themselves. This seems to me to be a difference between my position and those of Bird, *Kant's Theory of Knowledge*, and Prauss, *Kant und das Problem*.

¹⁸ Some one-world readings trivialize Kant's claim that we cannot have knowledge of things as they are in themselves, and this has been raised as an objection to Allison's view by Van Cleve (*Problems from Kant*, 4, 8), Langton (*Kantian Humility*, 9–10), and Guyer (*Kant and the Claims*). Other one-world views do not leave room for coherent thought about things as they are in themselves. For example, according to Melnick (*Kant's Analogies*, 152), the notion of a thing in itself is the notion of an object quite literally incomprehensible to us. For other objections to Allison's two-aspect view, see Robinson, "Two Perspectives," 422, Van Cleve, *Problems from Kant*, ch. 8, and Guyer, *Kant and the Claims*, 338.

with both, all appearances, are **not things**, but rather nothing but representations, and they cannot exist at all outside our mind."¹⁹ Phenomenalist readings survive because the dominant alternatives fail to give a strong enough sense in which appearances are mind-dependent. If the only way in which appearances could be mind-dependent were by existing in the mind—as mental entities, or in virtue of the existence of certain kinds of mental states—then only the phenomenalist reading would be compatible with what Kant says about the mind-dependence of appearances.²⁰ In order to dismiss this interpretation, we need to provide a coherent alternative view which allows a genuine sense in which appearances are mind-dependent.

Kantian appearances depend on us, but at the same time, they constitute the objective, external world: they are empirically real and transcendently ideal. Commentators tend to find room to do justice to only one of these aspects of Kant's position. Those who stress the transcendental ideality in Kant's position tend to see Kantian appearances phenomenally (such as Van Cleve²¹), while those who stress the empirical reality tend not to find any idealism at all (such as Abela²²). Kant's position must include both. We need an account of appearance which allows the appearances of things to be real, non-illusory, public constituents of an objective world, but which also allows a way in which they are mind-dependent, and can be contrasted with the way things are in themselves. They must be mind-dependent without existing in the mind, or merely in virtue of mental states or activities. I argue that the way to develop such a position is in terms of the analogy with secondary qualities suggested by Kant in the *Prolegomena*, in the passage quoted at the beginning of this paper.²³ Since the notion of secondary qualities is so controversial—and Kant himself is unclear about how he sees them—the analogy is not straightforward. Recent commentators, such as Putnam and Collins,²⁴ have taken up Kant's suggestion, while others, such as Van Cleve, have argued that no version of the secondary quality analogy makes sense of Kant's idealism.²⁵ Van Cleve argues this convincingly for a Lockean account of secondary qualities,

¹⁹ A492/B520. See also B45, A42/B59, A46/B63, A98, A101–04, A127, A197/B242, A249, A383, A490–91/B518–19, A494/B522, A505–06/B533–34, A514–15/B542–43. Epistemic interpreters such as Allison may agree that there is a sense in which appearances are mind-dependent, and argue that their view captures this. They could say that part of the point of talking of two aspects is that considering objects from a certain standpoint makes objects so considered dependent on this standpoint. However, this is not obviously true. We can consider the earth from the standpoint of geology, or from the standpoint of cosmology, without its being the case that the earth is dependent on either standpoint, or on us so considering it. Talk of two ways of considering objects can only be the beginning of a one-world interpretation of transcendental idealism.

²⁰ This is Van Cleve's argument: "How is it possible for objects to owe any of their traits to our manner of cognizing them? The answer I find most satisfactory is this: the objects in question owe their very *existence* to being cognized by us. An object can depend on us for its *Sosein* (its being the way it is) only if it depends on us for its *Sein* (its being, period)" (*Problems from Kant*, 5).

²¹ Van Cleve, *Problems from Kant*.

²² Abela, *Kant's Empirical Realism*.

²³ *Proleg.*, 289.

²⁴ Hillary Putnam, *Reason, Truth and History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 59; Collins, *Possible Experience*, 11–12. Collins does not present his account in this way, since he thinks a secondary quality analysis of color is committed to mentalizing color—something he accuses Putnam of doing. However, he does compare Kantian appearances to a subjectivist account of color.

²⁵ Van Cleve, "Putnam, Kant."

situated within an indirect or representative theory of perception. My aim in this paper is to argue that the secondary quality analogy does explain Kant's position, once we have the right account of secondary qualities, and that this must be situated within a *direct* or *non-representative* theory of perception. For the purposes of this discussion, I will focus entirely on color: the view of color we need is that it is a property of *objects*—and not of mental entities, mental states, or ways of mentally being—but that it is a *mind-dependent* property of objects. It is mind-dependent in the sense that the existence (or possibility) of minds is *necessary* for the existence (or possibility) of the property, but is not *sufficient* for it: it is a partially subjective and partially objective relational property of *the object*. I will call this position “subjectivism about color.”

Other commentators have read Kant in a similar way to that which I am defending, most notably, Dryer, Paton, and Collins.²⁶ I see my argument here as a part of a common project with theirs, but there are some differences between our positions. The biggest difference is with Dryer,²⁷ who sometimes implies that there is no idealism, or no mind-dependence, in Kant's position at all.²⁸ My reading is closest to those of Paton and Collins,²⁹ both of whom read Kantian appearances as instances of the sensory appearing of the qualities of things to perceivers, rather than as mental items of any sort.³⁰ However, these writers do not give the detailed account of properties like color that is required to defend the analogy, and to show that having knowledge only of properties that are in some sense secondary could

²⁶ D. P. Dryer, *Kant's Solution for Verification in Metaphysics* [*Kant's Solution*] (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1966); H. J. Paton, *Kant's Metaphysics of Experience* [*Kant's Metaphysics*] (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1951); Collins, *Possible Experience*. See also S. F. Barker, “Appearing and Appearances in Kant” [“Appearing and Appearances”], in *Kant Studies Today*, ed. L.W. Beck, (La Salle, IL: Open Court, 1969). Following R. M. Chisholm (“The Theory of Appearing” [“Theory of Appearing”], in *Philosophical Analysis*, ed. Max Black [Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1950]), Barker distinguishes between what he calls the language of appearing, and the language of appearances, or a sense-datum language. In his terms, I am arguing for reading Kant in terms of the language of appearing. Barker argues that Kant alternates between the two usages and decisively embraced neither. If true, this would have serious implications for understanding Kant's metaphysics, as it would mean that we could not conclusively either establish or repudiate a sense-data interpretation of Kantian appearances, and we would have to agree that no single interpretation of transcendental idealism is possible.

²⁷ Dryer, *Kant's Solution*, 500; see also 84–85, 506.

²⁸ For example, he claims that when Kant says that conditions of the possibility of experience are conditions of the possibility of objects of experience, he means “that conditions under which it is possible to secure empirical knowledge are also conditions under which it is possible for what exist to become objects of empirical knowledge” (Dryer, *Kant's Solution*, 506). This is acceptable to a straightforward realist.

²⁹ I argue that there is a point to calling Kant's position idealist, and this might be thought to be a difference between my position and that of Collins, as one of his aims is to deny that Kant is an idealist (he prefers to speak of Kant's subjectivism). I take this difference to be superficial, as he uses the term ‘idealist’ only to denote views which think that objects are mental entities, whereas my usage is broader, including any view which thinks that there is a sense in which objects or properties are mind-dependent. My aim is not to present a view which is fundamentally different from that of Collins, but rather to defend a similar view by spelling out the version of the secondary quality analogy we need to read Kant's transcendental idealism in terms of the theory of appearing, rather than that of sense-data.

³⁰ This reading of Paton is disputed. Collins (*Possible Experience*, 162) attributes to him a phenomenalist reading of appearances, as does Bird (*Kant's Theory of Knowledge*, 1). Barker (“Appearing and Appearances,” 282) argues that Paton (*Kant's Metaphysics*, 442) is not consistent in using the language of appearing, as he sometimes calls appearances “ideas.”

be sufficient for knowledge of an objective world. The secondary quality analogy has either been appealed to in very general terms and without adequate defence (as, for example, by Paton³¹) or dismissed, through being read in terms of Locke's representative realism (as, for example, by Van Cleve³²). To defend it requires a careful discussion of the account of secondary qualities required, which, in turn, must be situated within a *direct* theory of perception.³³ It is no accident that interpretations of transcendental idealism have gone down many of the same roads as have philosophical accounts of perception.³⁴ However, we will never understand transcendental idealism so long as we try to read Kantian appearances in terms of any view, such as Locke's representative realism, which characterizes perception merely in terms of inner states with appropriate external causes. Putnam says that "the false belief that perception must be so analysed is at the root of all the problems with the view of perception that, in one form or another, has dominated Western philosophy since the seventeenth century."³⁵ I suggest that it is also at the core of problems in interpreting Kant.

2

There are two initial problems with the secondary quality analogy. The first problem is that it is not clear to what account of secondary qualities it appeals,

³¹ Paton, *Kant's Metaphysics*, 442.

³² Van Cleve, "Putnam, Kant."

³³ Some philosophers might object to use of the term 'direct realism' to refer to a position in which some of the properties perceived are mind-dependent in any sense; this is an area in which terminology is notoriously tricky, but my usage will allow this possibility. See J. Austin, *Sense and Sensibilia* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962).

³⁴ The phenomenalist interpretation of transcendental idealism sees appearances as having the same ontological status as that which representational mental entities or states are thought to have in an indirect theory of perception. Kantian appearances have been read adverbially, by Aquila, Cummins, and Pereboom, and in terms of intentional objects, by Baldner. See Richard Aquila, *Representational Mind: A Study of Kant's Theory of Knowledge [Representational Mind]* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1983); Robert Cummins, "Substance, Matter and Kant's First Analogy," *Kant-Studien*, 70 (1979): 149–61; Derek Pereboom, "Kant on Intentionality," *Synthese*, 77 (1988): 321–52; Kent Baldner, "Is Transcendental Idealism Coherent?" *Synthese* 85 (1990): 1–23; and Kent Baldner, "Causality and Things in Themselves," *Synthese* 77 (1988), 353–73. Whether intentional object interpretations are phenomenalist is a tricky question, not least because of the difficulties surrounding the notion of intentional objects, and the fact that there is no agreed or standard intentional account of perception. Aquila (*Representational Mind*, 89–90) says that "to exist as an appearance is to exist in what I shall call a 'phenomenalistic' sense; it is to exist, in a certain sense, merely 'intentionally,'" which certainly suggests a phenomenalist interpretation. On the other hand, for R. M. Adams (*Leibniz: Determinist, Theist, Idealist* [New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994], 219–20), intentional objects are not intentionally inexistent objects of thought, but rather "what appears to us." But in this case, it is not clear that the appeal to intentional objects explains the idealism in Kant's position, as intentional objects, in this sense, can feature in a straightforward realist understanding of perception. As these two views illustrate, given standard intentional theories of perception, there are two ways in which a comparison between Kantian appearances and intentional objects could go. On the one hand, appearances could be compared with the *merely* intentional objects, or representational mental states, involved in hallucinatory perceptual events. In this case, appearances are once again compared with something which is characterized entirely mentally, which will result in a (sophisticated) phenomenalist reading of transcendental idealism. On the other hand, appearances could be understood in terms of the actual objects which are present in normal veridical perception. But now it seems that the comparison with intentional objects fails to capture any sense in which Kant's position is idealist.

³⁵ Hillary Putnam, "The Dewey Lectures: Sense, Nonsense and the Senses: An Inquiry into the Powers of the Human Mind" ["Sense, Nonsense"], *The Journal of Philosophy* 91 (1994), 454.

and the second is that, in the *Critique*, Kant *denies* that the mind-dependence of appearances can be illustrated by analogy with properties such as color and taste (B45). As the whole aim of this paper is to address the former of these questions, I will first briefly say something about the latter.

In the *Critique*, Kant says he wants to prevent us

from thinking of illustrating the asserted ideality of space with completely inadequate examples, since things like colors, taste, etc., are correctly considered not as qualities of things but as mere alterations of our subject, which can even be different in different people. (B45)³⁶

Kant's denial of the secondary quality analogy here might be thought to show it to be a non-starter, since the *Critique* must take precedence over the *Prolegomena* in any interpretative controversies, as the latter was written to popularize the former. However, a preliminary way of resolving this apparent contradiction between the two texts is to say that Kant does not present the same account of secondary qualities in the *Prolegomena* and the B45 passage.³⁷ It is only on one understanding of secondary qualities—one which sees them to be merely states of the subject, in no way belonging to the object—that Kant denies that his idealism can be illustrated by comparison with such qualities. He has not forbidden the comparison using other understandings of secondary qualities, and in fact suggests this, in the passage quoted above. This means that using the analogy suggested in the *Prolegomena* is not ruled out, so long as we can find an appropriate account of secondary qualities. Clearly, this cannot be the account of such qualities given at B45, and this rules out an account situated within an indirect realist theory of perception which sees color as belonging to an idea, or something mental.

Van Cleve argues that on either a Lockean or a Berkeleian understanding of properties like color, the analogy will not help us to give a non-phenomenalist account of Kant's idealism.³⁸ As Van Cleve sees it, for Locke, "a secondary quality is something quite definitely in the object, namely a power,"³⁹ whereas for Berkeley, "a secondary quality is a quality that exists only in the mind."⁴⁰ To read the

³⁶ Controversially, in a footnote at B70, he seems to imply a different view of color, saying that "the predicates of appearance can be attributed to the object in itself, in relation to our sense, e.g., the red color or fragrance to the rose." It may be that these two quotations are not in conflict, given Kant's use of 'can'; working out Kant's settled view of secondary qualities is not part of the aim of this paper.

³⁷ I call this preliminary since my aim is not to give an account of Kant's view of secondary qualities, nor to adjudicate between, or try to reconcile, the *Critique* and the *Prolegomena* on this issue. Even if Kant's settled view of secondary qualities is that presented at B45, we could still use the arguably different account presented in the *Prolegomena* passage to read the analogy.

³⁸ Van Cleve's argument is largely directed at Putnam. He claims that Putnam sometimes wishes to attribute Locke's view to Kant, sometimes Berkeley's, and he argues that on either a Lockean or a Berkeleian understanding of qualities like color, the analogy will not help us to understand Kant's idealism. A problem with Van Cleve's reading of Putnam is that he takes to the letter Putnam's suggestion that Kant should be read as saying that *all* properties are secondary. Whether or not this was Putnam's intention—he could give this impression, since his version of Kant ignores things in themselves—this is obviously not Kant's view, as Kant does not think that *all* properties are transcendentally ideal: things as they are in themselves are entirely mind-independent, and it is the ideality of *appearances* that is supposed to be illustrated by the secondary quality analogy. The idea is that the appearances of things are to be compared to properties like color.

³⁹ Van Cleve "Putnam, Kant," 84.

⁴⁰ Van Cleve, "Putnam, Kant," 84. Of course, for Berkeley, this does not make such properties *secondary*, as all properties of physical objects are like this; he denies a primary/secondary distinction.

secondary quality analogy in terms of a Berkeleian understanding of properties like color would lead to a two-world, phenomenalist, interpretation, and would also involve using the version of the secondary quality analogy that Kant expressly disallows at B45. However there are also problems with seeing Kantian appearances in terms of Locke's view, as Van Cleve presents the latter. According to Van Cleve's Locke, secondary qualities are "in truth" dispositions of objects, and Locke's "subjectivism about colors, tastes, and the like is expressed not by saying that secondary qualities exist only in the mind, but by saying that our ideas of colors and tastes (which do exist only in the mind) do not resemble anything in the objects that causes them."⁴¹ Assuming Van Cleve's reading of Locke,⁴² to run the secondary quality analogy for Kantian appearances, we have a choice: we can identify the appearances either with the mind-independent dispositions (the true secondary quality), or with the ideas in the subject which fail to resemble their causes in the objects themselves. If we take the second option, then the claim is that the appearances of things are like our *ideas* of color—ideas in the mind that fail to resemble their causes—and this just collapses into the Berkeleian interpretation of Kant's idealism. The alternative is to identify the appearances of things with what the secondary qualities "in truth" are—causal powers of objects—but now our picture is in danger of losing any kind of idealism.⁴³ This position would be similar to Langton's,⁴⁴ as she sees Kantian phenomena as the extrinsic causal properties of things, as opposed to what she sees as their intrinsic, causally inert properties—her characterization of the way things are in themselves. While I am sympathetic, in part, to Langton's account of Kant's humility, her position cannot give a complete account of transcendental idealism, as it does not include any mind-dependence at all, as has been pointed out by a number of critics.⁴⁵ If our analogy is between Kantian appearances and Locke's causes of our ideas, we are failing to compare appearances with the very part of Locke's picture that involves mind-dependence—surely the point of the secondary quality analogy. If, on the other hand, we compare appearances with the aspect of Locke's position that expresses his subjectivism, the position reduces to the Berkeleian version. Van Cleve concludes that the secondary quality analogy looks hopeless; I agree that if Locke and Berkeley's accounts of color are the only alternatives, the analogy will not help us understand Kant's idealism.

⁴¹ Van Cleve, "Putnam, Kant," 84.

⁴² For an alternative view of Locke, see J. W. Yolton, *Realism and Appearances* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

⁴³ This will depend on whether powers are thought to require the existence of what they are powers to produce. For objections to understanding Kantian appearances as powers, see Van Cleve, "Putnam, Kant."

⁴⁴ Langton, *Kantian Humility*.

⁴⁵ See G. Bird, "Review of *Kantian Humility*," *Philosophical Quarterly* 50 (2000): 105–08; D. Carr, "Review of *Kantian Humility*," *International Philosophical Quarterly* 40 (2000): 109–10; M. Esfeld, "Review of *Kantian Humility*," *Erkenntnis* 54 (2001): 299–303; L. Falkenstein, "Langton on Things in Themselves," *Kantian Review* 5 (2000): 49–64; A. Moore, "Review of *Kantian Humility*," *Philosophical Review* 110 (2001): 117–20; T. Rosefeldt, "Review of *Kantian Humility*," *European Journal of Philosophy* 9 (2001): 263–69. See also my "Intrinsic Natures: A Critique of Langton on Kant," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, forthcoming.

Unlike Van Cleve, I think that the secondary quality analogy is, in fact, an extremely useful starting point in understanding Kant's idealism, but we need a different account of qualities like color from that given by either Locke or Berkeley.⁴⁶ We need a view of secondary qualities which does not make them into ideas in the mind, and which allows that in perceiving them we are directly apprehending objects, but which does allow them to be mind-dependent, in some sense. This in turn requires an account of perception that does not involve mental intermediaries, while still allowing that some sensible properties of things are mind-dependent. The philosophical understanding of color and of perception are large and controversial subjects, and it is not my intention to defend in detail an account of either. I will simply sketch a possible view, which can be used to present Kant's position.

3 · I

In this section I sketch the account of perception within which we must situate the account of color we need to use the secondary quality analogy. My aim at this point is not to present *Kant's* account of perception, as the view I present is straightforwardly realist, and I do not discuss such issues as the role of concepts and judgment in the representation of objects.⁴⁷ I will call the view of perception we want a "relational" view.⁴⁸ The term 'relational' marks out the fact that "the object perceived is a constituent of the conscious experience itself."⁴⁹ This contrasts with representational views, and 'representational' here includes not just accounts that posit representational mental entities like sense-data, but also those which appeal to representational mental states, such as intentional theories of perception. What sense-data and intentional theories of perception have in common is the idea that the representational mental states involved in perception do not require the actual presence of the physical object perceived. In contrast, a relational view denies that perception decomposes into psychological states that are not themselves "perceptual" (to use a clumsy term), and other, external factors.⁵⁰ Rather, perception involves psychological states that are, themselves, intrinsically perceptual: the state would not be the psychological state that it is were it not perceptual of the particular item involved. Another way to express this idea is to say that perception is *directly presentational* in the following sense. First, perception subjectively presents as if the qualitative aspects of perceptual experience are aspects of the object perceived, and not aspects of the subject's mind which are ontologically separate from the object.⁵¹ According to the relational view,

⁴⁶ The dogmatic idealism of Berkeley and the problematic idealism of Descartes, according to Kant, have in common the view that experience is immediately of what is inner or mental, and this is something Kant explicitly aims to refute. See especially B274–79, A367–80. See also Collins, *Possible Experience*; Abela, *Kant's Empirical Realism*; and McDowell, "Woodbridge."

⁴⁷ See Abela, *Kant's Empirical Realism*; John McDowell, "Précis of *Mind and World*," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 58 (1998): 365–68.

⁴⁸ Following John Campbell, *Reference and Consciousness* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

⁴⁹ Campbell *Reference and Consciousness*, 117.

⁵⁰ John Foster, *The Nature of Perception [Nature of Perception]* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

⁵¹ Foster, *Nature of Perception*, 50

not only does perception subjectively present as being directly presentational in this way, this subjective appearance is correct. Second, perception does not seem to involve symbols, images, or other relations: it seems to make items available for demonstrative identification and cognitive scrutiny in a non-mediated way.⁵² The relational view claims that perception is as it subjectively presents in these respects: it makes objects available for demonstrative identification and cognitive scrutiny in a non-mediated way, and the qualitative aspects of perceptual experience *are* aspects of the objects perceived, and not properties of mental states. The view could be called “disjunctivist” in the sense that it denies there is a common mental representational state in an event of perceiving an object and an event of hallucinating an object, because unlike an hallucination, an event of perceiving an object intrinsically involves the actual presence of the object.⁵³ The psychological state could not be intrinsically perceptual if the same psychological state could occur in the absence of perceiving anything; all the relational view admits is that a *subjectively indistinguishable* state could occur in the absence of perceiving anything. Perception is intrinsically object-involving. Kantian appearances have been illustrated by analogy with many accounts of perception; while adverbial⁵⁴ and intentional object theories result in a more subtle and sophisticated account of appearances than simple sense-data views, they have in common with these the idea that we can analyze perception in terms of something entirely inner or mental, and an external cause. For our purposes, if such an account were used to present Kant's idealism about appearances, it would once again reduce to a phenomenalist idealism, which would mentalize appearances without seeing them as mental *objects*.⁵⁵

While a relational view of perception denies a common perceptual mental state between perception and hallucination, it is less clear that the same move can be made for non-veridical perception, or at least for all cases of non-veridical perception. As I will understand it, non-veridical perception involves something that is actually perceived (unlike hallucination, where what is apparently perceived is not actually present), but with respect to which the way in which it is perceived

⁵² See also Paul Snowdon (“How to Interpret ‘Direct Perception’” [“How to Interpret”], in *The Contents of Perception*, ed. T. Crane [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992]), who says that what we directly perceive is what we can demonstratively pick out. As McDowell says, “there are no images (two-dimensional arrays) in the phenomenology of vision: it is the relevant tract of the environment that is present to consciousness, not an image of it” (John McDowell, “The Content of Perceptual Experience,” in *Mind, Value & Reality* [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998], 342).

⁵³ See Foster, *Nature of Perception*; and William Child, *Causality, Interpretation and the Mind* [*Causality*] (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), ch. 5.

⁵⁴ The idea is that the role of the grammatical object of experience is not to indicate an actual mental object, but simply to characterize the kind of experience being attributed to the subject. For all its subtlety, there is something important this view has in common with a “cruder” sense-data account of perception: they both characterize perception in terms of what is happening inside the subject's mind, and an appropriate causal relation to an external object, because “the kind of experience” attributed to the subject is characterizable entirely subjectively. See Howard Robinson, *Perception* (London: Routledge, 1994).

⁵⁵ See Putnam, “Sense, Nonsense,” 453–54. If adverbial and intentional object accounts of perception do away with mental objects while still keeping perception firmly in the mind, the same is arguably true of the related adverbial and intentional interpretations of Kant's idealism, such as that of Van Cleve in *Problems from Kant*.

varies to some extent from the way the object actually is.⁵⁶ The reality of this phenomenon may be disputed, but it is widely accepted; it is commonly thought that sometimes we perceive things as being different from the way they “really are”: mountains that appear purple and hazy in the distance, sticks that appear bent in water, lines of the same length that appear to have different lengths, etc. A common and traditional argument for representative accounts of perception is based on claiming that perception cannot be directly presentational when it is inaccurate or non-veridical.⁵⁷ The objector argues that “in some cases of perception there is something of which the subject is aware which possesses sensible qualities which the physical object the subject is purportedly perceiving does not possess,”⁵⁸ and therefore that it is not the physical object that is immediately perceived. For example, the stick that is perceived as being bent in water is not bent; since something is perceived as bent, the something that is perceived cannot be the stick. The objector tries to force a non-identity between what is sensibly perceived and the mind-independent object.

My concern here is not to argue for a particular view of perception, but simply to describe the view we need in order to make use of the secondary quality analogy. What we need is the possibility of a view that allows the disjunctivist-type move for *hallucination*, but *not* for non-veridical perception.⁵⁹ What makes this plausible, at least in some cases of non-veridical perception, is the continuity between veridical and non-veridical perception: non-veridical perception is sometimes a matter of degree. For example, it is not plausible that the direct objects of awareness are mental when short-sighted subjects have their glasses off, but become external physical objects when such subjects put their glasses on, except for those things which were close enough to be in focus in both cases, which were directly presentational all along. While the disjunctivist can deny a common perceptual element between an event of perceiving an elephant and an hallucination of an elephant, it is harder to deny a common element between perceiving an elephant in focus, and perceiving an elephant short-sightedly. The disjunctivist thinks that an hallucination of an elephant can be characterised entirely mentally, but that this is not the case with seeing an elephant, which essentially involves the presence of the actual elephant perceived. But where seeing an elephant in focus is contrasted

⁵⁶ A further distinction could be drawn between intersubjective, non-veridical perception—as when we all perceive the stick as bent in water and the mountain as being purple and hazy—and group-specific and/or subject-specific non-veridical perception—such as a jaundiced subject seeing things as being more yellow than they are, or a short-sighted subject seeing things as blurry.

⁵⁷ See Foster, *Nature of Perception*; Robinson, *Perception*; J. Valberg, “The Puzzle of Experience,” in *The Contents of Experience*, ed. T. Crane (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

⁵⁸ Robinson, *Perception*, 57.

⁵⁹ Disjunctivist accounts are usually introduced in terms of hallucination, and not non-veridical perception as this is what the account is best suited to deal with. Snowdon (“Perception, Vision, and Causation,” in *Perceptual Knowledge*, ed. J. Dancy, [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988], 203) introduces the position as follows: “the disjunctive picture divides what makes look-ascriptions true into two classes. In cases where there is no sighting they are made true by a state of affairs intrinsically independent of surrounding objects; but in cases of sightings the truth-conferring state of affairs involves the surrounding object.” Child (*Causality*, 299–320) also introduces disjunctivism as denying that vision and hallucination have a common ingredient. However, McDowell “Criteria, Defeasibility and Knowledge,” in *Perceptual Knowledge*, ed. J. Dancy, [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988], 211–14) applies his disjunctivist view to both hallucination and non-veridical perception.

with seeing one out of focus, it seems that either both essentially involve the elephant or neither do.⁶⁰

Campbell suggests an analogy to illustrate the relational view of perception: think of viewing something through a pane of glass. For a representationalist, perception will involve images on the glass that represent the things beyond it, but for a relational view, we see straight through the glass, to the objects themselves. Just as scientific accounts of optics have played a role in the past in suggesting indirect accounts of perception,⁶¹ so too knowledge of cognitive processing may be taken as supporting a representationalist view.⁶² Campbell argues that knowledge of cognitive processing seems to threaten the idea that perception can be analogously like seeing through a pane of glass, because it tells us that, unlike a passive pane of glass, the brain is actively involved in constructing a representation of the world. In response, he suggests the following development of the analogy:

Suppose we have a medium which, like glass, can be transparent. But suppose that, unlike glass, it is highly volatile, and needs constant adjustment and recalibration if it is to remain transparent in different contexts. Suppose, in fact, that the adjustment required is always sensitive to the finest details of the scene being viewed. The upshot of the adjustment, in each case, is still not the construction of a representation on the medium of the scene being viewed; the upshot of the adjustment is simply that the medium becomes transparent. You might think of visual processing as a bit like that. It is not that the brain is constructing a conscious inner representation whose intrinsic character is independent of the environment. It is, rather, that there is a kind of complex adjustment that the brain has to undergo, in each context, in order that you can be visually related to the things you see around you; so that you can see them, in other words.⁶³

Let us extend this analogy in the following way: imagine that a malfunction in the adjustment mechanism causes the medium to fail to be completely transparent, but instead, distorts the shapes of things to some extent—as, for example, a fishbowl lens might. Just as when the medium is transparent, it is not the case that the distorted things are seen through seeing an image on the glass; it is the things that are directly seen. And if seeing things transparently essentially involves the presence of the objects, then this is also the case when their shapes are seen in a distorted way. Although things are seen directly, and although perception essentially involves the objects, the things are seen as being, to some extent, different from the way they are, apart from their being seen. According to the view of perception we want, seeing objects is not a matter of being in a representational state which could occur whether the objects are present or not, and is therefore intrinsically

⁶⁰ It could be argued that we can be disjunctivists not just about the objects of perception, but also about the properties objects are perceived to have. It is not clear that this move will help when it is the same feature of the object—its edge—that is perceived as blurry when seen without glasses and crisp when seen with glasses.

⁶¹ See J. Yolton, *Perceptual Acquaintance from Descartes to Reid* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press 1984). This view is still suggested by textbooks on vision which say things such as that what we actually see is an upside down image on the retina.

⁶² As Campbell says, since cognitive processing is a common factor in perception and hallucination, it is often assumed that it is the very same contents that are cognitively processed as figure in the contents of consciousness.

⁶³ Campbell, *Reference and Consciousness*, 119.

different from hallucinating.⁶⁴ But, although seeing an object is relational in the sense that the object is essentially present to consciousness, it does not follow from this that seeing an object is necessarily transparent, in the sense that the way the object is seen as being is the way it is apart from its being seen. If a relational view of perception allows non-veridical perception, then this is a possibility.

If the relational view admits non-veridical perception without (always) giving a disjunctivist analysis of it, it must locate the bent appearance of the stick in water in the stick, not in a mental entity or mental state or activity. A common strategy is simply to point out that it is not true that “X appears F” implies that X, or anything else, is F.⁶⁵ For example, there is no reason to accept the claim that, when the stick appears bent in water, there is anything that is bent; there is simply something that appears bent. While the stick does not have the property of *being* bent, it does have the property of *appearing* bent—the apparent bent-ness of the stick is a property of the stick, and not of a mental state or mental activity. There is nothing contradictory about being straight and appearing bent; there is no reason why one and the same object cannot have these two properties. This means that it is not the case that there is something of which the subject is aware which possesses sensible qualities that the physical object does not possess: the subject is aware of the physical stick, and the physical stick possesses the (sensible) property of appearing bent.

Perception involves things appearing a certain way to us: perception has a presentational character which presents or represents things in a certain way, and, according to the above argument, this may differ to some extent from the way objects are in themselves. Here ‘the way the object is in itself’ refers to the way the object is apart from its being perceived by subjects. ‘In itself’ could also be used in opposition to the extrinsic properties of objects, but here it is used simply in contrast to the perceptual mode of presentation of the object (allowing, at this stage, that it may be that perceptual experience usually presents objects to us as they are in themselves). Of course, indirect realists may also say that perception involves things appearing a certain way to us; the crucial point is how this is analysed. For the indirect realist, the appearing a certain way is understood in terms of mental states (characterizable subjectively) that are causally related to the object perceived, so the appearance properties are in the mind and are not public properties of objects. For the relational view, the appearing is something public, a property of the physical object, but appearing bent is different from being bent, because appearing is essentially relational: appearing is always for a subject.⁶⁶ ‘Appearing’ refers to the mode of presentation of an object to a subject, and thus essentially involves *both* the object and the possibility of conscious minds.

In allowing that perception involves things appearing a certain way to us, we are still far from Kant’s position: direct realists usually think that although occasionally things appear to us as being different from the way they are, usually the way they appear transparently reveals the way they are. I have introduced the possibility of

⁶⁴ Against intentional accounts, the objects perceived must be present; against sense data accounts, it is external, physical objects that are perceived.

⁶⁵ Snowdon, “How to Interpret,” 73.

⁶⁶ Chisholm “Theory of Appearing,” 110.

distinguishing between an object as it is in itself and an object as it appears, but it does not follow merely from drawing this distinction that the way an object appears could never allow the subject to apprehend it as it is in itself. Simply saying that perception involves things appearing to us in certain ways by no means rules out the possibility that they usually appear to us as they are in themselves.⁶⁷ The point of the discussion so far has been to show that understanding non-veridical perception in terms of direct realism enables us to make sense of the *possibility* of an objects' appearing in a way that is different to the way it is in itself, at least in some respects and to some extent, without mentalizing the appearance.

The bent appearance of the stick is different from Kant's notion of appearing, precisely because it is non-veridical (it is not empirically real, for Kant). Kantian appearances are not supposed to be an illusion or a mere seeming, but in the case of the stick in water it is possible to get a corrected perception of the stick's shape, by feeling it, or taking it out of the water. However, there are three features of the bent appearance of the stick that are useful for our purposes. First, as we have seen, the bent appearance is perfectly public: we can all observe it in the world. Second, there is a perfectly comprehensible use of the term 'representation' in this context, which does not involve seeing the bent appearance as a mental entity: since the bent appearance of the stick is different from the way the stick is in itself, we could say that perceptual experience *represents* the stick as being bent. Kant's use of the term 'representation' (*Vorstellung*) is used by Barker and Van Cleve⁶⁸ to argue for a sense-data interpretation of appearances, but we can now see that this does not necessarily follow. Perception involves things being presented, or represented, to subjects in certain ways, and the term 'representation' could be used to mark the fact that appearances are always appearances *for* subjects—that appearing is essentially relational—rather than to refer to mental intermediaries. Perception essentially involves *objects*, and it essentially involves *consciousness*. This brings us to the third point: despite being public and belonging to the physical stick, the bent appearance of the stick is *mind-dependent*. Not only is the stick not bent in itself, its bent appearance exists only for minds like ours, and we can see why someone might want to say that if we were to cease to exist, so would the bent appearance.⁶⁹ There is a sense in which the appearance exists independently of us, and a sense in which it does not; it is partly mind-dependent and partly mind-independent. The bent appearance of the stick is not a mental object or activity, or merely a property of something mental, and it does not exist in the minds of individual subjects. However, neither does it exist in the object as it is in itself,

⁶⁷ Further, even if it were established that all properties as they are presented in perceptual or sense-experience do not transparently reveal the way things mind-independently are, it would not follow from this alone that we could not have knowledge of things that abstracts from the particularities of our senses and conceptualizes the world as it is apart from us.

⁶⁸ Barker, "Appearing and Appearances," 275–80; Van Cleve, *Problems from Kant*, 123.

⁶⁹ On the one hand, as Chisholm says, "nothing can appear in *any* way unless observers are present" ("Theory of Appearing," 110); but on the other hand, as McDowell says, "an object's being such as to look red is independent of its actually looking red to anyone on any particular occasion" ("Values and Secondary Qualities" ["Values"], in *Mind, Value & Reality* [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998], 134).

apart from the way it appears to subjects like us. It is mind-dependent, without existing in the mind. It exists in our possible experience of it.⁷⁰

3 · 2

We are now in a position to give the account of color needed to use the secondary quality analogy to explain Kant's idealism about appearances. I will call this account "subjectivism about color." Before discussing the account, I note that any analogy has limitations, and one of the limitations of the secondary quality analogy is that it may well be that we all perceive color at least slightly differently; crucially, for the purposes of the analogy it is presumed that this is *not* the case, although I return to this possibility below. According to the version of the relational view of perception presented above, some of the ways in which things appear to us in perception are public (unlike mental states), are revealed in perception, but are mind-dependent, and do not reveal the mind-independent nature of the things of which they are appearances. The idea is that at least part of the way things appear might not reveal part of the way they mind-independently are, and color is an example of a property with respect to which this has often been thought to be the case. Our first step is to say that seeing an object as it appears is not seeing something mental, but can be seeing something as being (at least partly) different from the way it is apart from its appearing to us. Our next step is to see that there may be properties that belong only to objects as they appear. Another way of putting this point is to say that there may be ways of appearing which do not transparently reveal the mind-independent natures of the objects that appear—the way things are independently of their being perceived. Such ways in which objects appear, or modes of presentation of objects, cannot be thought of as *misrepresenting* a property of the object in itself, because in these cases the mode of presentation does not give a distorted presentation of a property the object has in itself, but rather presents a property which the object does not have apart from its perceptually appearing to us. Many philosophers have thought that there are reasons for thinking that color is only a property of things as they appear, and is not a property they have in themselves, apart from their visually appearing to us. (My concern at the moment is not with reasons for making this move.) Of course, the idea that color is not a property that things have in themselves has been associated with views of perception other than direct realism (such as Locke's representative realism), but our concern is with how a direct realist of the sort presented above could treat color. A representative, or indirect, realist might say that since color is not a property things have in themselves, it is only a property of something in the mind, and is spontaneously projected so as to be experienced *as if* it is a property of objects. In contrast, for my relational view, color is a property of objects, and not a property of mental intermediaries or mental states. However, as we have seen, it is open to the relational view to say that color-experience does not transparently reveal the

⁷⁰ Putting the point in terms of possible perception might make it sound suspiciously phenomenistic. What is crucial is whether possible perceptions are understood in terms of possible inner experiences/mental objects/mental activities, or in terms of possible ways in which external objects could appear to subjects.

mind-independent nature of objects that appear colored, and therefore that color belongs to things only as they appear, and not to things as they are in themselves. Color belongs to objects as they are perceptually presented to us, and does not belong to them apart from their being perceptually presented to us.

The case of color is different from the apparently bent stick in that the non-veridical appearance of the stick represents the stick's shape as being other than it is, and therefore misrepresents it, while it is open to the direct realist to claim that color experience is not a misrepresentation, or non-veridical perception. Rather, color experience does not transparently reveal the nature of its mind-independent ground. It is not non-veridical precisely because it belongs only to the appearances of things; it is only *within* color talk that it makes sense to talk of non-veridical perception of color.⁷¹ The idea is that color can be characterized only in terms of a certain sort of perceptual experience,⁷² and therefore that color is an essentially phenomenal quality of objects.⁷³ It is *essentially* part of the way objects are perceptually presented to subjects like us, and it is not part of the way objects are apart from their being perceptually presented to subjects like us. Like the bent appearance of the stick, it does not exist in individual minds, but its existence requires the possibility of minds like ours. Like the bent stick in water, color exists when we are not looking at it, but it does not exist apart from the possibility of our seeing it. On this account, color is still thought of as a public property of objects,⁷⁴ but it is essentially related to perceivers, and it cannot be adequately conceived except in terms of how it appears to subjects. We cannot understand what color is apart from in terms of sensory experience, even though it is not an idea or property of the mind.

According to this account, while it may be correct to say that an object has a disposition to look red to us, its redness is not a disposition to look a certain way—it is its looking a certain way.⁷⁵ Indirect realists or those who have a merely causal theory of perception appeal to dispositional accounts of secondary qualities because they distinguish between the way an object is in itself, the powers it has as a result of this, and ideas in us that are the outcome of a causal process.⁷⁶ Phenomenal color is attributed to the ideas “in us.” In contrast, for the relational

⁷¹ When we distinguish color-blindness from normal vision, or talk about things seeming to have different colors from the colors they actually have, this is done with reference to the visual experience of normal observers in normal conditions, and not with respect to underlying physics.

⁷² McDowell, “Values,” 133.

⁷³ See McDowell, “Values,” 134–35.

⁷⁴ Experience of such properties can still be thought of as “awareness of properties genuinely possessed by the objects that confront one” (McDowell, “Values,” 134).

⁷⁵ Although an object may be disposed to look a certain way to us, this does not make the way it looks a disposition: squares are disposed to appear square to us, and dogs are disposed to appear doggily to us, but this does not mean that squareness or dogginess are dispositions.

⁷⁶ There are many different possible dispositional accounts of color, and I do not argue here that a dispositional account *has* to be situated within indirect realism about perception, although I think that this is the most natural way of reading them. (See Colin McGinn, *The Subjective View: Secondary Qualities and Indexical Thoughts* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1983] for an argument against this.) Rather, my point is simply that those who understand color in terms of *dispositions or powers to produce ideas or sensations in us*, and who identify visual color with a feature of the sensations, cannot have a direct realist account of color perception.

view, color is a property of objects that is seen.⁷⁷ There *is* a causal process which involves the object in itself and us, but it would be misleading to say that the primary quality causes the secondary quality; rather, the object has a nature in itself which looks a certain way to us.⁷⁸ Unlike the bent appearance of the stick, color is not illusory and does not misrepresent things, but like the bent appearance of the stick in water, color exists only in relation to possible visual experience of it.⁷⁹

4 · I

We are now in a position to use the secondary quality analogy to apply this account of color to Kant's idealism about appearances. After doing so in this section, in section 4.2 I consider some objections to my reading.

Immediately before presenting the analogy, Kant defines idealism in terms of the idea that objects have a merely mental existence. In describing the kind of idealism he wants to refute, he says that "Idealism consists in the claim that there are none other than thinking beings; the other things that we believe we perceive in intuition are only representations in thinking beings" (*Proleg.*, 289). He denies that the things we perceive in intuition are merely mental entities, or merely mental representational states whose existence and nature is independent of the actual presence of the objects perceived. In the *Prolegomena* passage, Kant says that we do not detract from the existence of outer things when we say that "a great many of their predicates . . . belong not to these things in themselves, but only to their appearances and have no existence of their own outside our representation." He gives color as an example of this kind of property. He then claims that the remaining qualities of bodies traditionally thought of as primary—such as extension, place, impenetrability, and shape—are, in fact, like this, and that all the properties of things which are given in intuition belong merely to the appearances of things. All the properties of bodies which are given in intuition—all the properties we experience bodies as having—belong merely to the appearances of objects. The passage, on its own, does not determine which version of second-

⁷⁷ Whether we talk about color as a distinct property from the mind-independent property that appears colored is a tricky question. On the one hand, it seems they must be distinct, since a property that is mind-dependent in the sense that it is essentially related to perceivers cannot be identical with a property that has a way it is in itself. On the other hand, there is something awkward about calling the mode of presentation of a property a distinct property. Perhaps the awkwardness is a result of the fact that naïve experience assumes that the mode of presentation here transparently reveals the mind-independent property that appears. If we want to say that color experience is the way in which certain mind-independent properties of things appear to us, then, in a sense, it is the mind-independent properties that we are experiencing in this way. The property as it is in itself does not *make* the object red, it *is* the property we experience as red, although we do not experience it as it is in itself.

⁷⁸ Similarly, it would be misleading to say that an object's primary qualities (the arrangement of its minute parts) cause its tertiary qualities (its powers and dispositions). Powers and dispositions are not anything more, in the object itself, than its primary qualities; they are primary qualities individuated and described in terms of effects on other things, rather than as they are in the objects themselves.

⁷⁹ Note that I am not saying that color is a response-dependent *concept*, to use the contemporary jargon, because I am not saying that the mind-dependence of color is built into the concept of color, or that it is *a priori* that color experience does not reveal the way things mind-independently are. See C. Daly, "Modality and Acquaintance with Properties," *Monist* 81 (1998): 44–68; M. Johnston, "Are Manifest Qualities Response-Dependent," *Monist* 81 (1998): 3–43; and N. Miscevic, "The Aposteriority of Response-Dependence," *Monist* 81 (1998): 69–84.

ary qualities is appealed to,⁸⁰ and I suggest that we read it in terms of the direct realist subjectivist account of color I have presented. This means that, in reducing primary qualities to secondary qualities, we are not making Berkeley's move of saying that primaries, too, are merely ideas in the mind. Rather, qualities such as shape and solidity remain as properties of objects that are revealed in perception, not aspects of mind spontaneously projected so as to be experienced as if they are properties of bodies. However, we have a sense in which qualities like shape and solidity are mind-dependent: like color, they are only part of the way something mind-independent appears to subjects like us.

At the same time as repeatedly calling appearances representations, Kant vehemently denies that thinking of primaries as like secondaries makes his view idealist, in the empirical idealist sense that he wants to refute—that of saying that the “things which we believe we perceive in intuition are only representations in the thinking beings.”⁸¹ My reading can do justice to Kant's denial that he has made external objects into “representations in the thinking beings,” at the same time as showing the sense in which he holds that qualities like impenetrability are mind-dependent, and belong only to our representations, or to appearances. According to my subjectivist account, color is not something merely mental, which exists only in thinking beings, but neither is it part of the way things are in themselves, apart from their perceptually appearing to us. It is part of the way things are perceptually represented to us. Color is a public feature of objects, revealed in perception, but partly mind-dependent; so, for Kant, are all properties which are given in experience. Shape and solidity are part of the way things are experienced by us; while there is a way things are in themselves such that they are experienced as shaped and solid, our experience of shape and solidity reveals nothing about what this mind-independent ground is like.

4 · 2

Kant says that appearances can exist only in our possible experience of them, and, for Kant, possible experience is not just sense-experience: Kant's account of possible experience goes beyond what we can directly sense, since he allows that magnetic force is empirically real and would presumably allow the same for electrons. On the face of it, it is hard to see how such things could be mind-dependent in the way that color is: color is an essentially *experiential* property—a property that does not exist apart from in relation to possible visual experience. It is hard to see how anything analogous could be said about things so small or so distant that we cannot see them. Along these lines, it might be thought that when Kant says that the crudeness of our senses does not affect the extent of possible experience in general (A226/B237), he is giving up a strong connection between our experiencing something and its being empirically real.⁸² However, the crucial point for Kant is the way in which we are able to have experience of

⁸⁰ The fact that Kant mentions Locke does not commit us to reading it in terms of exactly Locke's account of the distinction, because he simply says that it is a distinction that has been acknowledged since Locke.

⁸¹ *Proleg.*, 289.

⁸² This is argued by Abela, *Kant's Empirical Realism*.

things that are so small that we cannot (currently) see them: this always requires something that is directly given in perception (not of course, the electrons), and a connection between this and the unseen entity via the categories and principles (A225–26/B273). Possible experience always requires a connection to something actually given in intuition, and without this connection to actual perception, there is nothing empirically real (A218/B266, A225/B272). It is a central claim of the *Critique* that none of our concepts, not even categorial concepts, have the content required for experience without something given in intuition. While we can use the categories and principles to extend beyond direct experience, and to enable us to cognize things that are too small or too far away for us to perceive, crucially, our cognition of these things essentially includes experiential content. What is given in intuition is what gives content to concepts, and when we cognize distant things, or very small things, or things described by fundamental physics, for Kant, this is only really cognition to the extent that it is related to, or understood in terms of, properties as given in experience, and is thus still part of appearances. For Kant, we can cognize things like electrons and the center of the earth because they causally affect things that we directly experience (see A495/B523, A211–18/B256–65), and our understanding of such things is essentially related to experientially given properties.⁸³

One objection would be that my account makes Kant's (transcendental) contrast between appearances and things in themselves too close to a parallel, but different, empirical distinction between (ordinary) things and the way they appear. My suggestion is that starting out thinking about the empirical distinction is a good way to understand Kant's notion of appearance. We need to understand the ordinary empirical distinction between (ordinary) things and the way they appear in a way which does not mentalize the appearance, but which allows that at least part of what is presented in perceptual experience may be mind-dependent. Then we need to allow that there are aspects of the way things appear that do not misrepresent things, and which feature in our understanding of interactions between things, but which do not represent things as they are in themselves. If we apply this understanding of appearance to *everything* of which we have experience, what is left of our knowledge of (ordinary) objects—in terms of their mind-independent nature—is simply the notion of something other than us that is appearing to us. This is the move Kant suggests in the secondary quality analogy in the *Prolegomena*.

A related objection might be that the talk of things and the way they appear assumed by the relational view of perception assumes a transcendent or metaphysical

⁸³ An objection to this might be that our understanding of things like electrons certainly is not in terms of experientially given properties like shape and solidity. This is not an issue I can discuss here, but a Kantian reply to this might be that, unless our knowledge of electrons is fleshed out with experiential content, it is purely abstract or formal, mathematical knowledge which may map onto the way things are in themselves, but gives us no real (non-formal) knowledge of what things are like in themselves. For a defense of this kind of view, see A. S. Eddington, *The Nature of the Physical World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1946); John Foster, *The Case for Idealism [Idealism]* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982); Michael Lockwood, *Mind, Brain and the Quantum* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989), ch. 10; Bertrand Russell, *The Problems of Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967); Galen J. Strawson, "Realistic Materialism," in *Chomsky and his Critics*, ed. L. Antony, L., and N. Hornstein, (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), 49–88.

position on things in themselves. Many commentators deny that Kant could have such a position⁸⁴ and argue that it commits us to saying that things in themselves appear to us, which is denied by Kant. This kind of position is particularly associated with merely epistemological readings of transcendental idealism. While I cannot argue against such readings here, the aim of my argument has been to chart a middle road between them and extreme idealist, phenomenalist readings of Kant. Here I will simply say that there are many places where Kant says that the existence of appearance implies something that appears (e.g., Bxxxvi; A251–52; *Proleg.*, 315), and where he talks about the contrast between things and *their* appearances, for instance:

We have wanted to say that all our intuition is nothing but the representation of appearance; that the things that we intuit are not in themselves what we intuit them to be, not are their relations so constituted in themselves as they appear to us.⁸⁵

My aim has been to show that we can present a reading of transcendental idealism which sees it as more of a metaphysical position than deflationary readings allow, while avoiding the problems of extreme idealist readings.

Another closely related objection is that my account seems to commit us to saying that we perceive things in themselves.⁸⁶ Once again, the secondary quality analogy is helpful here. On the one hand, we could say that there is a sense in which, in perceiving the colors of things, we are perceiving things themselves; color is part of the way things (as they are in themselves) perceptually appear to subjects like us. On the other hand, color does not represent things as they are in themselves at all; color is only a feature of things as they appear. Direct realists talk of perceiving colors, not their mind-independent grounds, although the latter are, in a sense, what is seen.⁸⁷ They are simply not seen as they are in themselves. Since Kant thinks that *everything* we know and experience about objects is mind-dependent in this sense, he talks of objects as being mind-dependent appearances.

Some methodological interpretations of transcendental idealism, such as Allison's,⁸⁸ see Kant's distinction as being between two ways of considering the same things, and the secondary quality analogy enables us to see both the uses and the limitations of "two-aspect" talk, or the idea of considering things in two different ways. We could introduce the mind-dependence of color by saying that there are two ways of considering the surface properties of objects: as they are in themselves and as they are in visual experience. The idea of considering the property in these two different ways is a helpful way of *introducing* the difference between the property as it appears and the property as it is in itself. However, the idea of considering properties in these two ways does not *explain* the differ-

⁸⁴ Most prominently, Allison, *Kant's Transcendental Idealism*.

⁸⁵ A42/B59. See also Bxx, Bxxvii, A27/B43, A38/B55, A39/B56, B69, B306, A276/B332, A360, and A546/B574.

⁸⁶ This objection is argued by Barker "Appearing and Appearances," 207.

⁸⁷ Similarly, a scientist might say that though in one sense, we do not perceive atoms, but we perceive things which are made of atoms, and in that sense are atoms, so in a sense we perceive things that are atoms, and therefore we do perceive atoms. In the same "opaque" way, we can say that we perceive things in themselves, although we do not perceive them as they are in themselves. Thanks to Karl Ameriks for this example.

⁸⁸ Allison, *Kant's Transcendental Idealism*.

ence between mind-independent surface properties and the mind-dependent appearances: the difference between the property in the object, as it is in itself, and the visual appearance of it is not just a difference in the way the property is considered. Red is not a disjunction of surface properties considered in a certain way; it is the way various surface properties appear. Saying that Kant's distinction is between things considered in two different ways is merely the beginning of an interpretation and does not, in itself, tell us anything about the mind-dependence of appearances.

I noted above that a possible objection to the secondary quality analogy can be made on the basis of Kant's view of secondary qualities: in the *Critique*, Kant denies that his idealism can be illustrated by comparison with qualities like color and taste. In response to this, I argued that Kant proposes the secondary quality analogy using a different account of secondary qualities to the one he forbids in the *Critique*, but it might be thought that Kant's view of secondary qualities in the *Critique* creates problems for the interpretation I have presented. For one thing, it shows a clear limitation with the analogy: so far, for the purposes of presenting the analogy, I have assumed that we all see color in the same way, but this is not true, and is not thought to be true by Kant (A29/B45). My account of appearances needs to be able to accommodate the fact that there are some aspects of the way things appear that are not objective, or empirically real, for Kant. Further, an objector might say that no one who thinks of color as Kant sometimes appears to do in the *Critique*—as something entirely in the mind and not really a property of objects—could have the direct realist account of appearances to which I have appealed here. I do not intend to attempt to defend an account of Kant's view of secondary qualities, or to try to reconcile everything he says about them in the two texts; rather, I will sketch two different ways in which variations in properties like color could be accommodated by the relational account of perceptual appearances I have given.

The first possibility is to say that, while we directly perceive objects, some of the properties that perceptual experience apparently presents objects as having are not properties of objects at all, and are only "modifications of the sense of the subject" (B45). A direct realist could think that *most* of the properties objects are presented as having in perception are properties of the objects, even where they are mind-dependent, but that *some* are only features of subjects' minds, which are spontaneously projected so as to be experienced as features of objects. For example, consider my looking at an uplifting scene; it might be said that, while I directly perceive the size and color of the large purple mountain, the "upliftingness" aspect of my perception is a feature of my mental state projected onto the scene, and not a property—not even a perceiver-dependent property—of the scene, although I spontaneously project it so as to experience it as a feature of the scene. It seems to be possible (although not, I think, desirable) to be direct realist about other properties, but to say this about color.

A second possibility is to say that, as well as there being properties which are relativized to us as a group—which are part of the way we all represent things as being—and therefore are empirically real, for Kant, there are also properties which are relativized to us as subgroups, or as individuals. Such properties would

still be perceivable properties of objects, and not aspects of mental states, but not intersubjective properties of objects. I think that *if* it is the case that we all perceive color differently, then this is what we should say about color; but this does not require mentalizing color. While it seems, on the basis of very brief comments, that in the *Critique* Kant adopted the first alternative, the second is equally compatible with his transcendental idealism, and since either are possibilities for my direct realist account of color, my account can deal with the fact that properties like color are not empirically real for Kant. In contrast, for a phenomenalist two-world view, there is a problem here with what Kant says about primary and secondary qualities: if color and taste are *contrasted* with space by being only properties of something mental, it is hard to see how space is also a property of something mental. We can deal with non-veridical appearances, such as the bent appearance of the stick, in a similar manner. Some of the properties things seem to have in perceptual experience are public, but are not related to other causal properties of things—such as the stick's bent appearance—and so are not empirically real. Other properties may be relativized to us as individuals, or as subgroups, rather than to all of us—as may be the case for color—and therefore are also not empirically real. What is empirically real is not just what is public, since illusions may be public (we can both see the mirage), but is also a part of and basic to causal explanation, and coheres with other causal properties of things and Kant's other principles of experience.

Another objection to my attribution of this position to Kant is that my use of the analogy results in a generalised position about appearances, rather than being based on Kant's specific concerns with *a priori*ity, and his resulting position about the ideality of the *forms* of appearances.⁸⁹ However, it is clear that, in the *Critique*, Kant has both a specific position concerning the ideality of the *a priori* forms of appearances, and a generalized position concerning the mind-dependence of appearances in general which he takes to follow from this. My use of the secondary quality analogy is intended as an explanation of the latter position, and not in any way an account of Kant's argument for his position. The argument for the specific position is based on his specific concerns with *a priori*ity, but this does not mean that the analogy cannot explain the generalized position which Kant takes to follow from the specific one.

Finally, the coherence of my interpretation of Kant might be questioned. It might be argued that it does not make sense to think that all the properties of objects could be mind-dependent as color is. In response, we could say that Kant does *not* say that *everything* about things is mind-dependent, because he does not think that everything of which we have experience exhausts everything there is—far from it. This will not go very far, because Kant does think that the entire empirical world is mind-dependent, and the objection will be that we cannot characterize experience of an objective world in terms only of mind-dependent properties. A second response is to point out that, even at the level of experience, Kant does not

⁸⁹ This kind of argument is criticized by Karl Ameriks, in "Kantian Idealism Today," *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 9 (1992): 329–42; and "Kant, Fichte, and Short Arguments to Idealism," *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie*, 72 (1990): 63–85.

have “a conception of the world which is . . . exclusively . . . woven out of materials given in experience.”⁹⁰ This is because the materials Kant has with which to construct an objective world are not merely what is given in intuition: *a priori* concepts and synthetic *a priori* principles play a crucial role, and demonstrating this is one of the main aims of the *Critique*. This response too might not be thought to go very far, since Kant thinks that the categories cannot give us knowledge without experiential content, so it remains the case that everything we know about the world is in terms of essentially phenomenal qualities.

The objector might argue that primary qualities play a crucial role in our thinking and experience of an objective world—a role that could not be filled by secondary qualities alone. Along these lines, it is argued by Evans that we need a simple theory of perception—or an understanding of a primitive mechanics into which primary qualities fit, and which alone gives them their sense—to make sense of the idea of existence unperceived; and it is argued by Bennett that we cannot make sense of sharing an objective world with someone who is shape-and-size-blind, in the way in which we could with someone who is color-blind.⁹¹ There are a number of interrelated roles that primary qualities are thought to play in constituting our knowledge of an objective world. First, it is thought that primary qualities are the qualities that feature in causal explanation and science. A second role for primary qualities is to enable us to avoid having bare dispositions.⁹² Third, it is argued that thinking about primary qualities is what enables us to distinguish between our experience of a thing and the thing the experience is of, and therefore to make sense of existence unperceived.

If we had an indirect-realist account of secondary qualities, it would be hard to see how secondary qualities could fill any of these roles, but the same problems do not arise for a subjectivist direct realist. Color can feature in causal explanations, and even in causal explanations used by science, as it certainly may be used by, for example, biology and zoology. Color (phenomenal color) does not feature in fundamental physics, and this seems to be an influential reason for thinking that it does not play a role in causal explanation. However, legitimate causal explanations that appeal to publicly observable—and, in that sense, objective—properties need not, and usually do not, involve terms of fundamental physics. It may be argued that if we think color features in causal explanations, then that is a reason for thinking that it is *not* secondary.⁹³ Whether color is mind-dependent is controversial, but all we need to make sense of Kant’s position is that that the subjectivist

⁹⁰ Gareth Evans, “Things Without the Mind,” in *Philosophical Subjects*, ed. Z. Van Straaten (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), 97.

⁹¹ Evans, “Things Without the Mind”; Jonathan Bennett, *Locke, Berkeley and Hume* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971).

⁹² Evans, “Things Without the Mind,” 101–02.

⁹³ See John Campbell, “A Simple View of Color,” in *Readings on Color*, ed. A. Byrne, and D. Hilbert (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997), 183; P. M. S Hacker, *Appearance and Reality* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989), 139; Barry Stroud, *The Quest for Reality: Subjectivism and the Metaphysics of Color* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Justin Broackes, “The Autonomy of Color,” in *Readings on Color*, ed. A. Byrne and D. Hilbert (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997). I do not argue against these views here, as all that is necessary for my purposes is that the alternative view is coherent. It seems to me that the strongest arguments for the mind-dependence of color are based not on the scientific considerations which Campbell, Hacker, and Stroud reject, but on the autonomy of color epistemology.

account of color I have presented is coherent. As our discussion of non-veridical perception shows, it is *possible* that there are properties which belong to objects only as they perceptually appear (and, therefore, are not misrepresentations of the way they are in themselves). The idea is not that there are properties which are essentially sensory in the sense of being characterisable in terms of sensible states, but rather that there are properties which are grasped in an essentially sensory manner. That these properties belong to objects only as they perceptually appear does not undermine their being public properties of objects—of features of the perceived environment—which play a role in explanations of interactions between things in the environment.

The second role for which primary qualities may be invoked is to be opposed to dispositions or powers: to avoid bare dispositions. It might be said that we need the idea of primary qualities because we cannot make sense of bare dispositions, or relations all the way down.⁹⁴ While I agree with this, I do not defend it here.⁹⁵ First, my subjectivist account of color does not see color as a disposition or power. Second, it is clear that Kant thinks that relations require something non-relational (see, for example, A285/B341), so the objection cannot apply to his position as a whole; we have something non-relational in things in themselves. Kant does not countenance relations all the way down, and although he thinks that appearances contain only relations (B67, A265/B321, A277/B333, A285/B341, A284/B340), his complete position includes things as they are in themselves, or the inner nature of things (A283/B339). However, while we may need the idea *that there is something* which is the ground or base of dispositions or causal powers, it does not follow from this that we need *knowledge* of this ground.⁹⁶ Some philosophers argue that fundamental science involves dispositions only;⁹⁷ if true, this would undermine the idea that we need primary qualities—in the sense of properties which are opposed to powers or dispositions—to have knowledge of an objective world.⁹⁸ Kant thinks

⁹⁴ It might be that a structural rather than a relational account of dispositions can avoid this objection.

⁹⁵ See Evans, "Things Without the Mind"; Foster, *Idealism*, 68–69; Langton, *Kantian Humility*, 19, 22; M. Smith and D. Stoljar, "Global Response-Dependence and Noumenal Realism," *The Monist* 81 (1998): 85–111; Van Cleve, "Putnam, Kant," 102–03.

⁹⁶ It might sound like my interpretation is becoming very similar to Langton's view that Kant's distinction is between intrinsic, causally inert properties of things and their (extrinsic) causal powers, but a key difference between our positions is that I am trying to do justice to the idealism in Kant's position, by comparing appearances to properties like color which are mind-dependent, whereas for Langton, appearances are mind-independent powers. Another difference between my position and Langton's is that I would not want to say that causal properties are not intrinsic, or that intrinsic properties are causally inert.

⁹⁷ See Simon Blackburn, "Filling in Space," *Analysis* (1990): 62–65; Frank Jackson, *From Metaphysics to Ethics: A Defense of Conceptual Analysis* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 23; Howard Robinson, *Matter and Sense* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 109; J. J. C. Smart, *Philosophy and Scientific Realism* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1963), 72; P. F. Strawson, "Reply to Evans," in *Philosophical Subjects*, ed. Z. Van Straaten (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), 280.

⁹⁸ To illustrate the special role of primary qualities, Bennett and Evans appeal to the related ideas of a primitive mechanics, and the way causal properties like size and shape are understood in relation to each other, making impossible size-and-shape-blindness. However, as Langton (*Kantian Humility*, 140–85) argues, it is not clear that they need *primary* qualities for these purposes; in Locke's terms, what does the work here may be *tertiary* qualities—properties understood in terms of the ways they affect other things.

that knowledge of primary qualities—in the sense of qualities which are opposed to powers—is not required for knowledge of an objective world, although the *notion* that there is something non-relational is required.⁹⁹ For Kant, our having knowledge of an objective world requires that we have explanations of how things interact with each other, and it requires that we have the notion of something that is absolutely inner or intrinsic. But it does not follow from this that these roles are filled by the same aspects of things, or that we need knowledge of the latter.

The third role that primary qualities are supposed to play in our having knowledge of an objective world is that of enabling us to make sense of existence unperceived. Evans argues that this requires a simple theory of perception, which explains our seeing things in terms of the things being there and the enabling conditions of perception being met. Properties which could fit into such a theory cannot be ones which exist only in subjects' minds—ideas with appropriate causes. However, the fitting of a property into a simple theory of perception does not demonstrate its complete mind-independence. It is possible that some of the properties objects have in perceptual experience do not belong to objects independently of this experience, and therefore that despite being perceivable properties of objects that are seen in the right conditions, they are mind-dependent. Thus, making all experienced properties mind-dependent in the way in which a subjectivist makes color mind-dependent does not preclude making sense of existence unperceived in terms of a simple theory of perception.

When the secondary quality analogy is divorced from indirect or representative views of perception (views which Kant clearly rejects), it enables us to make sense of properties that are mind-dependent in exactly the sense in which Kant expresses the mind-dependence of appearances; they do not exist apart from our possible experience of them. Against phenomenalist or two-world interpreters of Kant's idealism, these appearances do not exist in the mind, or as a logical construction out of subjective, mental states, which means we can do justice to Kant's empirical realism. Against merely epistemic or methodological interpretations, the analogy enables us to give a clear sense in which appearances are mind-dependent, and so to account for the idealism in Kant's position. While it would take a much longer work than this to account for Kant's transcendental idealism as a whole, and to assess arguments for his view, the analogy suggests a way of interpreting his idealism which is consistent with much more of what he says than either extreme view, and which is a coherent position.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ Kant divorces two of the traditional roles of Lockean primaries: that of being opposed to powers, and that of featuring in scientific explanation. For Kant, the fundamental explanatory notions of science are forces, and our understanding cannot reach beyond fundamental forces (Immanuel Kant, *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science*, ed. Michael Friedman [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004], 4: 482, 497–99, 513, 524, 534).

¹⁰⁰ For comments on various versions of the material in this paper, thanks to Karl Ameriks, Kenneth Westphal, and other members of the North American Kant Society at the October 2004 meeting at Purdue University, Quassim Cassam, Robert Hanna, Galen Strawson, James Harris, Eric Watkins, and members of the Philosophy Society of the University of Sussex.