

## *Temporally Token-Reflexive Experiences*

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### **Introduction**

John Searle has argued that all perceptual experiences are token-reflexive, in the sense that they are constituents of their own veridicality conditions. Many philosophers have found the kind of token-reflexivity he attributes to experiences, which I will call *causal* token-reflexivity, unfaithful to perceptual phenomenology. In this paper, I develop an argument for a different sort of token-reflexivity in perceptual (as well as some non-perceptual) experiences, which I will call *temporal* token-reflexivity, and which ought to be phenomenologically unobjectionable.

### **I Conscious Experience and Token-Reflexivity**

It has sometimes been claimed that many states of consciousness have a reflexive character — that they are in some way partly about themselves. Traditionally, such claims have been made on behalf of certain states of self-awareness or self-knowledge (Castañeda 1966, Perry 1979, Burge 1989). More recently, Caston (2002) argued that in Aristotle's philosophy of mind all states of perceptual consciousness are regarded as

reflexive in this way. Hossack (2002) follows Thomas Reid in arguing that all sensations represent themselves. Perhaps the strongest claim in this vein is Brentano's (1874) view that every mental state is intentionally directed at itself. Brentano's claim rested on his view that all mental states were conscious; it is possible to formulate a 'neo-Brentanian' theory according to which not all mental states are conscious, but those that are do represent themselves (Kriegel 2003).

These accounts, and others similar to them, differ both in how they construe reflexive character and in how they argue for it. That is, they differ in both elucidation and argumentation. Sometimes the elucidation or the argumentation leaves something to be desired: it is not always clear what reflexive character is supposed to amount to, or what the grounds are for ascribing it to some or all conscious states. In both respects, Searle's (1983) account of token-reflexivity in perceptual consciousness is of major help.

According to Searle, perceptual experiences are token-reflexive in that a full specification of the truth conditions, or rather veridicality conditions, of a perceptual experience P must make reference to P itself. There is no way to specify the veridicality conditions of a perceptual experience fully and correctly without mentioning that very experience. The experience thus figures in its own veridicality conditions, in the sense that it is a constituent of the state of affairs that makes them up. On the assumption that the representational content of a perceptual experience is given by its veridicality conditions, it follows that every perceptual experience figures in its own representational content — which is to say that the experience represents itself.<sup>1</sup> This provides a clear *elucidation* of what the reflexive character of perceptual experiences amounts to.

As for Searle's *argument* for such reflexivity, it too is relatively straightforward. Suppose you hallucinate a purple swan in the middle of your living room, when a purple-dyed swan is entered into the room and placed exactly where your hallucinated swan would be. Intuitively, says Searle, this does not render your perceptual experience veridical. Your experience is still hallucinatory, still non-veridical. To rule out the veridicality of your experience, Searle proposes that we construe its veridicality conditions as featuring not only a purple swan, but a purple swan that is causally responsible for your experience. What would make your experience veridical is not just that there would be a purple swan in the middle of your living room, but that that swan would be

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1 Needless to say, the view is that the experience represents itself *among other things*, not that it exhausts its own representational content.

causally responsible for your having your experience. On this view, a perceptual experience *P* of an object *O* represents *O* to be the cause of *P*. Therefore, *P* figures in its own veridicality conditions, hence self-represents.

Thus Searle's account of perceptual reflexivity is clear with respect to both elucidation and argumentation. As such, it is also more open to straightforward objections. One immediate objection might be that Searle conflates the *semantic* and *epistemic* properties of the purple swan experience. Searle is right that something is not right about the experience. But what is wrong with it may not have to do with its veridicality value, but rather with its epistemic status. On this way of thinking, the experience is strictly veridical. It is just that it is not warranted, in the sense that there is not the right connection between its veridicality and its veridicality-maker.

One way to capture this is to note that the experience is not *safe* in something like Sosa's (1999) sense. Sosa defines the following reliabilist virtue of beliefs: a belief that *p* is safe just in case in nearby possible worlds where the subject believes that *p*, it is indeed the case that *p*.<sup>2</sup> We might extend the notion of safety to experiences: an experience *E* as of *X* is safe iff in nearby possible worlds in which the subject has *E*, *X* exists.<sup>3</sup> With this sense in mind, we can say that your purple swan experience is unsafe. And it being unsafe is sufficient to capture the dimension in which it is deficient, making it unnecessary to claim that the experience is non-veridical.

Interestingly, the main objection to Searle's token-reflexivity thesis that one finds in the literature is different, and is phenomenologically based (see Burge 1991, Soteriou 2000, Siegel 2006). The claim is that perceptual experiences simply do not seem to be the way Searle says they are, in the sense that there is nothing in the phenomenal character of a perceptual experience that corresponds to its being caused by its object. When I attend to my current perceptual experience of my laptop, I become aware of the laptop's shape, color, spatial location, etc. I do not become aware of the laptop's causal relationship to me. Although I may *realize* that the laptop is probably causally responsible for my experi-

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2 This virtue of safety is supposed to be the contrapositive of Nozick's (1981) 'sensitivity': a belief that *p* is sensitive just in case in nearby possible world where it is not the case that *p*, the subject does not believe that *p*. Because these virtues are defined in terms of counterfactuals, and counterfactuals do not contrapose, the contrapositives are not equivalent and the virtues are different.

3 To avoid questions about the formal objects of experiences, or whether they have propositional content or just 'objectual' content, we can very liberal in what we allow *X* to range over; for instance, we can allow it to range over states of affairs.

ence, in the sense of entering a doxastic state whose content is such, the relevant content is not phenomenologically manifest, as it were.

In fact, it is often thought, on broadly Humean grounds, that causal relations in general cannot be phenomenologically manifest in experience. And presumably many unsophisticated creatures who lack the concept of cause altogether can nonetheless have perceptual experiences. But even if we set aside these more general considerations, perceptual experiences simply do not always — not even ordinarily — seem to present the objects and events they are about as causing them.<sup>4</sup>

The purpose of this paper is to argue for a different kind of token-reflexivity in perceptual experience, as well as episodic memory and anticipation — one that ought to be phenomenologically unobjectionable. Instead of Searle's *causal* token-reflexivity, I will argue for a *temporal* token-reflexivity. More specifically, I will argue that a perceptual experience P of an object O represents O as simultaneous with P; a mnemonic experience M of an object O represents O as earlier than M; and an anticipatory experience A of O represents O as later than A. In all these experiences, the experience itself shows up in the full specification of its content, and is thus a constituent of its own veridicality condition.

There is a temporal phenomenology that these claims presuppose, and my contention is that it is much more initially plausible than the causal phenomenology Searle's thesis presupposes.

To a first approximation, the phenomenological claim I am going to presuppose is the following: (a) perceptual experiences involve a phenomenology of presentness; (b) mnemonic experiences involve a phenomenology of pastness; (c) anticipatory experiences involve a phenomenology of futureness. In essence, the claim is that conscious perception, memory, and anticipation bear a phenomenological 'tag' presenting their temporal orientation.

One way to get a grasp on the claim is to conceive of a number of simultaneously formed swampmen. Suppose four swampmen are formed, such that (i) the first comes into existence undergoing a perceptual experience of a palm tree, (ii) the second comes into existence *remembering* — in an episodic, imagistic sort of way — a qualitatively

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4 One way to bypass this phenomenological objection to causal token-reflexivity is to deny that the representational content of perceptual experiences is determined by their phenomenal character. This is to deny the supervenience of content on phenomenology. I will return to the issue of the supervenience of content on phenomenology in the next section, but for now I want to proceed on the relatively safe assumption that such supervenience is highly plausible, and that a theory of perceptual content that cuts the latter loose from perceptual phenomenology is to be avoided, other things being equal.

indistinguishable tree in qualitatively indistinguishable settings, (iii) the third comes into existence undergoing a similarly imagistic conscious *anticipation* of seeing a qualitatively indistinguishable tree, and (iv) the fourth comes into existence *visualizing* the tree. And let us suppose that the first swampman's is a rather unvivid perceptual experience, and the second's, third's, and fourth's are unusually vivid experiences of their own type, so that there is no difference in the phenomenal intensity and clarity of their respective experiences. The claim before us is that the *overall* phenomenology of the four swampmen is nonetheless subtly different. What it is like for each to undergo his experience is unlike what it is like for any of the others.<sup>5</sup>

I realize that this claim is not beyond reasonable doubt, and will address (what I take to be) the central objection to it toward the end of this section. But what I want to stress is that the claim is not obviously false, and in fact carries considerable intuitive conviction, in a way that Searlean causal phenomenology does not.

To be sure, it would be better if we could supply a positive argument for the existence of the relevant temporal phenomenology. But arguments for the existence of phenomenology are hard to come by. Suppose someone maintained that while visual, auditory, tactile, and gustatory experiences have a phenomenal character, olfactory ones do not. How would we refute such eliminativism about olfactory qualia? This question raises tremendous methodological challenges, addressing which would take us too far afield. Naturally, the problem is compounded for phenomenologies that are not as viscerally impressive as, say, color phenomenology (as I suppose temporal phenomenology is). I propose that we proceed on the assumption that there is the kind of temporal phenomenology I claim there is, and see where that assumption leads us. So I will presuppose that perceptual, mnemonic, and anticipatory experiences do have (respectively) a phenomenology of presentness, pastness, and futureness, and simply hope that the claim resonates with the reader as much as it does with me. The more skeptical reader is enjoined to treat what follows as an argument for the following conditional: *if* perceptual, mnemonic, and anticipatory experiences have the temporal phenomenology I say they do, *then* they are token-reflexive.

An objector might concede that there is something intuitive about the notion that perception, memory, and anticipation are intimately associ-

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5 Perhaps part of the claim could be that if you were one of the four swampmen, you would be able to tell which one you were, and you would be able to do so on first-person grounds, simply by consulting the phenomenology of your experience.

ated with a sense of temporal orientation, but insist that the association is not strictly phenomenological. The objector might propose that perceptual experiences simply tend to be accompanied by *beliefs* or *thoughts* to the effect that what is experienced is in the present; mnemonic experiences accompanied by beliefs or thoughts that what is experienced is in the past; and anticipatory ones that what is experienced is in the future. Thus while the overall mental life of our four swampmen is different, the difference is not phenomenological.

The objector's alternative account of the difference between conscious perception, memory, anticipation, and visualization is not unreasonable. But for it to have any bite, the thoughts and beliefs it appeals to must have no phenomenology. For if they did, it would be open to us to maintain that the difference in thoughts or beliefs *is* a phenomenological difference. Thus, one view is that (i) the differences among the four swampmen have to do with the thoughts that accompany their mental images, but (ii) these thoughts have their own phenomenal character,<sup>6</sup> and (iii) perceptual, mnemonic, anticipatory, and visualizing experiences are composite mental states comprised of a mental image and a phenomenologically manifest thought. The overall phenomenology of the experience could then be construed as given by the combined phenomenal characters of image and thought. This view allows the differences among the four swampmen to do with the thoughts that accompany their images, without making it the case that there is no phenomenological contrast between them. The objection must, then, be that there are *non-phenomenal* accompanying thoughts or beliefs that account all by themselves for the differences among the four swampmen. But it is harder to believe that the difference between our four swampmen is purely unconscious in this way.<sup>7</sup>

The objector also faces a challenge in addressing empirical research on so-called *source amnesia*.<sup>8</sup> Patients suffering from source amnesia have

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6 For a sustained argument for a phenomenology proper to thoughts, see Pitt 2004. As it happens, Pitt's argument appeals to the method of knowability (see Kriegel 2006): the basic argument is that there is a whole lot of first-person knowledge we have about our conscious thoughts: that they are thoughts, that they are the thoughts they are (with the contents they have), etc.

7 A further problem is that, on some views, swampmen do not *have* beliefs and thoughts. These are views that require thoughts and beliefs to have teleosemantically grounded wide contents, that is, contents dependent on a history of interaction with an external environment.

8 This condition has been known since the later 1950s (see Evans and Thorne 1966), and has been rigorously studied in experimental settings at least since the mid-1980s (see Schacter et al. 1984).

episodic memories of past events without knowing when or where they acquired those memories, or when and where the remembered events took place. Plausibly, what these patients lack is the ability to generate beliefs about the events they appear to themselves to remember. Nevertheless, they still experience their memories as *memories*, and can introspectively recognize them as such. They are not inclined to mistake them for perceptions, anticipations, or visualizations. That they are not inclined to mistake them for perceptions is perhaps due to the real-life difference in phenomenal intensity and clarity between perception and memory, but that they are not inclined to mistake them for anticipations and visualizations — even those that are not *voluntarily* conjured up, but rather pop into one's mind — cannot be similarly explained. More likely, the source-amnesiacs can read off from the phenomenology of their experiences that they are memories.

Before closing this section, a note on memories and anticipations. The mnemonic experiences we are dealing with here are so-called *episodic* memories, as distinguished from *semantic* memories (Tulving 1972). An episodic memory involves remembering an event from the subject's personal life, such as the first time one was taken to the zoo or the last time one saw a rainbow. A semantic memory is just a piece of information committed to memory, e.g., that Pope Benedict IX was eleven years old when he was elected to the papacy. Semantic memories are standing states that may exhibit no phenomenology, but an episodic memory is typically an occurrent and imagistic experience that does boast a phenomenological character. A similar distinction ought to be drawn for anticipation. We may call the two types of anticipation *propositional* and *episodic*. Propositional anticipation is the sort of detached doxastic state we typically express using a that-clause, as in 'I anticipate that Turkey will join the EU by 2012.' Episodic anticipation, by contrast, is the more engaged and personal form of anticipating that we would typically express using an imperfect nominal, as in 'I anticipate running into my department chairperson before the end of the week.' Episodic anticipation is typically occurrent and imagistic, whereas most propositional anticipation is tacit and purely doxastic or 'intellectual.' Thus, as I anticipate running into my department chair this week, I occurrently entertain an image of conversing with him in the department hallway. But my anticipation that Turkey will join the EU by 2012 is for the most part a tacitly held belief, and even when it is brought up to occurrent contemplation, it is not accompanied by any distinctive, non-generic imagery.

The purpose of this section has been to introduce the notion of temporal token-reflexivity, and to suggest that its phenomenological commitments are more initially plausible than those of causal token-reflexivity. In the next section, I argue that the temporal phenomenology we have

assumed is best thought of as representational in character. In the section after next, I will argue that the representational content of temporally imbued experiences is best thought of as token-reflexive. I will end with consideration of a number of objections.

## II From Temporal Phenomenology to Temporal Intentionality

In this section, I argue that temporal phenomenology is inherently representational. More precisely, the claim is that the phenomenologies of presentness, pastness, and futureness are content properties of the experiences that have them. I start by explaining what the claim is, then offer four considerations in its favor.

Many conscious experiences — probably most, perhaps all — are intentional, or representational: there is something they are *about*, or *of*. Thus, my current visual experience of the laptop before me is intentionally directed at, or represents, the laptop; my olfactory experience of the neighbor's coffee brew represents the brew (or its odor); my desire for an ice cream bar is intentionally directed at, or represents, the bar (or its flavor and texture);<sup>9</sup> and so on. To say that conscious experiences represent is not to say that there is nothing more to them than that they represent, or that their phenomenal character is exhausted by (or even supervenes upon) the fact that they represent what they do. That is, it is not to endorse the so-called representationalist theory of consciousness (Dretske 1995, Tye 2000).<sup>10</sup>

A familiar distinction in discussions of representation is between two poles of the representation relation: what-does-the-representing and what-is-being-represented. The number of rings on a tree trunk represents the tree's age; the rings do the representing, the age is being represented. This distinction is often more economically put in terms

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9 There are some disagreements among philosophers on the proper use of the term of 'representation.' Some would feel uncomfortable saying that desire represents or has representational content. But few would deny that it has *intentional* content. In this paper, I employ a liberal and doubtless somewhat technical sense of the term 'representation,' one that means more or less the same as 'intentionality.'

10 It is only to say that whatever else is true of most experiences, it is also true that they represent. Although compatible with representationalism, this claim is also compatible with the notion that conscious experiences' phenomenal character plays no role in the fact that they represent and varies independently of their representational content. Compare: the symbol  $c^a^t$  represents cats; but its property of being three-lettered does not play any role in the fact that it represents what it does.

of vehicles and contents: the *vehicle* of representation is what does the representing, the *content* is what is being represented (or at least what is supposed to be represented).<sup>11</sup> The rings on the tree constitute the representational vehicle, the tree's age is the representational content. Accordingly, in discussing the properties of representations, we ought to distinguish between properties a representation has in virtue of the vehicle it employs and those it has in virtue of the content it carries. Call the former *vehicular properties* and the latter *content properties*. More precisely: for any representation  $R$  and property  $F$ ,  $F$  is a vehicular property of  $R$  iff  $R$  is  $F$  in virtue of  $R$ 's representational vehicle;  $F$  is a content property of  $R$  iff  $R$  is  $F$  in virtue of  $R$ 's representational content.<sup>12</sup> Thus, the property of representing an animal is a content property of  $c^{\wedge}a^{\wedge}t$ , while the property of being three-lettered is a vehicular property of it.

The question I want to consider in the present section is whether the phenomenologies of presentness, pastness, and futureness are vehicular or content properties of perceptual, mnemonic, and anticipatory experiences. I will argue that they are content properties.<sup>13</sup>

It used to be widely held that phenomenological features are one and all purely vehicular. When you have a perceptual experience of a blue expanse, your experience instantiates a bluish phenomenal quality that is associated with, but is distinct from, the blueness instantiated by the expanse. It is a vehicular property of your experience. This vehicular property is often referred to as *blue'*. The traditional idea was that in a conscious experience of a blue expanse, the representational vehicle instantiates *blue'* and the representational content instantiates blue; and that the phenomenal character of the experience is to be identified with the vehicular *blue'*. Call this the *vehicular conception of phenomenology*.

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11 I add the parenthetical qualification because some philosophers like to use the word 'representation' and its cognates as success terms, so that misrepresentation is not treated as a species of representation. The parenthetical remark is for these philosophers.

12 If  $R$  is  $F$  in virtue of both its vehicle and its content, or in virtue of neither, then we might say that  $F$  is neither a vehicular property nor a content property of  $R$ .

13 For each, I will consider only two possibilities: that (i) every instance is a vehicular property and that (ii) every instance is a content property. I will not consider the possibility that (iii) some instances are vehicular properties and some are content properties. This third possibility may be coherent, but it is too antecedently implausible to merit worrying about (in general, we are not familiar with properties of representation some instances of which are due to the vehicle and some due to the content). In every case, I will argue for (ii). That is, I will argue that every instance of the phenomenologies of presentness, pastness, and futureness is a content property of the experience that instantiates it.

More recently, the view that all phenomenological features are content properties has become extremely popular. This is mainly due to an observation that has come to be known as the *transparency of experience* (Harman 1990). The idea is that whenever we try to introspect the qualities of our experiences, we manage only to become aware of the properties of what these are experiences *of*. When I turn my attention away from the laptop and onto my experience of the laptop, I am not presented with any new features I was not previously aware of. In that sense, when we examine our experiences, we cannot help but see right through them, as though they were transparent.

To further bring out the transparency of experience, consider the following scenario (Byrne 2001). Suppose your brain is hooked up to a machine — called ‘the inverter’ — that can rewire the visual channels in your brain in such a way that when the operator pushes a button, your reddish experiences become greenish and vice versa. Throughout time interval  $T$  you are hooked up to the inverter and look at a red fire engine. At some time  $t$  during  $T$ , the operator pushes the button. What happens? As far as you can tell from your first-person perspective, what happens at  $t$  is that the fire engine suddenly changes its color from red to green. Even though the operator only changes things in your brain, and not at all in the fire engine, it is the fire engine that appears, ‘from the inside,’ to have changed color. (This is so even if you are well aware of the situation.) This suggests, rather forcefully, that there is nothing to your visual experience of the fire engine that is apparent ‘from the inside’ other than its representational content. It suggests, that is, that the color phenomenology of your experience is a content property, not a vehicular property. Call this the *content conception of phenomenology*.<sup>14</sup>

The thesis of this section may be construed as the *content conception of temporal phenomenology*. According to the content conception of temporal phenomenology, the phenomenologies of presentness, pastness, and futureness are content properties. If so, and if these phenomenolo-

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14 The content conception of phenomenology is very close to representationalism, though they may not be exactly equivalent. Representationalism is associated with the further claim that an account of phenomenal qualities exhausts the theory of consciousness, and is associated in spirit at least both with a reductive program in philosophy of mind and with a rather deflationist conception of phenomenology. As it happens, I have sympathies with two of these three further commitments/associations. But since none of these further issues bears on the subject matter of the present paper, I restrict myself here to the content conception and disregard representationalism about consciousness. Note, as well, that there is no similar alignment of the vehicular conception of phenomenology with anti-representationalism: the former is the contrary, whereas the latter merely the contradictory, of the content conception and representationalism.

gies are present in perceptual, mnemonic, and anticipatory experiences, then perceptual experiences represent their objects as occurring or existing in the present, episodic memories represent theirs as occurring or existing in the past, and episodic anticipations theirs as in the future. The representational content of a perceptual experience is never simply of the form '*a* is *F*' (or 'there is an *x*, such that *x* is *F*'), but rather something like 'in the present, *a* is *F*' or '*a* is presently *F*' (or 'in the present, there is an *x*, such that *x* is *F*' or 'there is an *x*, such that *x* is presently *F*').<sup>15</sup> Similarly for mnemonic and anticipatory experiences.<sup>16</sup>

So far we have mentioned only the vehicular and content conceptions of phenomenology. We have ignored any mixed conception according to which *some* phenomenology is vehicular and *some* content-based. Such a mixed conception is relatively underrepresented in this area. Perhaps this is because there is some initial plausibility to the notion that phenomenology must be the same, along the content/vehicle dimension, across the board. Either all phenomenology is vehicular or all phenomenology is content.<sup>17</sup>

If we take this view, it would provide a direct line of argument for the thesis of this section. For the content conception of phenomenology is probably more plausible than the vehicle conception as a theory of *all* phenomenology (given, e.g., the manifest transparency of color experience). The 'direct' argument would proceed as follows: 1) either all phenomenological features are vehicular properties or all are content properties; 2) it is implausible that all phenomenological features are vehicular properties; therefore, 3) plausibly, all phenomenological features are content properties; 4) the feelings of presentness, pastness,

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15 Two points about this. First, in formulating these propositions as potentially capturing the content of experiences, I do not intend to commit to the notion that perception has propositional content. I merely use these formulations as a device to illustrate the temporal aspect of perceptual content. Second, I use two formulations for each content in order to bypass the debate on whether the content of a perceptual content is best represented as a singular proposition or an existentially quantified one. What rides on this issue is irrelevant to the present paper's considerations.

16 Thus there is a *representational* difference between the experiences of our four swampmen/counterparts: the first represents the palm tree as present; the second as past; the third represents it atemporally (or does not represent it temporally); and the fourth represents it as future. The phenomenological differences among the four express themselves in their experiences' contents.

17 One line of thought might be that phenomenal states form a natural kind, and that their forming a natural kind rules out the possibility of important underlying heterogeneity of the sort that would be implied by the construal of some phenomenology along vehicular lines and some along content lines.

and futureness are phenomenological features; therefore, 5) plausibly, the feelings of presentness, pastness, and futureness are content properties.

If we do *not* wish to commit to such a monolithic content conception of phenomenology, then there is no such direct argument for the thesis that temporal phenomenology is a content feature. And indeed it is often thought that while the transparency of experience is compelling for visual experience, it is less so for somatic experiences, emotional experiences, and/or moods.<sup>18</sup> For my part, when I introspect an episode of rage, I certainly seem to myself to become aware of a feature that does not belong to the enraging event or object, but to the experience proper.<sup>19</sup> Against this background, it is an open question whether temporal phenomenology is vehicular or content. That is, it is an open question whether it is more akin to the phenomenology of visual perception or to that of intense emotion.

In addressing this question, the first order of business is to consider whether temporal phenomenology is transparent. The verdict, it seems to me, is that indeed it is. When I introspect my present perceptual experience of the laptop before me, it is the laptop that is presented as existing in the present. Observe, first, that the feeling of presentness is not self-standing, but seems to attach to *something*: something is presented as in the present; and second, that what it seems to attach to is the perceived object: it is the perceived laptop that is presented as existing in the present. To be sure, I also *believe* that my experience exists in the present, but this awareness of the presentness of my experience is not a feature of the experience itself; it is a feature of my belief *about* the experience. The feeling of presentness instantiated by the experience itself seems to attach rather to the laptop perceived through it. That is to say, the temporal phenomenology of perceptual experiences is trans-

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18 On the face of it, a toothache is not about anything, and nor is an orgasm. Likewise, depression, anxiety, and elation do not appear to be about anything in particular. At the same time, both these kinds of alleged counter-example have been contested. Some have argued that somatic experiences are about something after all: they are about physiological events in one's body (Tye 2000). Thus, the content of a toothache is tissue damage in one's tooth, and the content of an orgasm is an altogether different event in an altogether different place. As for moods, a natural idea is that although they are not about *anything in particular*, they are about *everything in general* (Seager 1999). Thus, when one is depressed, everything seems dull and unexciting to one; when one is anxious, everything seems worrisome; and so on.

19 But see Tye 2000 for an attempt to account for emotional phenomenology in terms of the representation of bodily changes characteristic of emotional upheaval.

parent. This is evidence that temporal phenomenology is a content property.<sup>20</sup>

There is other evidence as well, and I will turn to it momentarily. But first let us consider the issue of transparency as it regards the feelings of pastness and futureness in episodic memory and anticipation. Here things are slightly more complicated than in the case of perception. They are complicated by the fact that episodic memory and anticipation have *layered contents*.<sup>21</sup> Consider my episodic memory of a particularly impressive palm tree I saw on my last visit to Miami. One may ask whether the proper object of my memory is the palm tree or the original experience of *seeing* the palm tree. The answer, I think, is 'both' (see Fernández 2006). When I remember seeing the palm tree, I represent the tree *by* representing the seeing of the tree. We might say that I have a direct representation of the original seeing and an indirect representation of the tree thereby seen. The same holds for episodic anticipation: when I anticipate seeing an impressive palm tree on my next visit to Miami, I represent the tree by representing the future seeing. In this sense, episodic memories and anticipations have two layered representational contents: one to do with the past or future experience of an object or event and another to do with the object or event itself.

When considering the temporal phenomenology of episodic memory and anticipation, they seem to be transparent inasmuch as the feeling of pastness or futureness attaches to the directly represented content. When I introspect my episodic memory of seeing the palm tree, as regards the feeling of pastness it involves, I find that the sense of pastness attaches to the original seeing. What the memory presents as having occurred in the past is the original perception of the tree.<sup>22</sup> But

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20 Perhaps this is why it is so natural to describe the feeling of presentness involved in my perceptual experience of a palm tree in terms of the fact that the experience *presents* the palm tree as existing in the present. This talk of what the experience *presents* is already characteristically intentional, and indeed semi-representational. On some uses of 'presentation,' there is a difference between presenting and representing. On many views, however, presentation is a variety of representation, one characterized by a certain immediacy. Perhaps to present something is to represent it in an experientially unmediated way. In any case, it is clear that presentation is at least indicative or suggestive of representation. Since I am not offering a deductive argument here, but am rather developing a general consideration favoring the content conception of temporal phenomenology, I do not take a stand on these issues.

21 For the notion of layered representation, see Lycan 1996.

22 The memory does not present *the tree* as having existed in the past; rather, it seems to me, it presents the tree atemporally. Nor does it present *itself* as having occurred in the past; rather, it either presents itself atemporally or not at all.

it does present the original seeing of the tree as having occurred in the past. Thus the feeling of pastness is a feature of the first layer of mnemonic content. Parallel remarks apply to episodic anticipation.<sup>23</sup>

Independently of transparency considerations, it would be quite strange if temporal phenomenology were a vehicular feature. After all, temporal phenomenology — at least of the sort that interests us here — is an *aspect* of the phenomenology of perceptual, mnemonic, and anticipatory experience. And although we have noted that some phenomenologies may not be transparent, those of perception, memory, and anticipation seem quite straightforwardly transparent. It would be odd if the overall phenomenology of (say) a perceptual experience would be split into a vehicular component and a content component. That would undermine the manifest synchronic unity of the phenomenology. Just as it would be extremely odd if the phenomenal character of one's perceptual experience of a palm tree was such that the color phenomenology attached to the experience's content while its shape phenomenology attached to its vehicle, so it would be quite odd if the shape and color phenomenologies attached to the content while the temporal phenomenology attached to the vehicle.<sup>24</sup>

Finally, it is worth noting that those who construe temporal phenomenology as vehicular face explanatory burdens not faced by their content-oriented opponents. Recall that in the case of color phenomenology, we noted that the traditional vehicular conception construed it not in terms of the properties of blue, red, etc., but in terms of the related but distinct properties of blue', red', etc. Analogously, a vehicular conception of temporal phenomenology would have to construe it in terms of the properties of present'-ness, past'-ness, and future'-ness. On the face of it, it is not at all clear what these properties might be. It is unclear, that is, what *time'* might be.<sup>25</sup> If the chronicles of attempts to account for red' are any guide, philosophers who embark on the project of accounting for present' might find themselves pressed between manifest phenomenological implausibility and outright incoherence.

23 When I introspect my anticipatory experience of running into my department chairperson later this week, the feeling of futureness attaches to the envisaged event of running into the chairperson. The event is presented in the experience to occur in the future. The feeling of futureness is thus a feature of the first layer of the anticipatory content, that is, the layer of directly represented content.

24 The latter possibility would be admittedly less odd, in that there is an interdependence between color and shape (all colored entities are shaped and vice versa) that there may not be between color and time or shape and time. But some kind of oddity would certainly attach to such a phenomenological splitting.

25 For this point, I am indebted to Alex Byrne.

Those who embrace a content conception of temporal phenomenology are relieved of all such worries, as they can construe the relevant features as presentness, pastness, and futureness.<sup>26</sup>

In summary, there are four considerations that favor a content conception of temporal phenomenology over a vehicular conception. First, the recent literature on consciousness provides some reasons for embracing a content conception of phenomenology across the board; at any rate, if one wished to embrace a single conception across the board, the content conception is certainly the more plausible option. Second, temporal phenomenology appears to be transparent upon introspective examination of perceptual, mnemonic, and anticipatory experiences. Third, the other aspects of perceptual, mnemonic, and anticipatory phenomenology are content features, and it is somewhat implausible to suppose that their overall phenomenology might be split between content features and vehicular features. Fourth, it is unclear what the vehicular features of present'-ness, past'-ness, and future'-ness would be. I conclude that the feelings of presentness, pastness, and futureness are content properties of the conscious experiences that exhibit them.

### III Temporal Token-Reflexivity

I have suggested that perceptual, mnemonic, and anticipatory experiences typically exhibit a temporal phenomenology, and argued that this phenomenology is representational, with the result that such experiences typically represent time. In this section, I argue that the best account of this experiential representation of time makes perceptual, mnemonic, or anticipatory experiences token-reflexive. More specifically, I argue that a perceptual experience *P* represents the presentness of its object *O* by representing that *O* is simultaneous with *P*; a mnemonic experience *M* represents the pastness of its object *O* by representing that *O* is earlier than *M*; and an anticipatory experience *A* represents the futureness of its object *O* by representing that *O* is later than *A*. In all three cases the experience refers to itself in its own representational content, and is thus token-reflexive.

Plausibly, the representational content of a perceptual, mnemonic, or anticipatory experience is given by the experience's *veridicality conditions*. To specify the conditions under which the experience would come out veridical is thus to specify the experience's content, and conversely,

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26 As we will see in the next section, these properties are also not unproblematic, though there is a way to handle the problems they create.

to specify the content we specify the veridicality conditions. To say that perceptual, mnemonic, or anticipatory experiences represent time is therefore to say that time is a component of these experiences' veridicality conditions. For a perceptual experience of a laptop to be veridical, it is not enough that there be a laptop, nor even a laptop exactly like the one presented in the experience. The laptop must exist *in the present*. For a mnemonic experience of a palm tree to be veridical, the palm tree must have existed *in the past*. And similarly for an anticipatory experience.

This specification of veridicality conditions faces a problem, however. We have spoken thus far as though the properties of presentness, pastness, and futureness are unproblematic. Yet most metaphysicians nowadays take them to be very much problematic, perhaps incoherent.<sup>27</sup> The arguments to that effect emerge in the context of the debate between the A-theory and B-theory of time. There are many ways to characterize this debate, but I will focus here on the metaphysical characterization in terms of the existence of properties. According to B-theory, there are no such properties as presentness, pastness, and futureness, in the sense that these properties are uninstantiated.<sup>28</sup> The only real temporal properties are the relations of being earlier than, later than, and simultaneous with. According to A-theory, the fundamental temporal properties are presentness, pastness, and futureness. Any other temporal properties — including the B-theoretic relations of being earlier than, later than, or simultaneous with — *supervene* on presentness, pastness, and futureness. The problem is that there are good reasons to reject A-theory in favor of B-theory. Doing justice to the issues at hand would be impossible within the scope of the present paper, so in what follows I will simply adopt what the majority of philosophers of time have adopted, namely B-theory.<sup>29</sup> What I argue

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27 This is not to suggest that there is anything like a consensus among philosophers that B-theory is the truth. A-theory has its own able defenders. But I think it would be right to say, as a sociological observation, that B-theory enjoys today, and for at least a generation, much wider popularity.

28 At least this is straightforwardly so if these properties are taken to be incoherent (or impossible, i.e. necessarily uninstantiated). One view is that they are coherent (possible), but uninstantiated. On a sparse conception of properties, this would entail that they do not exist. On a latitudinous conception, it may not. Thus a B-theorist could hold that the A-theoretic properties exist, but are uninstantiated. In what follows, I overlook this subtlety.

29 Two of the most traditionally influential arguments for B-theory are due to McTaggart and Smart. McTaggart's (1908) main idea is that every point in time will be present and/or past at some point and was present and/or future at some point.

in the remainder of this section is that if B-theory is the right theory of the metaphysics of time, then the veridicality conditions of perceptual, mnemonic, and anticipatory experiences involve token-reflexivity. I present first a sloppy approximation of the argument, then a more accurate formulation. That is, I first present the argument in a straightforward but invalid form. To make the argument valid, a suppressed premise must be defended, which is what I will do next.

The sloppy approximation is this. If there are no A-theoretic properties, we cannot use them in specifying the veridicality conditions of perceptual, mnemonic, and anticipatory experiences. Fortunately, however, we can use B-theoretic proxies, of the form suggested by Mellor (1981). Instead of saying that a perceptual experience represents its object as *in the present*, we can say that it represents its object as *simultaneous with itself*. Instead of saying that a mnemonic experience represents its object as in the past, we can say that it represents its object as *earlier than* itself. And instead of saying that an anticipatory experience represents its object as in the future, we can say that it represents its object as *later than* itself. These new specifications of the experiences' veridicality conditions make ineliminable reference to the experiences themselves. In each case, the token experience is a constituent of its own veridicality condition.

Consider the veridicality conditions of my perceptual experience of the laptop before me. They are given by the existence of such a laptop simultaneously with that very experience. That is, the state of affairs whose obtaining would make my experience veridical (its putative 'veridicality-maker,' if you will) involves the existence of a laptop that (i) bears all the non-temporal properties it is presented in the experience to have and (ii) bears a relation of simultaneity to my experience itself. Thus the specification of my experience's veridicality conditions

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Thus every point in time has all three A-theoretic properties of presentness, pastness, and futureness — which is incoherent. It might be responded that the point in time has all three properties but *not at the same time*; rather, a temporal point is past at one time, present at another, and future at a third one. But this response appeals to new points in time (namely, the points relative to which we ascribe presentness, pastness, and futureness to the original points), and ascribing temporal location to *those* will involve the same incoherence. Thus A-theory faces the familiar specter of incoherence-or-infinite-regress. Smart's (1949) argument targets the fact that, according to A-theory, time flows: what was once future and then present is now past and what is now future will one day be present and then past. However, for any instance of flow or passage, one is entitled to ask for the *rate* of flow or passage. The notion of rateless moving is incoherent (in the same way the notion of a shapeless chair is). But the only answer the A-theorist can provide is that time flows at the rate of one second per second — which is singularly unhelpful.

makes reference to that very token experience. The experience is therefore token-reflexive: it is a constituent of its own putative veridicality-maker. It therefore shows up in its own representational content and is in that sense self-representing.

In the previous section, I said that the content of a perceptual experience is not of the form '*a* is *F*' (or 'there is an *x*, such that *x* is *F*'), but rather of the form 'in the present, *a* is *F*' (or 'in the present, there is an *x*, such that *x* is *F*'). We can now see that a better formulation of the content would be '*a* is *F* simultaneously with this very experience' (or 'there is an *x*, such that *x* is *F* simultaneously with this very experience').

Matters are more complicated in the case of memory and anticipation, but again the complication is due to their layered contents. When I episodically remember seeing the impressive Miami palm tree, my experience represents the tree indirectly and the original seeing directly. More specifically, I want to claim that it represents the original seeing as *earlier than* it and the tree either atemporally or as simultaneous with the original seeing. Our interest here is in the 'direct' layer of the experience's content. The veridicality conditions of the direct layer are given by the existence of an event of seeing a palm tree that (i) bears all the non-temporal properties the seeing is presented in the remembering to have and (ii) bears the relation of being-earlier-than to the remembering. Thus the veridicality conditions of my remembering involve reference to that very remembering, which is therefore token-reflexive. The direct layer of its content is of the form 'I perceived earlier than this very experience that *a* is *F*.' Parallel remarks apply to my episodic anticipation of running into my department chairperson.

The reason this is only a sloppy approximation is that we cannot infer, from the fact that a property *F* does not exist, that an experience *E* does not represent *F*. After all, we go through illusions and hallucinations, as well as flights of the imagination, all the time. We can hallucinate a dragon even though the property of being a dragon is uninstantiated, and we can visualize an Escher triangle even though the property of being an Escher triangle is *necessarily* uninstantiated. So even if there are no A-theoretic properties, it does not follow that conscious experiences do not represent events and objects to instantiate such properties.<sup>30</sup> The argument we have presented is invalid, because it suppresses something like the following premise: if there are no A-theoretic properties, then it is more plausible to suppose that the relevant experi-

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30 That is to say, the fallacy in the sloppy approximation as presented above is that the very first sentence of the presentation is false: 'If there are no A-theoretic properties, we cannot use them in specifying the veridicality conditions of perceptual, mnemonic, and anticipatory experiences.'

ences represent B-theoretic properties. I now turn to a defense of this premise.

First, note that the illusion we would be ascribing to the experiential representation of time by construing it as representation of A-theoretic properties would not be local and accidental.<sup>31</sup> It would be massive and systematic illusion. Our experience of time would present us with a ‘veil of appearances,’ if you will. The specter of such skepticism is always philosophically disconcerting. But it would be particularly disagreeable in this case. For the representation of time is — we have argued — present throughout conscious perception, memory, and anticipation. This would make the illusion under consideration alarmingly pervasive. Moreover, since an experience cannot be veridical if it gets wrong even one component of the state of affairs it represents, it would follow that not only our experiential time-representation is non-veridical, but also that the experiences employing such time-representation (perceptual, mnemonic, and anticipatory experiences) are all non-veridical, and always so.

In other words, allowing the experiential representation of time to target A-theoretic properties would wed us to an *error theory* of conscious perception, memory, and anticipation. On such error theory, no one has ever had a veridical perceptual experience. Surely this is an undesirable outcome. Now, different philosophers have different sensibilities when facing the possibility of error theory. For some, its prospect is so unappealing that they are willing to ‘massage’ their metaphysical commitments to avoid it. Others are less concerned with the verdict on the accuracy of everyday experience. But the important thing to realize is that in the present case we are spared the choice between the metaphysics we want (B-theoretic) and the phenomenology we want (veridical). We can have both — provided we construe the contents of conscious perception, memory, and anticipation as token-reflexive.

It is worth noting that ascribing A-theoretic content to experiential time-representation would entail non-veridicality that is radical not only in scope but also in depth. If it is true that A-theory is not only false but incoherent, then the A-theoretic properties are not only uninstantiated, but *necessarily* uninstantiated. This is important, because arguably experiences *cannot* represent necessarily uninstantiated properties. I said above (in passing) that we can visualize Escher triangles (which are impossible). But can we? Upon reflection, there is something to be said for the view that we can only visualize a *part* of an Escher

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31 This is based on the assumption, which I continue to make, that A-theoretic properties do not exist.

triangle at a time, perhaps accompanying the visualization with the *thought* that it is part of an Escher triangle. I entreat the reader to try and visualize an Escher triangle in its entirety. Perhaps it is possible to do so; but that is far from obvious. And if we cannot voluntarily visualize an Escher triangle, it would be quite surprising if we could involuntarily hallucinate one. These considerations suggest that there may be an argument against the very *possibility* that experience represents A-theoretic properties. The argument would proceed as follows: 1) conscious experiences cannot represent necessarily uninstantiated properties; 2) A-theoretic properties are necessarily uninstantiated; therefore, 3) conscious experiences cannot represent A-theoretic properties. It is not obvious to me that this argument is sound, but nor is it obvious to me that it is unsound.

Furthermore, ascribing to experiential time-representation B-theoretic content relieves us of the need to offer a special account of concept acquisition for the temporal concepts that go into time-representation. Subjects acquire B-theoretic concepts by interacting with B-theoretic properties (or instances thereof) in exactly the same way they acquire, say, fruit concepts. But if A-theoretic properties are uninstantiated, then A-theoretic concepts cannot be acquired this way. Those who hold that experiential time-representation employs A-theoretic concepts owe us a story about the acquisition of those concepts. It is possible that such a story could be told, but it would be a non-standard, and probably quite convoluted, story.

It might be retorted that A-theoretic concepts are innate. But this suggestion faces a dilemma. There are two views of how a concept C comes to be innate; I will call one the 'new innateness' and the other the 'old innateness.' The new innateness involves the idea that we did not have to acquire C because our ancestors did that work for us, or because our C-employing ancestors were naturally selected, or because of some other natural process. On this view, innate concepts are not *ontogenetically* acquired, but they *are phylogenetically* acquired. On the old innateness view, innate concepts are acquired neither ontogenetically nor phylogenetically. They are bestowed on us by a god, or installed in us by freak occurrence, or for some other reason outside the web of normal natural processes. The problem is that if A-concepts are supposed to be innate in the new way, then again a non-standard story would have to be told, since A-concepts could not be even phylogenetically acquired via interaction with A-properties; and if they are supposed to be innate in the old way, then the result is a non-naturalist and generally more straightforwardly objectionable view of temporal-concept acquisition.

In summary, there are three considerations that recommend rejecting non-veridical representation of A-theoretic properties in favor of off-veridical representation of B-theoretic properties. First, the latter avoids

the skeptical and error-theoretic pitfalls of the former. Secondly, there is reason to suspect that experience *cannot* represent necessarily uninstantiated properties, as A-theoretic properties might well be. Thirdly, the latter enables a straightforward, standard account of temporal-concept acquisition, whereas the former does not.

The overall argument of this section may be formulated as follows: 1) ordinary perceptual, mnemonic, and anticipatory experiences typically represent temporal properties; 2) if there are no A-theoretic temporal properties, then it is plausible to suppose that ordinary perceptual, mnemonic, and anticipatory experiences typically represent B-theoretic temporal properties; 3) plausibly, there are no A-theoretic temporal properties; therefore, 4) plausibly, ordinary perceptual, mnemonic, and anticipatory experiences typically represent B-theoretic properties; 5) their representation of B-theoretic properties must be token-reflexive; therefore, 6) ordinary perceptual, mnemonic, and anticipatory experiences are typically token-reflexive (in the sense that they are constituents of their own veridicality conditions). (The third premise here is the one suppressed in the sloppy presentation of the argument and defended later.)

#### IV Objections and Replies

In this section, I consider six independent objections to the argument of this paper (or its conclusion). The first three target the phenomenological aspect of the argument, and the others its representational aspect.

The most important objection is that we have been too glib in dismissing a potential phenomenological objection. For the argument of this paper relies on ascribing B-theoretic content to perception, memory, and anticipation. And it may strike the reader that, all said and done, the phenomenology of temporal awareness is A-theoretic rather than B-theoretic. We seem to be perceptually aware of the present, not of simultaneity with our perceptual experience; mnemonically aware of the past, not of precedence to our episodic memory; etc. After all, traditionally the main argument for the A-theory is an argument from temporal phenomenology. The argument is precisely that the phenomenology of our time-awareness has an A-theoretic character.

In response, I would argue that there is no distinctly introspectible phenomenological difference between being aware of something as present and being aware of it as simultaneous with one's awareness. Can we imagine two phenomenologically different experiences that are indistinguishable except for the fact that one represents a palm tree as present while the other represents a palm tree as simultaneous with itself? For my part, I cannot report success in this task. I do not offer

this report as evidence for the absence of phenomenological difference. I am merely reporting absence of evidence for phenomenological difference.

The reason temporal phenomenology is often taken to support an argument for A-theory is that Mellor's B-theoretic way of capturing the so-called feeling of presentness, in terms of simultaneity with that very feeling, has not been fully appreciated. For the present objection to carry conviction, it must show that there is an enhanced phenomenological plausibility to the A-theoretic gloss on the feeling of presentness over the B-theoretic gloss. This is what I reject: the two glosses strike me as phenomenologically equivalent. Or more accurately, I am not struck by any phenomenological non-equivalence between them.

It is certainly more natural, from our egocentric temporal perspective, to report our experiences using A-theoretic *vocabulary*. But if there is no genuine phenomenological difference between otherwise indistinguishable A-theoretic and B-theoretic experiences, then the fact that the experiences are reported using A-theoretic vocabulary cannot support an A-theoretic view of the phenomenology. On the view I am suggesting, the report 'I see that the game is on now' does not express the proposition that one sees that the game is present rather than the proposition that one sees that the game is simultaneous with one's seeing — not any more than 'I see that the pizza is here' expresses the proposition that one sees that the pizza is (roughly) in an ontologically privileged location rather than the proposition that one sees that the pizza is (roughly) co-located with one's seeing. Instead, what these reports express is indeterminate between the two alternative propositions.

Perhaps much could be made of the fact that presentness is an intrinsic property, whereas simultaneity with something is a relational one? The objection would then take the following form: when we perceive a palm tree, our perceptual experience presents the tree as having an intrinsic temporal property, not a relational one; this is the way in which temporal phenomenology is at bottom A-theoretic rather than B-theoretic.

However, the claim that experience presents the temporal location of its objects as intrinsic is not all that intuitively compelling. When it is claimed in similar contexts that colors are presented in experience as monadic rather than relational properties, or as occurrent rather than dispositional ones, it is instantly clear what the claim is and why it is plausible. There is no such effect with the parallel claim about temporal phenomenology.<sup>32</sup>

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32 Moreover, whether temporal location is presented as intrinsic or relational may

I conclude that it is far from obvious, and indeed probably false, that the phenomenology of temporal awareness is, all said and done, more A-theoretic than B-theoretic. More likely, the phenomenology of temporal awareness is neutral as between the two.

A second objection of a phenomenological nature might be produced on the basis of a remark due to Le Poidevin (2005). In a somewhat different context, Le Poidevin argues that the fact that we perceive events as present is a 'trivial fact,' because there may be no difference between perceiving something and perceiving it as present.<sup>33</sup> On one reading, this may be taken to support the claim in §II that perceptual experience represents its objects as in the present. (A trivial fact is still a fact.) But on another reading, it may be thought to undermine that claim. The thought may be that if there is no difference between perceiving something and perceiving it as present, then there cannot be the kind of phenomenological contrast needed to establish the phenomenological reality of a feeling of presentness.

I offer two related responses to this objection. First, there is something problematic about the reasoning under consideration. If we cannot envisage a perceptual experience that does not represent its object as in the present, this may well be because perceptual experiences *necessarily* represent their objects as in the present, not because the notion that they represent the present is meaningless (or anything like that).

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not affect the veridicality conditions of ordinary experiences. Compare the case of weight. Arguably, weight is presented in tactile experience as intrinsic. Yet the property itself is relational: an earthly object's weight is relative to the earth's gravity. Still, it does not seem right to say that all weight experiences are non-veridical. This is because an ordinary tactile experience of, say, an apple represents that the apple weighs so-and-so. It does *not* represent that the apple weighs so-and-so *relative to the earth* (on the one hand), nor that the apple weighs so-and-so *in and of itself* (on the other hand). It simply represents that the apple weighs so-and-so. In that sense, its representational content is *neutral* on whether the apple's weight is relational or intrinsic. Consequently, the veridicality conditions of the experience are given by the state of affairs consisting in the apple's having the right weight, *not* by (the conjunctive state of affairs of) the apple's having the right weight *and* the weight being intrinsic to the apple. This is why many ordinary weight experiences can be said to be veridical. In a similar vein, an episodic memory of seeing a palm tree represents the original seeing as past, but it does not represent it as past *in and of itself* nor as past *relative to the memory*. The memory's content, and hence veridicality conditions, are neutral between the original seeing being non-relationally past and in the past relative to (i.e., earlier than) the memory.

33 The original context concerns an attempt to undermine a phenomenological argument for the A-theory of the metaphysics of time. This issue does not concern us at this point, but we will to pick it up below.

In other words, the reasoning deployed here is *too powerful*: it could be used to deny the existence of any necessary feature of (certain kinds of) experience.

Relatedly, even if there is no difference between *perceiving* something and perceiving it as present, there is certainly a difference between *experiencing* something and experiencing it as present. Perception is only one form of experience, but there are other forms, including ones that do not involve a feeling of presentness. This is clearly illustrated by our swampmen from §I. Even if we cannot envisage two *perceiving* swampmen with only a temporal difference in their phenomenology, we can envisage two *experiencing* swampmen with only such a difference. Indeed, the case of the contrast between the perceiving swampman and the visualizing one was precisely one in which the former's experience involved a feeling of presentness absent from the latter's.

A third phenomenological objection concedes the reasoning spanning §§I-III for perception and memory, but resists its application to anticipation. The objector suggests that the phenomenology of anticipation does not involve a temporal tag, as the phenomenologies of perception and memory do. Rather, anticipations are just combinations of visualizations and beliefs about the futureness of that which is visualized. If so, there is no case for building later-than relations into the content of anticipatory experiences.

I concede that the visualization plus temporal belief model is more phenomenologically compelling in the case of anticipation than memory and perception. But there are two reasonable responses to the objection. One is to simply concede the point and roll back the scope of the paper's thesis. If the argument of this paper is accepted for perceptual and mnemonic experiences, it will have been a worthwhile exercise. Its extension to anticipation could be seen as an unfulfilled 'bonus.'

A second, more feisty response is to argue against the visualization-cum-belief model of anticipation. Recall that at the end of §I, I argued against a general objection to temporal phenomenology based on that model. One of the considerations I cited was that if the associated temporal belief is itself phenomenally conscious, the model would be consistent with the claim that there is a temporal phenomenology in perception, memory, and anticipation, because the latter could be construed as composite conscious states with a visualization component and a belief component. The upshot is that only in a version in which the belief is phenomenally unconscious is the model threatening to the thesis of temporal phenomenology, but in that version it is less intuitively compelling. This consideration applies here as well. On the one hand, it is implausible that anticipation is a visualization accompanied by an unconscious belief. It *is* plausible, on the other hand, that anticipation is a composite state involving temporally neutral visualization

and phenomenally conscious belief about the future, but this nowise undermines a temporal phenomenology for anticipation.<sup>34</sup>

(A final consideration, of a more methodological nature, is that a unified account of the temporal profiles of perception, memory, and anticipation is *mutatis mutandis* preferable, in a way a unified account always is, over one that is not. This means that if we have reason to think that perception and memory have a temporal phenomenology, then we should prefer, other things being equal, an account of anticipation that gives it a temporal phenomenology as well. This consideration does not address the question of whether other things really are equal; it merely produces a pressure in the direction of a an account of anticipation of the sort that the objector rejects.)

Let us move on, then, to representational objections. Here the most important objection is that our account of temporal representation is at odds with mainstream work on the semantics of temporal indexicals in the philosophy of language. Fregean, descriptivist accounts of such indexicals naturally assign token-reflexive contents to them. But such accounts are out of favor, and Kripkean, direct-referential accounts of indexicals do not assign token-reflexive contents. Thus our argument is wedded to an outmoded account of the contents of temporal representations. Let me expand a little on the background to this objection, then respond to it.

When two utterances of 'now' occur at two different times, old-school Fregean accounts admit that they have different reference, but insist that they have the same sense. Different accounts of the shared sense of all occurrences of 'now' are possible, but one natural account would capture it in terms of the definite description 'the time of this very utterance.'<sup>35</sup> This is a token-reflexive account. Since on Fregean views the proposition expressed by a sentence is determined by the senses of its constituent expressions, on such a token-reflexive account the proposition expressed by utterances of 'Jimmy is happy now' at different times is the same. However, Kaplan (1989) argued that this is in tension with intuitions about 'what is said' on different occasions of using indexicals. *What is said* on two occasions of 'he is tall' is different if on one occasion 'he' refers to George Bush and on another to Barack Obama,

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34 The second consideration I offered in §I concerned source amnesia and the pressure it produced against a visualization-cum-belief model of memory. This consideration does not apply to anticipation, since there is no parallel pathology of anticipation.

35 Likewise for other indexicals: the sense of 'here' is captured by the definite description 'the place of this very utterance' and that of 'I' by 'the producer of this very utterance.'

and likewise for 'Jimmy is happy now' if one occurs in 2008 and one in 2009. Assuming that intuitions about 'what is said' track the proposition expressed by an utterance, we should conclude that the proposition expressed is different, *pace* Fregean accounts. It is true, according to Kaplan, that different utterances of the same indexical have a shared *character* (captured roughly in terms of a function from contexts to references), which is a kind of sense. But indexicals contribute their reference, not their sense/character, to the proposition expressed. On the assumption that the proposition expressed by an utterance constitutes the utterance's content, this means that the content of indexicals is not given by their sense/character. So even if their sense/character is token-reflexive, it does not follow that their content is.

Our objector accepts that perception, memory, and anticipation have a temporal phenomenology, that this phenomenology is representational, and that therefore perception, memory, and anticipation involve temporal representation. What the objector rejects is the claim that the temporal representation is token-reflexive. Merely as an expository device, let us suppose that mental representation is implemented in a language of thought, *Mentalese*, and that *Mentalese* includes temporal indexicals. The objector would agree that perception, memory, and anticipation employ *Mentalese* indexicals, but deny that the content of those indexicals is token-reflexive. I offer two responses.

The first response is to deny the objector's assumption that (all) *Mentalese* indexicals behave the way English indexicals do. It is perfectly possible — although in need of motivating — to hold that English indexicals are Kripkean but (some) *Mentalese* indexicals are Fregean (and more specifically token-reflexive). What might motivate this view is precisely the kind of intuitions that track content. Intuition instructs that 'what is said' in two utterances of 'he is tall' is different. But intuition does not instruct that 'what is presented' in two perceptual experiences of a laptop is different — quite the contrary. Thus intuitions about 'what is presented' in phenomenology seem to be at odds with intuitions about 'what is said' in utterances, and to motivate a different account of content. Adopting Kaplanian semantics for (all) *Mentalese* indexicals would therefore have serious counter-intuitive consequences. For example, since the content we are interested in is one that is determined by phenomenology, and since Kaplanian semantics assigns different contents to non-simultaneous perceptual experiences across the board, it would follow that no non-simultaneous perceptual experiences can have the same phenomenology. This strikes me as a terrible price to pay for the sake of protecting a unified treatment of English and *Mentalese* indexicals.

Even if this response to the objection is unpersuasive, perhaps because a unified treatment of English and *Mentalese* indexicals is deemed non-negotiable, there is a second, independent response. Although the Kap-

lanian objection assumes that there is only one notion of content, to do with the proposition expressed, more recent semantic frameworks have been more pluralistic about the notion of content. In particular, so-called two-dimensional semantics makes room for *two* contents associated with linguistic expressions, including temporal indexicals. With a more liberal usage of the term ‘content,’ we could say that temporal indexicals have two contents, one of them Kripkean but the other corresponding to Kaplanian character. This is, in fact, exactly how Chalmers (2006) proceeds, treating Kaplan’s character as capturing the primary intension of indexicals, which is one of their two contents (or content-dimensions).

The objector might complain that there is something arbitrary about this liberal usage of ‘content’ — and the way it allows for token-reflexive content for indexicals. But first, Kaplanian character is naturally thought of as a *semantic value* of indexicals, and it is not all that arbitrary to call semantic values ‘contents’; second, there is a proposition associated with primary intensions — namely, Stalnaker’s (1978) *diagonal proposition* — and so it is quite natural to call it a content; and third, arguably the term ‘content’ is just a technical term, which should be used in the most theoretically beneficial way, so to the extent that two-dimensional semantics is explanatorily powerful, it is justifiable to treat Kaplanian character as content. Moreover, for my part at least, I seem able to enter two modes of intuiting about ‘what is said.’ In one mode, my intuitions conform to Kaplan’s. But in another, my intuitions are simply different, and what is said seems to me the same in all utterances of ‘he is tall’ (or ‘Jimmy is happy now’) in one perfectly legitimate sense of ‘what is said.’ It is natural to hold that intuitions in each mode track one notion of content, and therefore that indexicals have two distinct contents.

A fifth objection is that the B-theoretic account of mnemonic and anticipatory content cannot accommodate the representational content of some mnemonic and anticipatory experiences in time travel scenarios. Suppose a subject travels to a time earlier than the remembered event. Then her memory would no longer represent the event in question to have happened *earlier than* it, or at any rate could not do so veridically. But this is counter-intuitive. Thus, if I travel to a time prior to my seeing the palm tree in Miami, and then episodically remember that seeing, intuitively my memory is veridical, but the B-theoretic account entails that it is not. A parallel problem would arise with anticipation and travel to the future. It would seem, then, that the B-theoretic account returns the wrong results in time-travel scenarios.<sup>36</sup>

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36 It should be emphasized that the kind of time travel that would create this problem

There are at least three responses to this objection. The first is to simply deny the metaphysical possibility of time travel, say by citing the suicidal time traveler who committed suicide immediately upon exiting the time-travel machine (rendering true both the propositions that he is alive a year later and that he is dead a year later). Such blanket denial would of course entail that there can be no time-traveled experiences, and therefore no possible memories that predate their objects or anticipations that postdate theirs.

A second response admits the possibility of time travel but proposes a way the B-theoretic account of temporal content could return the *right* results (i.e., make time-traveled mnemonic experiences postdate their objects). This is to appeal to the distinction between objective time and personal time (Lewis 1976). Suppose my time machine is old and shabby, and it takes it four minutes to move the traveler a year in time. Then there is a sense in which it would take me about forty minutes to return to the late nineties. When I get out of the machine, it is a decade earlier than when I entered *in objective time*, but forty minutes later than when I entered *in personal time*. If we appeal to this notion of personal time in the account of temporal content, we can say that even the time traveler's episodic memories occur later than their events — in personal time. They are therefore veridical. Likewise for episodic anticipations.

A third response is to bite the bullet and claim that my memory of seeing the palm tree becomes illusory when I come out of my time travel machine, since (as it happens) I did not see the palm tree until spring break of 2000. The challenge for this response is to explain away the intuition that my memory is veridical.<sup>37</sup>

One option is to claim that the intuition is based on a confusion between a person having an illusory experience and a person being under an illusion. Often the two go hand in hand, but sometimes they do not. Consider a well-informed subject presented with Müller-Lyer arrows. Her perceptual experience is accompanied by a belief that the

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would have to be of a sophisticated sort, where the subject returns to the past with her later experiences and memories with her. Just returning to the past in the sense of returning to my childhood as a child would not do. I have to return to my childhood as an adult.

37 This response is in tension with the second one, inasmuch as the motivations to embrace the two responses are opposite. However, there is no straightforward contradiction between them, as far as I can see. Moreover, there is value in presenting both, even though it would be epistemically problematic to embrace both, because readers might find at least one response plausible even if it is not the same response. Indeed, my own distribution of credences is such that I can find merit in each (though not in both).

two lines are equally long, but the experience itself represents one line to be longer than the other. In this situation, the subject's experience is illusory even though the subject is not under any illusion. The case of a well-informed time traveler's memories may be similar: the memories are accompanied by *beliefs* to the effect that the remembered event is *later* than the memory, while themselves representing the event to have occurred *earlier* than them. To appreciate the plausibility of this view, consider the memories of a time traveler who, for some reason or another, is unaware that she has traveled to the past; for her, it sounds immediately obvious that many of her mnemonic experiences are non-veridical. So the intuition of veridicality applies only to cases of well-informed time travel. What explains this difference in intuition, I suggest, is that the latter cases of well-informed time travel, but not those of ill-informed time travel, tempt us to confuse not being under an illusion for not having an illusory experience. Parallel remarks apply to anticipatory experiences occurring later than their object: they may all be non-veridical experiences accompanied by true beliefs.<sup>38</sup>

The sixth and final objection I will consider claims that, contrary to the argument of the previous section, the B-theoretic account of temporal representation does not fare better than the A-theoretic account with respect to the specter of error theory. Normally, what we perceive causes us to perceive it, and since (plausibly) cause and effect are never simultaneous, what we perceive and our perceiving are never simultaneous. Therefore, if our perceptual experiences represent what is perceived as simultaneous with themselves, then they misrepresent.

This objection may be based on the same conflation of semantics and epistemics that we observed in Searle's original argument. An experience E of an object O that represents O as simultaneous with E, or of O as being F simultaneously with E, would misrepresent only if O went out of existence, or ceased to be F, during the interval over which the causing of E took place. The speed of light being what it is, the probability of (visual) misrepresentation *on these grounds* is vanishingly small. So just as I maintained that the perception of the purple-dyed swan

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38 It is also worth noting, when considering this objection, that reverting to an A-theoretic account of mnemonic and anticipatory content would be entirely unhelpful with this objection. Suppose for the sake of argument that episodic memories represented their object as in the past. Then we would be presented with the same problem when a time traveler remembers what was once in the past but is now in the future. If the objection motivates anything, it is not reverting to an A-theoretic account of mnemonic content, but moving to a time-free account of mnemonic and anticipatory content. Such an account is, however, both intuitively and phenomenologically implausible.

was actually veridical, so I maintain that in the normal go of things a perception presents its object's simultaneity with itself veridically.<sup>39</sup>

Of course, when we consider faraway objects, the probability of misrepresentation becomes much higher, but an error theory about the relevant experiences is concordantly no longer implausible. We see the sun, we are told, the way it was about eight minutes ago. If the sun has changed its spatial location relative to the viewer over the course of those eight minutes, or in any other way, then the viewer's experience is indeed non-veridical, and error theory would be appropriate. Likewise, in possible worlds where the speed of light is extremely low, the probability of visual misrepresentation may be quite high, and an error theory is again appropriate. So here as elsewhere, the account appears to return the right results.<sup>40</sup>

## V Conclusion

The thesis of this paper is that conscious perception, memory, and anticipation are token-reflexive. More precisely, the thesis is that perceptual, mnemonic, and anticipatory experiences are constituents of their own veridicality conditions, and therefore represent themselves (among other things). The argument for this thesis may be construed as follows: 1) perceptual (mnemonic, anticipatory) experiences involve a phenomenology of presentness (pastness, futureness); 2) the phenomenology of presentness (pastness, futureness) is a property ordinary perceptual (mnemonic, anticipatory) experiences have in virtue of their representational content; therefore, 3) perceptual (mnemonic, anticipatory)

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39 Nor can the objection be pressed in epistemic terms, that is, as the complaint that the B-theoretic account makes temporally imbued experiences unsafe. For in nearby possible worlds in which the subject undergoes E, O exists and/or is F simultaneously with E.

40 One final objection may be that the choice between A-theoretic and B-theoretic contents is a false dichotomy. One coherent view, which we have not taken into account, is that conscious perceptions, memories, and anticipations have B-theoretic 'reference' but A-theoretic 'sense' or mode of presentation. More generally, they may have both A- and B-theoretic contents. The A-theoretic content reflects the phenomenology, while the B-theoretic content aligns with the metaphysics. This objection is something of a *non sequitur*. On the one hand, if perceptual, mnemonic, and anticipatory experiences have B-theoretic content, that content would have to be token-reflexive. On the other hand, if these experiences have A-theoretic content, *that* content would have to be non-veridical. So this dual-content suggestion would neither relieve our account of time-representation of error theory, nor undermine its token-reflexivity.

experiences typically involve representation of presentness (pastness, futureness); 4) an experience represents presentness (pastness, futureness) by representing simultaneity with itself (earlier-ness than itself, later-ness than itself); therefore, 5) a perceptual (mnemonic, anticipatory) experience typically represents itself.

This argument is different from Searle's (1983) original argument for perceptual token-reflexivity in three related ways. First, it applies not only to perception, but also to memory and anticipation. Secondly, it focuses on the *temporal* dimension of perceptual, mnemonic, and anticipatory experience. Thirdly, its outcome is phenomenologically unobjectionable, or at least not as objectionable as Searle's argument's. As such, the thesis of this paper may evade the main source of resistance to Searlean token-reflexivity, namely, the sense that the view is unfaithful to the phenomenology.

On the emerging picture, our ongoing conscious experience keeps track of time almost continually, inasmuch as we undergo a perceptual, mnemonic, or anticipatory experience at almost every moment of our waking life. But our ongoing conscious experience also does more than that: it keeps track not only of time, but also of our *own* location as we move *through* time. The token-reflexivity of temporally imbued experiences ensures that as long as we have such experiences, we are aware of our own position in time.<sup>41</sup> As subjects of perceptual, mnemonic, and anticipatory experiences that are partly about themselves, we represent not only events and objects in time, but also where *we* stand within time relative to those events and objects.<sup>42</sup>

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41 This picture also provides the seeds of a compelling account of the experiential *Moving Now*. It acknowledges the personal sense of a Moving Now, but rather than explaining it in terms of the representation of a metaphysical Moving Now, it explains it as an artifact of the token-reflexivity of experiential time-representation (see also Ismael 2006 Ch.10). Fully developing this alternative account of the experiential Moving Now is a task better left for another occasion. But its raw elements are already present in the token-reflexive picture defended here.

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