# Varieties of Representationalism

# Consciousness and Intentionality

- Background question:

  - What is the relationship between the phenomenal and the intentional?

# Phenomenal and Representational Properties

- Phenomenal, representational properties = properties of subjects (alternatively, mental states).

- Phenomenal property = property characterizing an aspect of what it is like to be a subject

- Pure representational property = property of representing such-and-such

- Impure representational property = property of representing such-and-such in such-and-such a way.

# Question

- What is the relationship between phenomenal and represeentational properties?

- Are there entailments between these?  (Which direction?)

- Is one class reducible to the other?  (Ditto.)

- Are phenomenal properties identical (or equivalent) to representational properties?

  - Representationalist: yes
  - Antirepresentationalist: no
  - Block: "the greatest chasm in the philosophy of mind"

# Entailment I

- Do pure representational properties entail phenomenal properties?

    - Plausibly, no. A given content can plausibly be represented unconsciously, without associated phenomenal properties.

- Weaker tenable theses? Entailment by:
    - Complexes of pure representional properties?
    - Special pure representational properties?
    - Impure representational properties?

# Entailment II

- Do phenomenal properties entail pure representational properties?
    - Plausibly yes - at least for perceptual phenomenal properties.

- A given perceptual phenomenal state by its nature presents the world as being a certain way, and is thereby assessable for accuracy.

    - Siewert, Horgan/Tienson, Loar, Byrne, …

# Identity I

- Are phenomenal properties identical (or equivalent) to pure representational properties?

- Plausibly no, because of failure of reverse entailment due to unconscious representation (see Entailment I).

  - Only possibility: special contents that cannot be nonphenomenally represented.

# Identity II

- Are (perceptual) phenomenal properties identical (or equivalent) to impure representational properties?

- Plausibly yes, if the "way" distinguishes conscious/unconscious representation

- E.g.: phenomenal property P <->
  phenomenally representing such-and-such
  or    visually-phenomenally representing such-and-such

  - This requires that distinct phenomenal properties (or distinct visual phenomenal properties) entail distinct pure representational properties

# Representationalism

- **Representationalism**: phenomenal property <-> representing such-and-such in such-and-such a way

- **Reductive representationalism**: terms on right-hand-side can be understood without appeal to the phenomenal

- **Nonreductive representationalism**: terms on right-hand-side cannot be understood without appeal to the phenomenal.

# Functionalist Representationalism

- **Functionalist representationalism** (Tye, etc):  RHS terms can be understood in (broadly) causal/functional terms
  - "such-and-such way" =  under an appropriate functional role (global availability, etc)

- Amounts to a sort of functionalism about the phenomenal/ nonphenomenal distinction
  - Most arguments for these views are really arguments for the representationalist aspect, not the functionalist aspect.
  - Standard objections to functionalism about the phenomenal apply.

- So the good reasons to accept representationalism do not obviously yield good reasons to accept reductive representationalism.

# Nonreductive Representationalism

- Phenomenal property <-> Phenomenally representing content C
  or: visually-phenomenally representing C.


- Further: content C may also presuppose the phenomenal
  - Cf. projectivism, Shoemaker, Stoljar
  - P-representing object as having quale Q
  - P-representing object as disposed to cause quale Q.
  - …

- If so: doubly nonreductive representationalism?

# Internalist and Externalist Representationalism

- Phenomenal properties are often thought to be narrow
- Representational properties are often thought to be wide

- Reactions:
  - (i) deny representationalism (Block)
  - (ii) hold that phenomenal properties are wide (Lycan, Dretske)
  - (iii) hold that the relevant representational properties are narrow.

- (ii) = externalist representationalism
- (iii) = internalist representationalism

# Millian (Extensional) Representationalism

- Millian (extensional) representationalism: the relevant representational contents are extensional (referential) contents.
  - Typically: properties attributed by experiences
  - Standard representationalism: (e.g.) color properties
  - Shoemaker: dispositional properties

- Extensional representational properties are typically wide properties -> externalist representationalism.
  - Shoemaker's view allows narrow properties, but with costs re attribution of colors by experiences.

# Fregean (Intensional) Representationalism

- Fregean (intensional) representationalism: the relevant representational contents are intensional (Fregean) contents
  - In the domain of senses/modes of presentation rather than extension.

- E.g. Fregean content = condition on extension
  - Cf. *Hesperus*: morning star (intension), Venus (extension)
  - quasi-descriptive condition, mirroring cognitive role
  - Argued elsewhere: all beliefs, perceptual states have Fregean (epistemic) contents

- Maybe: phenomenal property = representing such-and-such Fregean content in such-and-such a way.

- Phenomenal properties = (in effect) modes of presentation of extensions

# Example

- E.g. red experience:
  - extensional content (property attributed): *red*
  - intensional content (condition on property attributed) = *the property that typically causes phenomenally red experiences*

- So: the experience attributes (non-dispositional) colors, under a dispositional mode of presentation (cf. Shoemaker)

- Phenomenal contents are mode-of-presentation contents.
- Compatible with transparency: one always attends to modes of presentation by attending to referents.

# Summary

Phenomenal property = representing content C in manner M

- Pure [manner = phenomenal] vs. impure [manner = phenomenal+]
- Reductive [manner functionally reducible] vs nonreductive [not]

- Extensional [content is Millian] vs intensional [content is Fregean]
- Externalist [content is wide] vs internalist [content is narrow]
- Reductive [content is phenomenal-involving] vs nonreductive [not]