

Phenomenal Character, Phenomenal Concepts, and Externalism*

Jonathan Ellis

1. Introduction

In each of the last three decades or so, at least one movement has especially marked work in Anglo-American philosophy of mind. In the latter part of the 70s and the 80s, there was content externalism. According to that view, still dominant today, the contents of a subject's thoughts are in part individuated by factors "external" to the subject: physical duplicates could have thoughts with different contents.¹ In the 90s, there was representationalism about phenomenal character. According to this view, also still thriving, the phenomenal character of an experience consists in (or is "exhausted by") some or all of the experience's representational features, its representational content. The phenomenal character of my visual experience of a lime, for instance, is to be understood entirely in terms of what my experience represents the lime to be like.² And in the last decade, a great deal of work has focused on the strategy (often called the "Phenomenal Concept Strategy") of appealing to the nature of phenomenal concepts (concepts such as *tingly*, *painful*, and so on) in order to undermine the most persistent objections to materialist theories of the mind.

* Forthcoming in *Philosophical Studies*. (This is not the final version, as I intend to make some minor editorial changes. Please do not quote without author's permission.)

¹ A number of senses of "internal" emerged from Hilary Putnam's Twin Earth arguments concerning meaning. In Putnam 1975, to say that two subjects were internally identical was to say that they were "psychologically" identical—identical in "appearance, feelings, thoughts, interior monologue. . . sense data . . . dispositions, etc." On this sense of "internal," externalism about the contents of thought (or about phenomenal character) is an oxymoron. On another sense of "internal," to say that two subjects are internally identical is to say they are physically identical—identical "from the skin in." This is the sense I employ in this paper.

² Dretske 1995, Tye 1995, and Lycan 1996 have been especially influential.

These three movements are of course related. Some of their relations have been acknowledged. But others have not. I will argue in this paper that, in particular, contemporary work on phenomenal concepts has some striking implications for the earlier two movements, implications which are quite substantial, in many ways surprising, and so far entirely unnoticed.

One relation between content externalism and representationalism about phenomenal character that philosophers have already noted is that when conjoined these two views appear to lead to externalism about phenomenal character: physically identical individuals could have experiences with different phenomenal character. If an experience's phenomenal character is exhausted by its representational content, and if representational content is externally individuated, then phenomenal character itself is externally individuated. Because externalism about phenomenal character strikes many philosophers as extremely implausible, this consequence is often taken to be a serious problem for representationalism. Even if internally identical individuals could have different thoughts, it is argued, if one of them has a headache, or a tingly sensation, so must the other.³ Certainly not all philosophers regard externalism about phenomenal character as implausible, but those who do not are often accused of having "too much respect for philosophical theory and not enough common sense."⁴ Likewise, not

³ Fred Dretske (1995), for instance, sees this as the most significant obstacle for representationalism. Dretske, himself a representationalist, proceeds to argue that externalism about phenomenal character may in fact be correct. His argument there bears some similarities to what I will ultimately propose. See note 22 below for some of the significant similarities and dissimilarities between our approaches.

⁴ This is how Byrne and Tye (2006, 242) describe the standard charge; they themselves are among those who have recently denied the intuition. Most of those who deny it do so because they endorse either a representationalist approach to perception (e.g., Dretske (1995), Tye (1995), and Lycan (1996)) or an "enactive" one (e.g., Noë (2006)). (Dretske and Noë argue only that the intuition *may* be incorrect.) The intuition is so commonplace that arguments for it are rarely advanced; typically, the view is merely asserted, or assumed. For a recent argument in its favor, see Pautz 2006.

everyone endorses content externalism.⁵ In fact, one gets the sense that the tides may be turning a bit, in both cases. But it is fair to say that externalism about content and internalism about phenomenal character each still receives considerably more support than its opposing view.

The alleged problem for representationalism, then, is that it is in substantial tension with the standard conjunction of externalism about content and internalism about phenomenal character. (Ned Block (1996), Tyler Burge (1979, 2003), and Sydney Shoemaker (1994, 1998) are among the many who endorse the conjunction.) Recent work on phenomenal concepts, however, has important consequences for this conjunction. In particular, it reveals that the conjunction is in tension with most other views of phenomenal character as well, if not with all of them. It is in tension, for instance, with representationalism's primary foil, sometimes called "qualia realism," according to which phenomenal character involves (or is constituted by, or explained by) qualities of experience that are both "intrinsic" and introspectively accessible.⁶ On the face of things, it wouldn't seem as if the qualia realist would face any difficulty embracing both externalism about content and internalism about phenomenal character. I will argue that he does, and that so do other non-representationalists.

This would be significant for a number of reasons. The first is patent: it would undermine a primary objection to representationalism. The incompatibility of representationalism with the conjunction of externalism about content and internalism about phenomenal character would be no serious problem for representationalism if no other plausible model is compatible with the conjunction either.

⁵ See, for instance, Searle 1980, Heil 2004, and Horgan et al. 2004.

⁶ See Peacocke 1983, Boghossian and Velleman 1989, Block 1990, Searle 1992, and Loar 1997.

The second reason concerns the general incompatibility of externalism about content with internalism about phenomenal character. If my argument is correct, then no matter which of the prominent models of phenomenal character a philosopher endorses (perhaps even if he is agnostic on the issue), he cannot be both externalist about content and internalist about phenomenal character; externalism is true either of both content and character, or of neither.⁷ The many philosophers who explicitly embrace both externalism about content and internalism about phenomenal character would thus be forced to abandon one of them. Even more philosophers have in print taken a stance on only one of the two internalism/externalism debates (they have endorsed content externalism but not written about phenomenal character, for instance).⁸ These philosophers would now have to be seen as committed to a position on an issue about which they have so far been silent.

A third reason my argument would be of significance stems from the fact that qualia realism typically goes hand in hand with internalism about phenomenal character. To the extent that it does, my argument would reveal that qualia realism is itself in tension with externalism about content. This would perhaps be the most surprising result of all.

I myself am an externalist about content. Thus, the arguments I provide in this paper have convinced me that I must also endorse externalism about phenomenal character. I think

⁷ The arguments I offer in this paper do not apply to the possibility of conjoining internalism about content and externalism about phenomenal character; however, I am unaware of any reason one would wish to embrace this particular conjunction, or of anyone who does.

⁸ Indeed, the fact that many philosophers of mind have in print taken a stance on only one of the two debates may explain why some readers might have the impression that the conjunction is not as dominant as I am suggesting. In my experience, the great majority of philosophers engaged with these issues holds the conjunction. Another part of why it may seem (again, I think falsely) as if the conjunction does not dominate the field is that in recent years those who have been most vocal about the conjunction, representationalists, have denied it. But this is only because their theories of phenomenal character require that they deny it, and so they attempt to render that denial more palatable. (There are also those who deny the conjunction because they are internalist about both, e.g., Searle (1980), Heil (2004), and Horgan et al. (2004).)

this is a good thing. In this paper, though, I do not argue at all for content externalism. And so for everything I say here, my arguments could be adopted by an internalist about content and employed in a *reductio* against externalism about content.

2. A Sketch of the Argument

Since most philosophers already agree that the representationalist cannot plausibly endorse both content externalism and internalism about phenomenal character, I will focus in this paper entirely upon those who reject representationalism.⁹ Most salient of course are the qualia realists, according to whom phenomenal character involves qualities of experience that are both intrinsic and introspectively accessible. However, some philosophers who used to endorse qualia realism (e.g., Block 1990) remain staunchly anti-representationalist, yet they no longer speak of intrinsic properties (or non-intrinsic properties) in specifying their view of phenomenal character (Block 2003). My arguments apply to these philosophers as well.

My central argument will be this: those who reject representationalism yet who endorse externalism about content must accept two theses about phenomenal *concepts* that together entail externalism about phenomenal character. I call the two premises “Accessibility” and “Twin Inability”:

Accessibility: For any phenomenal quality of a subject’s experience, if the subject introspectively attends to her experience, she can employ a phenomenal concept that refers to that quality.

⁹ Some philosophers allow for the possibility of a representationalist’s being externalist about some forms of representation but internalist about the representation involved in phenomenal character (see Rey 1998).

Twin Inability: It is possible for a subject to have an experience with a phenomenal quality that is not referred to by any phenomenal concept that the subject's (introspectively capable) twin can employ.

Accessibility and Twin Inability together entail externalism about phenomenal character. If Sally has an experience with a phenomenal quality Q, and none of the phenomenal concepts that Twin Sally can employ refers to Q, then Twin Sally's experience cannot have the phenomenal quality Q. For if it did, then by Accessibility Twin Sally could employ a phenomenal concept that referred to Q.¹⁰

I suspect that most, if not all, representationalists must also accept these two premises (i.e., those who endorse content externalism), but I will not make good on that claim here. I will focus only on the content externalist who rejects representationalism. For brevity, I will use the abbreviation "CE" to refer to the content externalist who rejects representationalism. In the next section, I will explain why CEs should accept Accessibility. In Sections 4 through 9, I will explain why they should accept Twin Inability. It is here where recent work on phenomenal concepts will be illuminating. Two issues will be especially relevant: (1) the way in which phenomenal concepts are acquired; and (2) the nature of the referential relation that obtains between phenomenal concepts and the phenomenal qualities they pick out. Another lesson of this paper is that, contrary to what many philosophers claim, our possession of

¹⁰ I have constructed Twin Inability so as to concern *introspectively capable* twins because it is only of introspectively capable subjects that Accessibility guarantees that for any phenomenal quality of their experience they can employ a phenomenal concept that refers to that quality. I will return to this qualification in Section 3.

phenomenal concepts cannot be understood independently of the rest of our conceptual repertoire.

3. The Accessibility of Phenomenal Qualities

What is the nature of the access or awareness guaranteed in the standard idea that phenomenal qualities are introspectively accessible? Let us first make explicit a sense of awareness that is not intended. Philosophers occasionally use the term “awareness” such that being aware of a particular phenomenal quality of one’s own experience is simply a matter of *having* the experience. The idea we are concerned with, though, is that phenomenal qualities are all introspectively *accessible*, not that they are all introspectively *accessed*.¹¹ What is intended, rather, is something more like the following: For any phenomenal quality of a subject’s experience, if the subject introspectively attends to her experience, she can become aware of that quality. But still, what is the nature of that awareness?

It will suffice for our purposes to note that when a subject is introspectively aware of a phenomenal quality, the awareness is conceptual; it involves the employment of concepts. This idea is especially prevalent now that most philosophers have abandoned so-called “inner-sense” or “perception-object” models of introspection, on which we observe or perceive our own mental states and their properties.¹² Rather than rehearse the difficulties these theories face, let us note that even on many inner-sense theories, introspective awareness of phenomenal qualities is conceptual (especially contemporary ones, e.g., Lycan 1996 and Aydede and Güzeldere 2005). The inner sense theorist will agree that introspective awareness

¹¹ See Sosa 2003 on this sense of awareness and its relation to certain doctrines of privileged access.

¹² See Shoemaker 1994 for a sustained attack on inner-sense theories. For more on the source of the idea that introspective awareness of phenomenal quality is conceptual, see Dretske 1995.

is conceptual as long as he accepts that the sense or perception involved is conceptual.¹³ Thus, the first premise I claim that the CE (or really, anyone who holds that phenomenal character is introspectively accessible) should accept is Accessibility, or (A):

- (A) For any phenomenal quality of a subject's experience, if the subject introspectively attends to her experience, she can employ a phenomenal concept that refers to that quality.¹⁴

Indeed, (A) will be true even on inner-sense theories on which the perceptual mechanism is *not* conceptual but its product is, e.g., where the mechanism results in a judgment about the phenomenal quality.

Later, in section 7, I will address some possible ways of resisting (A). For now, let me clarify a potential misunderstanding. It may seem as if (A) has the consequence that animals that are incapable of employing concepts that refer to phenomenal qualities (dogs, perhaps) cannot have experiences with phenomenal quality. But it does not. (A) says only that every phenomenal quality is such that the subject can employ a concept that refers to it *if the subject introspectively attends to her experience*. The fact that animals that are incapable of introspective attention cannot employ concepts that refer to phenomenal qualities does not with (A) entail that these animals do not have experiences with these qualities.

¹³ This is especially likely to be the case for inner-sense theories on which what is perceived in introspection are facts. But even those who claim that what is perceived are objects can construe such perception as conceptual.

¹⁴ The force of "can" in Accessibility (and in Twin Inability) is important. For now, it suffices to note that it is on a par with the force of "accessible" in the claim that phenomenal qualities are introspectively accessible. I will return to this issue in Section 7. Also, some readers might find strange such talk of concepts "referring," as opposed to their (say) "applying." I will return to this

4. Road Map

(A) is the first of the two premises I claim the CE must accept. Let me turn to the second premise, Twin Inability, or (TI):

(TI) It is possible for a subject to have an experience with a phenomenal quality that is not referred to by any phenomenal concept that the subject's (introspectively capable) twin can employ.

My argument for why the CE is committed to (TI) is quite involved, so it is important that I explain its structure at the outset. The argument has a form similar to the larger argument. In this case, the CE must accept two premises which themselves lead to (TI). The argument is intricate, however, because for one of these premises, the way to see why the CE must accept it varies according to two factors about which CEs might disagree. Thus, to show that CEs are indeed committed to this premise, I will need to address a variety of possible CEs.

Before elaborating, let me introduce the two premises. The first premise is externalism about phenomenal *concepts*, or (EPC):

(EPC) The phenomenal concepts that a subject is able to employ could be substantially different from the phenomenal concepts that her physical twin is able to employ.¹⁵

The idea that the CE must accept (EPC) will at first be resisted. While many *representationalists* will quickly grant that (EPC) follows from content externalism (Dretske 1995), the CE will not. The standard arguments for externalism about concepts such as *water* and *arthritis* would not appear to many CEs to apply similarly to concepts such as *tingly* or

terminological issue and to the notion of reference in general in section 6. Let me here simply clarify that I mean “refers” in as theoretically unladen a sense as possible.

¹⁵ It's worth being explicit that I'm using “(EPC)” to refer to externalism about phenomenal *concepts*, not externalism about phenomenal character (i.e., quality). I won't use an abbreviation for the latter.

painful. Central to my argument for why the CE must accept (EPC) are the substantial, often cognitive conditions on the formation of phenomenal concepts.

Externalism about phenomenal *concepts*, though, certainly does not entail externalism about phenomenal *quality* or character. Nor does it entail (TI). After all, even if physical duplicates could have different phenomenal concepts, it may be that their experiences must have the same phenomenal qualities, and that in cases where duplicates have different phenomenal concepts, the duplicates could refer to these qualities by means of different phenomenal concepts. Thus, the second step of the argument consists in explaining why CEs should accept the following premise about conceptual co-reference:

(CR) Physical duplicates could not refer to the same phenomenal quality with different phenomenal concepts.

(EPC) and (CR) do not, strictly speaking, *entail* (TI); however, as will become clear, no CE would accept (EPC) and (CR) without accepting (TI).

It is the first premise, (EPC), that requires the multi-faceted argument. The way to see why a CE should endorse (EPC) varies according to both the CE's conception of the formation of phenomenal concepts and the reason for which the CE accepts content externalism. Content externalism, for instance, as I am understanding it in this paper, is the thesis that physical duplicates could have thoughts with different contents. However, one issue on which CEs will differ concerns the domain of contents that could be different. The three most influential families of argument for content externalism are Tyler Burge's argument involving the concept *arthritis*, Hilary Putnam's "Twin Earth" argument, and externalist arguments motivated by considerations about normativity. Seeing why a CE should accept (EPC) depends in part upon which of these arguments a CE accepts. I will argue that on any combination of one of these

three arguments and one of the prominent conceptions of phenomenal concepts the CE is committed to (EPC).

The next several sections thus employ a divide-and-conquer strategy. In sections 5 through 7, I will be concerned with CEs who accept Burge's argument for content externalism and who also accept a very widespread assumption about the formation of phenomenal concepts. According to many philosophers, the formation of a phenomenal concept involves in the basic cases an introspective process of demonstration of, or attention to, the phenomenal quality to which the concept refers (Loar 1990/1997, Gertler 2001, Perry 2001, Chalmers 2003, Sosa 2003, Tye 2003, Levin 2007). This assumption is common to accounts of phenomenal concepts that vary substantially in other respects, such as Loar's "recognitional" view and Perry's "indexical" view. And it is held both by philosophers who employ the Phenomenal Concept Strategy and by those who reject it. In section 5, I will explain why a CE who accepts this assumption about phenomenal concepts and Burge's argument for content externalism must accept (EPC). In section 6, I will explain why this CE (indeed, all CEs) must accept (CR) and, in turn, (TI). In section 7, I will address several potential objections to my arguments in sections 3 through 6. In section 8, I will explain why CEs who reject Burge's argument for content externalism but who accept either Putnam's argument or an argument from normativity will also be led to (EPC). In Section 9, I will turn to CEs who hold accounts of phenomenal concepts that are not explicitly committed to the demonstration-based view (such as David Papineau's (2002) "quotational" model and Murat Aydede and Güven Güzeldere's (2005) "information-theoretic" account) and explain why they too should accept (EPC). I will spend the most time on the first combination, though—CEs who endorse Burge's argument and the

demonstration-based view—as many of the points I will make about that case will apply to the other cases as well.¹⁶

5. Burge’s Argument and the Demonstration-Based Model

Consider, then, Burge’s argument for content externalism (Burge 1979). Burge asks us to imagine a man (call him “Al”) who suffers from arthritis. Al develops a pain in his thigh and forms the belief that his arthritis has spread to his thigh. He visits his doctor and says to him, “I have arthritis in the thigh.” His doctor replies that this could not be so, since arthritis is specifically an inflammation of the joints. Al thus relinquishes his belief that he has arthritis in his thigh. Burge then asks us to imagine a counterfactual world where everything is the same except that physicians, lexicographers, and informed laymen apply “arthritis” not only to arthritis but to various other rheumatoid ailments including that which is affecting Al’s thigh. (Let us use the word “tharthritis” to refer to that which speakers in the counterfactual world refer to with the word “arthritis.”) Al’s twin, who is identical to Al in physical and nonintentional mental history (considered in isolation from social context), similarly visits his doctor and says, “I have arthritis in the thigh.” Burge argues that, even before each patient hears his doctor’s response (i.e., even when the twins’ histories are still identical), Al and Twin Al have different concepts (or “notions”). He claims that it is evident that Al has the concept *arthritis* (and not *tharthritis*),

¹⁶ In Ellis 2007, I advanced the same arguments as those I will provide here in sections 5 and 8 for the conclusion that standard arguments for content externalism lead to externalism about phenomenal concepts. In that paper, I employed this conclusion to infer that if content externalism is in tension with the idea that we have privileged access to the contents of our own beliefs, as some have argued (e.g., Boghossian (1989)), then it is also in tension with the idea that we have privileged access to the phenomenal character of our own experience. In the present paper, I conjoin the arguments I advanced in Ellis 2007 with premises (A) and (CR) to infer conclusions about the individuation and “metaphysics” of phenomenal character. I support the overlapping arguments in more depth in this paper by addressing a variety of objections (in sections 5 and 9) that I did not discuss in the earlier paper.

because Al abandons his belief upon hearing his doctor's response. In contrast, Burge says, "it is hard to see how [Twin Al] could have picked up the notion of arthritis. The word 'arthritis' in the counterfactual community does not mean *arthritis*." (Burge 1979, 539.) Burge thus concludes that what concepts a subject possesses (and so what contents a subject's thoughts have) is externally determined.

My primary concern with this argument is whether the CE who is externalist about content because of this argument must accept (EPC). Since Burge's argument is intended to show only that *some* concepts are externally determined, (EPC) cannot be inferred straightaway. Burge does say that his considerations about the concept *arthritis* have "extremely wide application," and that they apply to a whole host of concepts, including legal concepts, color concepts, and concepts like *brisket* (Burge 1979, 540). However, he does not explicitly mention phenomenal concepts. And indeed, phenomenal concepts are precisely the sort of concepts to which one might think his arguments do not extend.

Why then should we think that, given a demonstration-based account of phenomenal concepts, Burge's argument would suggest that some phenomenal concepts are themselves externally individuated? Central to my argument are the substantial cognitive conditions on successful demonstration. Consider a case in which an individual demonstrates a *non-*phenomenal property, the greenness of a lime, say. For me to point to the greenness of a lime (one that is in plain view, in good light, etc.), it is not enough that I raise my hand and extend my finger such that the tip of my finger, its three knuckles, and the lime form a straight line. I would make just the same movements whether I intended to point to the greenness of the lime or to its elliptical shape, or to the kind of fruit I wanted squeezed on my pasta, or to the lime's "grue" property (Goodman 1955), its green-or-blue property, and so

on. Those movements alone are not sufficient for my pointing to the greenness of the lime—a point familiar from Wittgenstein. What must be added, it seems, is that when I make such movements, I at the same time concentrate upon, or otherwise have in mind, the particular feature to which I’m attempting to point. I must intend, or mean, to point to *that* feature. Some of the concepts I might employ in demonstrating the greenness of the lime are (perhaps) *color, shade, quality, lime, object, same*, and so on.

The fact that demonstration requires a cognitive element is sometimes explicitly acknowledged by those who advance demonstration-based conceptions of phenomenal concepts. Loar, for instance, writes,

Recognitional concepts are generally formed against a further conceptual background. In identifying a thing as of a recognized kind, we almost always presuppose a more general type to which the kind belongs: four-legged animal, plant, physical thing, perceptible event. A recognitional concept will then have the form ‘physical thing of that (perceived) kind’ or ‘internal state of that kind’, and so forth. (1997, 601.)

If the formation of phenomenal concepts is to be thought of on the model of demonstration, then similar considerations will apply. As Ernie Sosa says, “Selective attention is the index finger of the mind” (2003, 279). And Chalmers writes,

As with all acts of demonstration and attention, phenomenal demonstration and attention involves a cognitive element. Reference to a phenomenal quality is determined in part by cognitive elements of a demonstration. These cognitive elements will also enter into determining the content of a corresponding direct phenomenal concept. (2003, 237.)

Consider, then, my attempt to demonstrate the phenomenal greenness of my experience of the lime. Like limes, experiences of limes have countless qualities. I need some way of picking out the phenomenal greenness of the experience from its other properties—from its phenomenal ellipticity, its phenomenal greenness, its phenomenal green-or-blueness, etc. The crucial point is that the property I succeed in demonstrating and thus the concept I succeed in

forming will again depend upon the concepts I employ in the demonstration. Some of the concepts I might employ in this case are perhaps *color, shade, quality, experience, phenomenal, same*, and so on. My central point should now be clear: on a demonstration-based conception of phenomenal concepts, a subject's cognitive background places limitations on the phenomenal concepts she can form. If the concepts that a subject can employ in demonstration are substantially different from those her twin can employ in demonstration, so will be the concepts the two form.

Still, it does not follow from this alone that a content externalist who accepts Burge's argument must accept (EPC). We must address two questions: (i) Are the sorts of concepts that must be employed in the demonstration of phenomenal qualities concepts that Burge's argument suggests are externally determined? And (ii) Even if some of the concepts that must be employed are themselves externally determined, does their being externally determined ultimately make the concepts *formed* externally determined? I will argue that, in some cases, the answer to both questions is "Yes."

To see why, consider how the demonstration of a phenomenal property might proceed on Burge's account. Instead of the word "arthritis," let us take the word "color." Suppose that in another counterfactual world people use the word "color" in a different way. Let us suppose that what English speakers in the counterfactual world mean by "green" is what we (following Goodman 1955) mean by "gred": To say that something is gred is to say that it *either* has been observed by someone before the year 4000 and is green, *or* has not been observed before the year 4000 and is red. The meanings of their color words correspond to our understanding of complementary colors. Their word "blue" means what we mean by "blellow": either observed before the year 4000 and blue, or not observed before 4000 and yellow. Let us also suppose

that their word “color” means what we mean by (say) “schmolor.” That is, if what we mean by “color” is the determinable that has the determinates green, blue, red, and so on, what they mean by “color” is the determinable that has the determinates gred, blellow, reen, and so on. (Let me be explicit, in order to preempt a common misunderstanding, that to say that emeralds observed today are gred (which they are) is *not* to say or in any way suggest that these emeralds will be red after the year 3999. Nor is to say or in any way suggest that emeralds that are never observed before 4000 are now or ever will be red.)

Burge’s argument concerning “arthritis” can be similarly applied to color words, as he notes. We can thus imagine a counterfactual world in which, because experts and lexicographers define color words in grue-like ways, Al’s counterfactual twin has the concept *gred*, even though Al in the actual world has the concept *green*. The same goes for *color* and *schmolor*. Now, imagine that Al and his twin in this counterfactual world each attempts to demonstrate a property of a non-mental object. Each of them has a tomato in front of himself, and the tomatoes are identical. Each says, pointing at his tomato, “I’m going to use the word ‘X’ to refer to this color.” They utter the same sentence, but Al’s word “color” means *color*, and Twin Al’s word “color” means *schmolor*. If the tomato is red, then the property Al picks out is red, and the property Twin Al picks out is reen (assuming the year is not yet 4000). The properties they pick out are different, as are the concepts they form of them.

The same considerations would apply in the case in which each twin attempts to demonstrate a phenomenal property of his experience of the tomato. If the concepts the twins bring to their demonstrations are substantially different (as are *color* and *schmolor*), so will be the properties the twins pick out and the concepts they form. The concept Al would form is

phenomenal red, and the concept Twin AI would form is *phenomenal reen*. Physical twins could have different phenomenal concepts.

I am not claiming here that in *all* cases in which externally individuated concepts are employed in the formation of a concept through demonstration the resulting concept will be itself externally individuated. I am claiming that at least in some cases it will be. This is all my argument requires.

Three Objections

It is crucial at this juncture that I pause to address three rather salient objections to my argument that my reader might have in mind at this point. My discussion of these objections (especially of the third) should help sharpen and clarify my argument. The first concerns my claim that in demonstrating a phenomenal color one employs the concept *color*. The second concerns my appeal to grue-like expressions and concepts, of which some readers might be suspicious. And the third concerns whether what I have just said about AI and Twin AI contradicts Accessibility, the first premise of the more general argument.

Objection 1

My objector might insist that in demonstrating a phenomenal color, one does not employ the concept *color* but the concept *phenomenal color*, and that we cannot assume Burge's argument suggests that this latter concept is externally determined. I think it is awkward to suppose that the concept *color* does not factor centrally in the demonstration of phenomenal color properties. However, even if we grant that it does not, the objection does not succeed. For the question would then be how we form the concept *phenomenal color*. My objector would need to argue that the formation of this concept does not depend on the concept *color* (or *schmolor*, etc.) or particular color

concepts; otherwise, *phenomenal color* would inherit the idiosyncrasies of *color*. The natural way to make plausible the idea that the formation of the concept *phenomenal color* is independent of the possession of (non-phenomenal) color concepts is to suppose that we form it either by attending to phenomenal color properties or on the basis of particular phenomenal color concepts that we already possess. But as long as we continue to assume that introspective awareness of phenomenal qualities is conceptual and that phenomenal concepts are acquired through demonstration, neither of these proposals could work. If we acquire the concept *phenomenal color* from more particular phenomenal color concepts, then the objection that the demonstration involved in the formation of particular phenomenal color concepts involves the concept *phenomenal color* (and not *color*) fails. Likewise, if introspective awareness of phenomenal properties is conceptual, then we could not acquire the concept *phenomenal color* by attending to phenomenal color properties if we did not already have particular phenomenal color concepts.¹⁷

Now I of course do not take myself to have in any way *proven* that the concept *color* is employed in the demonstration of phenomenal color properties—or even to have proven more generally that the concepts employed in the demonstration of phenomenal qualities are sometimes concepts that Burge’s argument suggests are externally determined. But I do think I’ve provided strong reason to think that they are—and certainly, excellent reason to think that

¹⁷ One might wonder how, if what I argue here is correct, we could ever acquire the concept *color* on this view. We could not acquire it from the concept *phenomenal color* or from particular phenomenal color concepts if the concept *color* is required for their acquisition. Nor perhaps could we acquire it from our particular color concepts if the way in which we acquire those is through demonstration. CEs, however, are not committed to the idea that attention to color properties is conceptual; nor are they committed to a demonstration-based conception of color concepts. Indeed, Burge’s argument suggests that the community plays at least some role in determining the color concepts we possess.

Moreover, if it *could* plausibly be argued both that the process of demonstration involved in the formation of particular phenomenal color concepts involves the concept *phenomenal color* and not *color*, and that the concept *phenomenal color* is formed independently of the concept *color* and particular color concepts, it seems we could still construct a Burge-style thought experiment on another

they may be. It is, at the very least, a live possibility that anyone who is externalist about content but internalist about phenomenal character must take seriously.

Objection 2

There are a variety of reasons for which my reader might be uncomfortable with my appeal to grue-like concepts. None of them is well-founded though. So as not to confuse matters, let's return to the case in which the twins are demonstrating a property of a non-phenomenal entity, the tomato. My reader might first protest that even though Twin Al employs the concept *schmolor*, the property of the tomato he manages to pick out is not reeness but redness; after all, that's what the tomato *is*: red. However, while it is certainly true that the tomato is red, it is also true that it is reen: it has been observed before the year 4000 and is red. The objector might sharpen his objection by insisting that, although the tomato is reen, the *reason* it is reen is that it is red. But even if it is true that the reason the tomato is reen is that it is red (and even this is not quite right), this would not imply that the property of which Twin Al forms a concept is redness. Let's turn back to Al for a moment. Suppose that the particular *shade* of the tomato is red₃₂. One might then similarly say that the "reason" the tomato is red is that it is red₃₂. But that would not entail that the property Al would form a concept of when he points at the tomato and says, e.g., "I'm going to use the word 'X' to refer to this *general* color" is red₃₂. The property Al would form a concept of is a general color, such as red, and not a fine shade such as red₃₂, even though the "reason" the tomato is red would be that it is red₃₂. What property is ostended is determined in significant part by the concept(s) employed. And the concept Twin Al employs is *schmolor*.

concept that is centrally involved in the demonstration of phenomenal colors (the concept *quality*, perhaps).

My objector might revise his objection and instead propose that the concept Twin AI forms is a concept of the very *token* (or instance) of red, which also happens to be a token of reen, i.e., that the concept is a concept of a particular, not of a property. But phenomenal concepts are concepts of types. Two experiences can have the same phenomenal quality. “There’s that phenomenal quality again,” one might say. Phenomenal concepts can apply to more than one particular (token) experience, just as color concepts can apply to more than one object.

In a different vein, my reader might object that my appeal to grue-like terms is inappropriate because reen, grue, etc., are not “real” or otherwise legitimate properties. But even if we grant that reen (and phenomenal reen) are not real or legitimate properties (whatever that would mean), that would not then mean that the concept Twin AI would form is a concept of *red* (or phenomenal red); rather, it would mean that it is a concept of an unreal or illegitimate property, or that he fails to form any concept at all. Any which way, Twin AI would not form the phenomenal concept that AI would, in accordance with (EPC).¹⁸

Finally, it should be clear that my argument does not depend on choosing counterfactual concepts that we define in terms of a time in the *future*. I could have just as well defined them using a year in the past. In fact, what is doing the work is not the temporal component at all but the disjunctive component. And even disjunction is not necessary; conjunction too, for instance, would have worked.

Objection 3

Wouldn't that contradict (A), though? Wouldn't that entail that Twin AI would not, after all, be able to employ a phenomenal concept that refers to the phenomenal red quality of his experience of the tomato? No. What it would show, given (A), is that Twin AI's experience of the tomato is not phenomenal red after all. We have been assuming so far that when AI and Twin AI experience the tomato, their experiences are both phenomenal red, regardless of which concepts they are able to form. But that is precisely the assumption I want to treat as a *reductio* premise. Or more precisely, the *reductio* premise is internalism about phenomenal character, which entails that if AI's experience is phenomenal red, then so is Twin AI's.

Suppose, by the *reductio* premise, that AI and Twin AI have identical experiences. They are both phenomenal red. If my argument is correct, then AI forms the concept *phenomenal red*, and Twin AI forms the concept *phenomenal reen*. If Accessibility is correct, though, then Twin AI's experience is *not* phenomenal red, because Twin AI is not able to employ a phenomenal concept that refers to the phenomenal red quality of his experience; he is able to employ only a phenomenal concept that refers to the phenomenal reen quality of his experience. The absurdity that the *reductio* premise leads to (for the CE) is that Twin AI's experience is both phenomenal red and not phenomenal red. To remain externalist about content, then, he must reject internalism about phenomenal character.

Two more questions arise immediately: (1) Why couldn't Twin AI employ his concept *phenomenal reen* to refer to the phenomenal red quality of his experience? And (2) How could Twin AI's experience be phenomenal reen but not phenomenal red! Before the year 4000,

¹⁸ The same general point would apply to an objector who granted that Twin AI would form a concept a legitimate property but who argued that the property would not be a *phenomenal* property (and that concept not a phenomenal concept). Since AI does form a phenomenal concept, (EPC) would still hold.

anything that has been observed and is seen is also red, by definition. Doesn't this show that something is awry in my reasoning? The answer to the first question will emerge in the next section, in which I discuss (CR), the second of the two premises leading to (TI). The second question is one of several objections I will discuss in section 7.

6. Phenomenal Concepts and Co-Reference

In the last section, I argued that the CE who accepts Burge's argument and a demonstration-based conception of phenomenal concepts must accept (EPC). But externalism about phenomenal *concepts*, even with (A), does not entail externalism about phenomenal *character*. Even if physical duplicates could have different phenomenal concepts, it may be that their experiences always have the same phenomenal qualities, and that, in accordance with (A), in cases where duplicates do have different phenomenal concepts, the duplicates could refer to these qualities by means of different phenomenal concepts. After all, we often refer to one and the same entity by employing different concepts. You think to yourself, *Meno was written by the student of Socrates*; I think to myself, *Meno was written by the teacher of Aristotle*. Even if you do not have the concept *teacher of Aristotle* and I do not have the concept *student of Socrates*, we still manage to refer to the same entity: Plato.

This, though, could not be what could go on in the case where physically identical subjects have different phenomenal concepts. That is because, on nearly all accounts of phenomenal concepts, phenomenal concepts refer "directly" (Loar 1990/1997, Balog 1999, Gertler 2001, Papineau 2002, Chalmers 2003, Tye 2003, Levin 2007). Before elaborating upon the idea of direct reference, let me pause to say something about the notions of reference at play in this paper, so that it is clear that I am not committing an equivocation.

The notion of reference first arose when I introduced (A): For any phenomenal quality of a subject's experience, if the subject introspectively attends to her experience, she can employ a phenomenal concept that refers to that quality. I chose the term "refer," which I intended there in as theoretically unladen a sense as possible, since "reference" is a common way in which philosophers describe the relation between color concepts (e.g., *yellow*) and their corresponding colors (yellow). It is standard, for some linguistic expressions, to distinguish between what the expression refers to and what is in its extension. The expression "yellow," it is said, refers to the property yellow but has in its extension all entities that have the property yellow (i.e., that are yellow—lemons, sunflowers, etc.). Some philosophers make a similar distinction in the case of concepts: the concept *yellow* refers to the property yellow but has in its extension (or perhaps better in the case of concepts, "applies to") all entities that have the property yellow (Peacocke 1992).

That is why I chose the term "refers" in (A). However, the CE is not committed to any particular view of the semantic relation between phenomenal concepts and phenomenal qualities (or at least, I have not shown that he is). And so in (A), "refers" must be understood in a loose way. By giving it a loose sense, we do not unfairly foist upon the CE an assumption he does not hold. I might have chosen the expression "picks out" or "denotes."

The word "refers" in (TI) must of course be read in the same way. (TI) reads: It is possible for a subject to have an experience with a phenomenal quality that is not referred to by any phenomenal concept that the subject's (introspectively capable) twin can employ. Understanding "refers" in this loose sense makes (TI) a stronger claim than if we understood it in a more specific way. What is important, then, is that I show that the CE is committed to (TI) in this stronger sense.

The notion of reference now arises again with the idea that phenomenal concepts refer directly, by which philosophers mean that these concepts do not have “descriptive” or “higher-order” or “contingent” reference-fixing modes of presentation. This idea has become especially prevalent as a result of the Phenomenal Concept Strategy. Consider, for instance, Loar’s (1990/1997) influential way of responding to Frank Jackson’s Knowledge Argument (1982). Loar proposes that Mary does not learn any new facts when she leaves her original environment; rather, what she acquires are new concepts—phenomenal concepts—by means of which she is able to conceive in a new way of facts she already knew. Before she leaves her environment, Mary is able to think about an experience of red by means of a physical concept; once she is let out, she becomes able to think about such an experience by means of a phenomenal concept as well (e.g., *phenomenal red*). This response to Jackson’s argument, though, faces an objection. If Mary’s two concepts that refer to the experience of red do so under different modes of presentation of this sort, then the experience of red must have different properties—presumably, a mental one and a physical one—in virtue of which the two concepts refer to the experience. But if so, then the physicalist must account for this mental property and is soon led on a regress.¹⁹ Many physicalists (including Loar) respond to this objection by emphasizing that phenomenal concepts refer directly and not via any such mode of presentation.²⁰

If phenomenal concepts refer directly, then different phenomenal concepts cannot, even in a loose sense, refer to the same phenomenal quality. Consider once again our twins looking at the tomato. It is true that, if the twins’ experiences did have all of the same phenomenal

¹⁹ See White 1986. The central idea can be found in Smart 1959. Smart attributes the idea to Max Black.

²⁰ The idea that phenomenal concepts refer directly is appealing not only to philosophers who reject the Phenomenal Concept Strategy (e.g., Chalmers 2003). See Levine 2001 for someone who emphasizes the rich modes of presentations phenomenal concepts have.

qualities, the two concepts *phenomenal red* and *phenomenal reen* would both apply to both of the twins' *experiences*. The twins could thus each apply a concept to his present experience (and to his twin's), and these experiences would be phenomenally identical. However, their applying these concepts to their experiences would not amount to their referring to (or picking out or denoting) the same phenomenal *quality*. While the extensions of the concepts *phenomenal red* and *phenomenal reen* include some of the same experiences, they do not include any phenomenal quality. Similarly, while the extensions of *orange* and *spherical* include some of the same objects (oranges), they do not include any property. In applying *orange* and *spherical* to an orange, we do not apply the concepts to the same property. Nor do we refer to the same property.

My argument here does not rely on the claim that, where concepts of properties are concerned, different concepts can never pick out the same property. Consider, for instance, the concepts *Julius Caesar's favorite color* and *Catullus' favorite color*. These concepts may both pick out the property blue. If they do though, they do so under different modes of presentation. The concept *Julius Caesar's favorite color* would pick out blue under the mode of presentation of being Julius Caesar's favorite color, and the concept *Catullus' favorite color* would pick it out under the mode of presentation of being Catullus' favorite color. The two concepts would pick out one and the same property but by way of different properties of that property. But this could not be what goes on when the concepts refer directly.²¹

²¹ Several philosophers who provide careful characterizations of the semantic relation between phenomenal concepts and their referents do not explicitly employ the notion of direct reference. And so it is worth pointing out that my argument applies to these philosophers as well. What (CR) requires is that phenomenal concepts do not refer by way of modes of presentation that would make it possible for subjects to use different phenomenal concepts to refer to the same phenomenal property. That is guaranteed even on models that do not speak of direct reference, as in Hill and McLaughlin 1999, Perry 2001, and Block 2006 (as I read them, at least).

That, then, is why a CE must accept (CR)—physical duplicates could not refer to the same phenomenal quality with different phenomenal concepts—and thus (TI) if he accepts (EPC).²² And since (A) and (TI) entail externalism about phenomenal character, he must accept that too: physical twins could have experiences with different phenomenal qualities. I have focused primarily on phenomenal color qualities, but I suspect my arguments could be applied to some other phenomenal qualities as well. My aim in this paper, however, is simply to show that the CE must grant that physical twins could have experiences with different phenomenal qualities, and a focus on phenomenal color qualities is sufficient to do that.²³

²² The proposition that different phenomenal concepts could not refer to the same phenomenal quality does not, with (EPC), entail Twin Inability. The two propositions are compatible with possibilities such as that whenever physical twins have different phenomenal color concepts, say, their experiences have few or no phenomenal color qualities. But there is little reason to entertain such possibilities, as our example of the twins and the tomato reveals.

²³ I am now in a position to explain the relationship between my treatment of these issues and Dretske's. Dretske (1995, ch. 5) and I both argue that content externalism leads to externalism about phenomenal character, and that part of the reason it does is that content externalism (or for me, many standard arguments for content externalism) imply that the primary concepts through which we think about phenomenal qualities are themselves externally determined. One important respect in which our arguments differ concerns the reasons for thinking that content externalism implies such an externalism about phenomenal concepts. For Dretske, this implication follows quickly from his representationalist theory, and so he simply assumes the implication on that basis. But I am concerned with those who resist representationalism. It is views like the qualia realist's for which the conjunction of content externalism and internalism about phenomenal character would appear to provide little problem, and for which externalism about phenomenal character is perhaps especially counter-intuitive. And little has been done in work on these topics to show why anyone who is not a representationalist should suppose that the standard arguments for content externalism lead to externalism about phenomenal concepts. Indeed, many qualia realists would resist this idea. Some of the central arguments of this paper are thus directed at showing why this is the case. Another significant difference between us concerns the relation between externalism about phenomenal concepts and externalism about phenomenal character. Dretske assumes that if phenomenal qualities are introspectively accessible (or "knowable"), then externalism about phenomenal concepts implies externalism about phenomenal character. But this is not as straightforward as Dretske makes it seem. Dretske does not countenance the salient possibility that individuals can think about, or "access," the same phenomenal quality by employing different concepts. This too is the result of his assuming a representationalist model.

7. More Objections and Replies

Let us take stock of where we are. I have argued that Burgean CEs who hold a demonstration-based account of phenomenal concepts must be externalist about phenomenal character. While many CEs have been persuaded by Burge's argument, though, some will endorse content externalism for other reasons. In section 8, I will explain why the arguments I advanced in sections 5 and 6 can be applied similarly to CEs who are moved by either of the other sorts of influential argument for content externalism. And in section 9, I will explain why similar considerations can be applied to CEs who might reject the premise about the role of demonstration or attention in the formation of phenomenal concepts. Before turning to either of these topics, though, I want in this section to address three more objections my reader might have in mind at this juncture. Here too, my discussion of these objections should help bring my argument into clearer focus.

Objection 4

The first objection I will consider here is the one I raised at the end of section 5: How could Twin Al's experience be phenomenal reen but not phenomenal red? Before the year 4000, anything that has been observed and is reen is also red, by definition.

We must be careful here. It is true that by definition anything that has been observed before 4000 and is reen is also red. But that does not imply that anything that has been observed before 4000 and is *phenomenal* reen is also *phenomenal* red. Consider the representationalist model of phenomenal quality. On that model, what it is for an experience of a tomato to be phenomenal red is for the experience to represent (in a particular way) the tomato as being red. Likewise, what it is for the experience to be phenomenal reen is for it to represent the tomato as being reen. But it does not follow from the fact that a particular

experience (that is “observed” before 4000) *represents* a tomato as being reen that the experience also represents the tomato as being red. That is so, even though from the fact that an experience observed before 4000 correctly represents the tomato as being reen, it does follow that the tomato is red. Having the property phenomenal reen (and being observed before 4000) does not on all models of phenomenal character imply having the property phenomenal red.

My reader will be quick to point out that even if the entailment does not hold on the representationalist model, the focus of my argument are those philosophers who resist representationalism, such as qualia realists. And, one might suppose, on the qualia realist model the fact that an experience is phenomenal reen (and is observed before 4000) does imply that the experience is also phenomenal red. But even if this implication holds on the qualia realist model (and it may not), we must keep in mind the dialectical structure of my argument. I have been exploring whether those who reject representationalism can maintain a consistent picture of things while embracing both content externalism and internalism about phenomenal character, and have been arguing that they cannot, that they are led into an absurdity. My objector then objects to a part of my argument for this claim by responding, “So are you saying that content externalism (together with (A)) suggests that a person could have an experience that is phenomenal reen (and observed before 4000) but that is not phenomenal red? Isn’t that obviously incorrect?” And I am saying, if it is obviously incorrect, it is so only on certain models of phenomenal character, such as perhaps qualia realism. Its incorrectness on the qualia realist would suggest not that my argument is fallacious but that there is a significant tension between externalism about content and qualia realism. It would reveal that the

externalist about content is restricted to models of phenomenal character on which the consequence is innocuous, such as representationalism.

Objection 5

Here is a series of objections or questions one might ask about our first premise, Accessibility, or (A): “(A) suggests that it is not possible for someone to have an experience with, say, a scarlet phenomenal quality if that person does not possess the concept *scarlet* (or *phenomenal scarlet*) but possesses only the concept *red* (or *phenomenal red*). But surely that is false. My experience has many phenomenal qualities of which I do not have concepts.”

As formulated, the objection is off the mark. (A) does not imply that it is not possible for someone to have an experience with a particular phenomenal quality without having a concept that refers to that phenomenal quality. What (A) implies is that it is not possible for someone (who is capable of introspection) to have an experience with a particular phenomenal quality without having *the ability to employ* a concept that refers to that phenomenal quality. For all (A) says, it is possible for a person to have an experience with a phenomenal quality and not to possess a phenomenal concept that refers to that quality, as long as she has the ability to form and employ that concept through introspection. It is consistent with (A) that a subject whose experience is phenomenal scarlet does not possess the concept *phenomenal scarlet* but has the ability to form the concept *phenomenal scarlet* on the spot, e.g. by focusing on the phenomenal shade of the experience. One need not even already possess the concept *scarlet* (as opposed to *phenomenal scarlet*) in order to do this. Nor need one understand the word “scarlet.” One might, for instance, attend to the shade in question by thinking something like *this phenomenal shade*.

I will return to this idea of forming a concept “on the spot” in a moment. Let me first address a related question that this objection raises. How fine-grained must the concepts be by means of which a subject must be able to “access” the phenomenal qualities of her experience? If my experience is phenomenal scarlet, must I be able to employ the concept *phenomenal scarlet*, or would the concept *phenomenal red* suffice? The spirit of the notion that phenomenal character is introspectively accessible would seem to guarantee that a subject can access or become aware not only of the phenomenal *red* property of her experience but of its phenomenal shade too. Someone who proposed that it would suffice for the subject to be able to employ the concept *phenomenal red* would need to explain the sense in which the phenomenal scarlet quality of the subject’s experience is truly accessible to the subject, given that introspective access is not to be understood on a perceptual model. Regardless, most important for our purposes is to see that my argument does not depend upon how this question should be answered. For we have already seen that a subject who can form the concept *phenomenal red* could have a twin who can form only the concept *phenomenal reen*. And the difference between these concepts is not a matter of grain.

Now, my emphasis on a subject’s ability to form certain phenomenal concepts “on the spot” raises a question about the force or scope of the ability guaranteed by (A). Once again, (A) reads:

- (A) For any phenomenal quality of a subject’s experience, if the subject introspectively attends to her experience, she can employ a phenomenal concept that refers to that quality.

My reader might ask: if we include the proviso “if the subject introspectively attends to her experience,” why not similarly add the proviso “if the subject is capable of forming such a phenomenal concept”?

The answer is this. The objector is proposing to amend (A) in this way in order to allow for the possibility that a subject’s experience has a phenomenal quality, such as phenomenal red, but because of her external environment (in this case, her community) she is able to form only the concept *phenomenal reen*. Rather than infer from my argument that the CE must reject internalism about phenomenal character, the objector proposes that we infer from it that we must allow for such possibilities, i.e., that we allow for the possibility that a subject’s experience has a phenomenal quality that she cannot become introspectively aware of, because, due to her external environment, she cannot employ a phenomenal concept that refers to it. But countenancing such possibilities runs far afoul of the standard understanding of the introspective accessibility of phenomenal qualities. A subject’s ability to access the phenomenal qualities of her experience is not typically thought to be conditional on her external environment’s being a certain way. Phenomenal qualities are typically thought of as being, for instance, “immediately presented to us in introspection” (Raffman 1995). Sydney Shoemaker writes:

So self-blindness with respect to pain seems to be an impossibility. What goes for pain would seem to go as well for itches, tingles, and the like. And it would also seem to go for such phenomena as having a ringing in one’s ears. It would sound more than a little ludicrous to suggest that countless others have the same condition but, mercifully, are totally unaware of it, being self-blind with respect to that particular mental phenomenon. I am not talking about the possibility, which I do not deny, that some people have it but do not notice it. What would constitute self-blindness is not not-noticing but the impossibility of noticing.²⁴

²⁴ Shoemaker 1994, 229. Shoemaker places the final two sentences quoted here in a footnote.

Of course, a philosopher who is adamant about retaining the conjunction of externalism about content and internalism about phenomenal character might choose to abandon the standard idea about introspective accessibility. But that would be a substantial idea to jettison, with significant consequences. He would be allowing for the possibility that a subject has many phenomenal qualities that she is simply unable to access introspectively, even though she is capable of introspection more generally.²⁵ Shoemaker's example of ringing in the ears brings out how foreign an idea this is. But if that is the route one chooses to take in the face of my argument, then a primary lesson of the arguments in this paper would be that those who wish to retain the conjunction of externalism about content and internalism about phenomenal character must significantly re-think their notion of introspective accessibility.

Objection 6

Another objection: "You conclude that a CE must be an externalist about phenomenal character. But how could, for instance, a qualia realist be an externalist about phenomenal character? How could a qualia realist, who holds that phenomenal character involves (or is constituted by, or explained by) qualities of experience that are *intrinsic* qualities, suppose that such properties are in part individuated by factors beyond a subject's physical constitution? Or by a subject's *concepts*?" This objection presumably depends upon a materialist conception of the mind as well as perhaps a dubitable conception of what it is to be an intrinsic property. Even so, what is once again most relevant for our purposes is that if the qualia realist cannot satisfactorily make sense of externalism about phenomenal character, then my argument reveals there is a tension between qualia realism and content externalism more generally.

²⁵ It is true that some subjects would have the ability to form the other concepts just as we have formed the concept *reen* out of the concepts *red* and *green*, and *observed before the year 4000*. However, the

8. Other Families of Content Externalism

My argument in section 5 that the CE must accept (EPC) depended on the CE's accepting Burge's argument for content externalism. My argument in section 6 that he must accept (CR) did not. In this section, then, I will explain why my argument that he must accept (EPC) can be applied similarly to CEs influenced by Putnam's Twin Earth Argument and those influenced by externalist arguments from normativity. I will begin with the latter.

To possess a concept, it is said, one must grasp the distinction between the conditions under which the concept applies and the conditions under which it does not. For every concept, there is a corresponding distinction. Some philosophers argue that what makes possible there even being such a distinction is in part something that is "external" to any individual who possesses the corresponding concept. Normative externalists sometimes endorse a "communitarian" account (McDowell 1984, Pettit 1990, Davidson 1991, Stroud 1996), according to which such a distinction requires that thinkers stand in certain relations to a social environment. Since on this view *all* concepts are externally individuated, phenomenal concepts themselves are.

Similarly, phenomenal concepts are externally individuated on many "teleological" accounts of content, according to which what makes possible the existence of a distinction between the conditions under which a concept applies and the conditions under which it does not involves the function of the corresponding brain state. Many teleologists appeal to evolutionary history (Millikan 1984, Papineau 1993, Dretske 1995). For instance, Dretske claims that what determines what a particular brain state represents (i.e., what determines its content) is the information that being in such a state has historically had the function of providing. And this is

spirit of the idea of introspective access does not involve this kind of conceptual fancywork.

an external matter. Unlike communitarianism, though, the view that function is what (in part) grounds these distinctions is not, strictly speaking, incompatible with internalism about phenomenal concepts. It would depend upon the teleologist's account of the nature and source of function. Most teleological accounts in currency (if not all), however, would render phenomenal concepts sometimes externally individuated.²⁶

This leaves CEs who accept Putnam's Twin Earth Argument but neither Burge's argument nor arguments from normativity. In the case of Putnam's argument, as in that of Burge's, we cannot simply assume that the CE must accept (EPC). Like Burge, Putnam does not claim that *all* concepts are externally determined, nor does he explicitly address phenomenal concepts.²⁷ Indeed, one might think that phenomenal concepts are precisely the sort of concept to which his argument would *not* apply. But I suspect the considerations I raised for Burge's argument *would* ultimately apply to Putnam's argument. The details would be different, however, and matters are admittedly less clear. Putnam argues that physical twins could mean different things by the word "water," because one of their linguistic communities could have originally ostended H₂O when ostensibly defining the word "water," while the other's community ostended XYZ (1975, 585). When considering Putnam's argument, then, there are *two* ostensions or demonstrations, between which we must distinguish: the ostensions or demonstrations through which we acquire the concepts Putnam explicitly addresses (such as *water*), and the demonstrations through which we form phenomenal concepts. (We are still discussing the CE who accepts the demonstration-based model of phenomenal concepts.) For the internalist about phenomenal character, Putnam's argument concerning "water" could not similarly apply to phenomenal concepts,

²⁶ See Dretske 1995 and Papineau 2002 for two philosophers who explicitly infer (EPC) from their teleological accounts of content.

²⁷ Putnam focuses more on words than concepts, but his conclusion is typically taken to apply to concepts as well.

because the phenomenal properties of the twins' experiences could not vary as does the molecular make-up of "water," a variance that is required for the argument.

This, however, does not imply that Putnam's argument does not have externalist implications for phenomenal concepts. The crucial question would again be whether any of the concepts employed in the demonstration through which individuals form phenomenal concepts are themselves externally individuated on Putnam's account. Putnam focuses most on natural kind words, but he claims that "the points we have made apply to many other kinds of words as well. They apply to the great majority of all nouns, and to other parts of speech as well." (1975, 591.) If Putnam's argument extends to nouns such as "color," then the arguments I marshaled with respect to Burge's argument might similarly apply.

It is difficult to know whether "color" is one of the nouns that is externally individuated on Putnam's account (and if so, whether a phenomenal concept formed through a demonstration employing the concept *color* would thus be externally individuated too). I think it is reasonable to expect that, for at least some phenomenal qualities, some of the concepts employed in demonstrating them are externally individuated on Putnam's view. But this remains only a suspicion. Regardless, even if I have shown only that two of the three influential families of externalism about content lead to externalism about phenomenal concepts (and thus externalism about phenomenal character), this would still be of considerable import.

9. Other Accounts of Phenomenal Concepts

My arguments that the CE must accept (EPC) depended on the CE's accepting the common view that the formation of phenomenal concepts involves, in basic cases, a process of demonstration or attention. (My argument that the CE must accept (CR) did not.) Could a CE

resist (EPC) by endorsing some other conception of phenomenal concepts? Given that the CE rejects representationalism, it seems the CE would not adopt a representationalist account of phenomenal concepts, according to which phenomenal concepts are to be understood entirely in representational terms (e.g., Dretske 1995). And even if he did, he would presumably be led to (EPC) anyway, since he is an externalist about content (or representation). Nor could anyone who holds that phenomenal character is introspectively accessible adopt a deflationist account of phenomenal concepts, on which there are no phenomenal concepts. If introspection involves the employment of phenomenal concepts, then to deny that we have phenomenal concepts would render one unable to explain the accessibility of phenomenal qualities.

There are still other models of phenomenal concepts, though, that do not explicitly emphasize demonstration. David Papineau (2002), for instance, urges us to understand phenomenal concepts on a “quotational” model. On his view, phenomenal concepts are compound terms consisting of “some state of perceptual classification or re-creation” that enters into the frame provided by a “general experience operator” such as “the experience: ---” (Papineau 2002, 116). The referent of the concept, he says, is whatever appropriately “resembles” that which enters into this frame (i.e., that which is “quoted”). In some cases, the state quoted is a faint copy of the concept’s referent; in others, it is an intensification of it.

What determines what states “appropriately resemble” the state quoted, on Papineau’s view? In what *respect* must the states resemble one another? Papineau’s preferred view appears to be teleological. He says, “Phenomenal concepts refer to items that resemble their ‘fillings’ . . . because it is the function of such concepts to track those items.” (2002, 121.) And

since biological purposes are to be “cased out aetiologically, in terms of histories of natural selection” (2002, 113), Papineau’s model of phenomenal concepts leads to (EPC).^{28, 29}

Likewise, a CE who adopted an “information-theoretic” account of phenomenal concepts of the sort offered by Murat Aydede and Güven Güzeldere (2005) would also be led to (EPC). According to Aydede and Güzeldere, we acquire our phenomenal concepts (e.g., *phenomenal yellow*) directly from our “sensory” concepts (e.g., *yellow*). And we acquire our sensory concepts from our sensory experiences (e.g., those of lemons). On Aydede and Güzeldere’s account, sensory concepts have both a semantic content and an *informational* content. The semantic content of *yellow* is yellowness. But the information that the sensory concept carries is more than just that of yellowness. The structure of the “information flow,” they say, is such that *yellow* carries information about yellowness by carrying information about the experience of yellow. A sensory concept carries information about the sensory experience from which the sensory concept was formed. The informational content of *yellow* is thus given by the following ordered pair: <yellowness, experience of yellowness>. Phenomenal concepts are formed from sensory concepts through a mechanism (introspection) through which there occurs a “semantic switch or shift.” Introspection takes the second element of the information

²⁸ Papineau also countenances the possibility of appealing to the causal properties of phenomenal concepts as opposed to their teleological ones, but he is wary (as am I) of the difficulties concerning misrepresentation that causal or informational accounts of content face. Still, Papineau does not rule out the possibility of a “revised version of the causal theory sophisticated enough to deal with misrepresentation” (Papineau 2002, 113). Whether such a view would ultimately entail (EPC) would depend on its details.

²⁹ Papineau (2007) has recently revised his account of phenomenal concepts. I discuss his older account here because of the substantial attention it has received, but my arguments apply similarly to his new account.

content of the sensory concept (in this case, experience of yellowness), and makes it the semantic content of the phenomenal concept. And thus the phenomenal concept is formed.

It is easy to see why on this account too, if sensory concepts such as color concepts are externally determined, so too will be the corresponding phenomenal concepts. On this view, “the only conceptual resources that we have in our disposal to conceive of our experiences and their qualities in introspection are the very same ones available to us in conceiving what our experiences present” (227). If sensory concepts like color concepts are externally individuated, then their semantic contents, which are identical to the first components of their informational contents, are externally individuated. And if the first component of the informational content of a sensory concept is externally individuated, then so too will the second component be, because of the intimate link between the formation and identity of the two components. If the first component is *X*, the second component is *experience of X*. For instance, on Aydede and Güzeldere’s particular account, what individuates the first component are teleological matters. The first component is individuated by the information that the subject’s brain state has the function to carry. So if our subject’s twin had an environment or history such that the function of her brain state was to carry information about yellow-orangeness, say (as opposed to yellowness), then the informational content of her sensory concept would be <yellow-orangeness, experience of yellow-orangeness>. Accordingly, the semantic content of the phenomenal concept formed from this sensory concept would be *experience of yellow-orangeness*. Thus, the CE who adopts Aydede and Güzeldere’s account of phenomenal concepts will have to accept (EPC). On most, if not all, feasible models of phenomenal concepts, then, the CE is led to (EPC).

10. Conclusion

That, then, is why an externalist about content must also be an externalist about phenomenal character. Externalism is true either of *both* content and phenomenal character, or of neither. The implications of this result are various. First, if those who reject representationalist models of phenomenal character cannot themselves maintain the conjunction of externalism about content and internalism about phenomenal character, then the representationalist's celebrated inability to maintain it cannot be wielded in objection to him. For some philosophers, this has constituted the most significant problem for representationalism. Second, the many philosophers who embrace the conjunction face a decision: abandon content externalism or abandon internalism about phenomenal character. For many, this will be a difficult decision to make, with significant ramifications of its own. Similarly, those philosophers who have taken a stance on only one of the two externalism/internalism debates must now be seen as committed to a particular stance on the other. Third, to the extent that internalism about phenomenal character attends qualia realism, as it typically does, content externalism is in tension with qualia realism itself. We saw other potential indications of this tension along the way.

As I mentioned at the outset, I myself am drawn most of all to content externalism, and so the arguments of this paper lead me to embrace externalism about phenomenal character. In this paper, however, I have not argued at all on behalf of content externalism. And so the content internalist could just as easily capitalize on the wide appeal of internalism about phenomenal character and employ my argument in a *reductio* of content externalism. Whichever way one chooses to go, a more general methodological thesis has yet again been corroborated:

philosophical inquiry about phenomenal character, or about consciousness more generally, cannot be pursued independently of philosophical work on the conceptual.³⁰

References

- Alter, T. and Walter, S. eds. (2007) *Phenomenal Concepts and Phenomenal Knowledge* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).
- Aydede, M. and Güzeldere, G. (2005) "Cognitive Architecture, Concepts, and Introspection" *Noûs*, 39 (2): 197-255.
- Balog, K. (1999) "Conceivability, Possibility, and the Mind-Body Problem" *Philosophical Review*, 108 (4): 497-528.
- Block, N. (1990) "Inverted Earth". Reprinted in Block, Flanagan, and Güzeldere (1997).
- Block, N. (1996) "Mental Paint and Mental Latex" in *Philosophical Issues 7*, ed. E. Villanueva (Atascadero, CA: Ridgeview Publishing Co.).
- Block, N. (2003) "Mental Paint". In Hahn and Ramberg (2003).
- Block, N. (2006) "Max Black's Objection to Mind-Body Identity". Reprinted in Alter and Walter (2007).
- Block, N., Flanagan, O., and Güzeldere G. eds. (1997) *The Nature of Consciousness* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press).
- Boghossian, P. A. (1989) "Content and Self-Knowledge" *Philosophical Topics* 17.
- Boghossian, P. A., and Velleman, J. D. (1989) "Colour as a Secondary Quality" *Mind*, 98 (1): 81-103.
- Burge, T. (1979) "Individualism and the Mental". Reprinted in *The Nature of Mind*, ed. D. Rosenthal (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991).
- Burge, T. (2003) "Qualia and Intentional Content: Reply to Block". In Hahn and Ramberg (2003).
- Byrne, A. and Tye, M. (2006) "Qualia ain't in the head" *Noûs* 40 (2): 241-255.
- Chalmers, D. ed. (2002) *Philosophy of Mind: Classical and Contemporary Readings* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).
- Chalmers, D. (2003) "The Content and Epistemology of Phenomenal Belief". In Smith and Jovic (2003).
- Davidson, D. (1991) "Three Varieties of Knowledge" in *A.J. Ayer: Memorial Essays. Royal Institute of Philosophy Supplement*, ed. A. P. Griffiths (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- Dretske, F. (1995) *Naturalizing the Mind* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press).
- Ellis, J. (2007) "Content Externalism and Phenomenal Character: A New Worry about Privileged Access" *Synthese* 159: 47-60.
- Gertler, B. (2001) "Introspecting Phenomenal States" *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 63: 305-28.
- Goodman, N. (1955) *Fact, Fiction, and Forecast* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press).
- Hahn, M. and Ramberg, B. eds. (2003) *Reflections and Replies: Essays on the Philosophy of Tyler Burge* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press).

³⁰ Acknowledgments.

- Heil, J. (2004) "Natural Intentionality". In Schantz (2004).
- Hill, C. and McLaughlin, B. (1999) "There Are Fewer Things in Reality Than Are Dreamt of in Chalmers's Philosophy" *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 59 (2): 445-454.
- Horgan, T., Tienson, J., and Graham, G. (2004) "Phenomenal Intentionality and the Brain in a Vat". In Schantz (2004).
- Jackson, F. (1982) "Epiphenomenal Qualia" *Philosophical Quarterly* 32.
- Levin, J. (2007) "What Is a Phenomenal Concept?" In Alter and Walter (2007).
- Levine, J. (2001) *Purple Haze* (New York: Oxford University Press).
- Loar, B. (1990) "Phenomenal States" in *Philosophical Perspectives 4: Action Theory and Philosophy of Mind*, ed. J. Tomberlin (Atascadero, CA: Ridgeview).
- Loar, B. (1997) "Phenomenal States" (Revised version). Reprinted in Block, Flanagan, and Güzeldere (1997).
- Loar, B. (2003) "Transparent Experience and the Availability of Qualia". In Smith and Jokic (2003).
- Lycan, W. (1996) *Consciousness and Experience* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press).
- McDowell, J. (1984) "Wittgenstein on Following a Rule" *Synthese* 58: 325-363.
- Millikan, R. (1984) *Language, Thought, and Other Biological Categories: New Foundations for Realism* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press).
- Noë, A. (2006) "Experience without the Head" in *Perceptual Experience*, eds. T. S. Gendler and J. Hawthorne (USA: Oxford University Press).
- Papineau, D. (1993) *Philosophical Naturalism* (Oxford: Blackwell).
- Papineau, D. (2002) *Thinking about Consciousness* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).
- Papineau, D. (2007) "Phenomenal and Perceptual Concepts". In Alter and Walter (2007).
- Pautz, A. (2006) "Sensory Awareness Is not a Wide Physical Relation: An Empirical Argument Against Externalist Intentionalism" *Noûs* 40 (2): 205-240.
- Peacocke, C. (1983) *Sense and Content: Experience, Thought, and their Relations* (Oxford: Clarendon Press).
- Peacocke, C. (1992) *A Study of Concepts* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press).
- Perry, J. (2001) *Knowledge, Possibility, and Consciousness* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press).
- Pettit, P. (1990) "The Reality of Rule-Following" *Mind* 99: 1-21.
- Putnam, H. (1975) "The Meaning of 'Meaning'". Reprinted in Chalmers (2002).
- Raffman, D. (1995) "On the Persistence of Phenomenology" in *Conscious Experience*, ed. T. Metzinger (Ferdinand Schöningh).
- Rey, G. (1998) "A Narrow Representationalist Account of Qualitative Experience" in *Philosophical Perspectives* 12, ed. J. Tomberlin (Oxford: Blackwell).
- Schantz, R. ed. (2004) *The Externalist Challenge* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter).
- Searle, J. (1980) *Intentionality* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press).
- Searle, J. (1992) *Rediscovery of the Mind* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press).
- Shoemaker, S. (1994) "The Royce Lectures: Self-Knowledge and 'Inner Sense'". Reprinted in his *The First-Person Perspective and Other Essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
- Shoemaker, S. (1998) "Two Cheers for Representationalism" *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 58 (3): 671-678.
- Smart, J. J. (1959) "Sensations and Brain Processes" *Philosophical Review* 68: 141-156.
- Smith, Q. and Jokic, A. eds. (2003) *Consciousness: New Philosophical Essays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

- Sosa, E. (2003) "Privileged Access". In Smith and Jokic (2003).
- Stroud, B. (1996) "Mind, Meaning, and Practice" in *The Cambridge Companion to Wittgenstein*, eds. H. Sluga and D. Stern (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- Tye, M. (1995) *Ten Problems of Consciousness* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press).
- Tye, M. (2003) "A Theory of Phenomenal Concepts" in *Minds and Persons: Royal Institute of Philosophy Supplement 53*, ed. A. O'Hear (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- White, S. (1986) "Curse of the Qualia" *Synthese* 68: 333-368.