

Consciousness Neglect and Inner Sense: A Reply to Lycan

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ABSTRACT: Lycan is concerned that I fail to explain my sense of 'phenomenal consciousness' sufficiently, and that I would unjustifiably criticize his "inner sense" theory for consciousness neglect. In response, I argue that my explanation of what I mean provides an adequate basis for disambiguating and answering Lycan's questions about the relation of phenomenal consciousness to "visual awareness" and the like. While I do not charge Lycan's theory with consciousness neglect, I do argue it employs a notion of non-conceptual higher order representation that has not been explained so as to make it clear we have warrant for applying it to our own experience.

I want to thank Bill Lycan for his admirably fair-minded (and humorous) comments, and would like now to start to atone for my shamefully stingy and (as he says) "unlaudatory" references to his work in my book. I have learned and continue to learn much from what he says about consciousness. I hope the following remarks will bear that out.

Let me begin by saying something about Lycan's concern that my effort to clarify what is meant by 'consciousness' (admirable as it may be) *fails to pin down a unique sense*. He worries first that my "via positiva"-where I say that phenomenal consciousness is what

we know with first-person warrant to be common to silent speech, other imagery and sense-experience-is insufficient, because there are a number of distinct features these may introspectively be known to share. Second, he worries that my "via negativa"-my attempt to make phenomenal consciousness conspicuous by its absence in hypothetical situations-also leaves my meaning unclear. He thinks that, while he can suppose the character Belinda lacks visual awareness in some sense, I leave it insufficiently determinate just what sense this is. Finally, he uneasily concludes that perhaps what I mean by 'phenomenal consciousness' is what he means by 'awareness of qualitative content.'

First: I grant that my "via positiva" is not enough to forestall misunderstanding of what I mean. (Though I do think being clear about the range of phenomenal experience helps ward off the kind of misunderstanding that can occur when people assume consciousness consists in some kind of serial "stream of narrative.") However, the positive part of my story was not intended to do the job alone, but only in concert with the "via negativa." Part of the work of this perhaps can be done in showing that the shared feature is not just intentionality, through drawing attention to ordinary states of mind (standing beliefs, for example) that have intentionality, but are not phenomenally conscious. However: the blindsight thought experiment is crucial to my attempt at clarification. Now, just why does Lycan think it leaves my meaning inadequately evident?

Apparently this is because he thinks it will be clear what I mean only if I first clarify the relation of what Belinda's missing, when it doesn't look any way to her on her left, to what he calls "visual awareness." I do see that questions can be posed about whether Belinda, as described, would be lacking this or that form of visual awareness. But I do not believe they need to be answered before one can grasp what I mean by 'phenomenal consciousness.' That's not to say they cannot be answered (I will try to do so shortly)--but only after we have said a little more to clarify what we have in mind by talk of 'awareness.'

But first: keep in mind that all that is required of you, in order to grasp what I mean by 'phenomenal consciousness' is this. You must identify a sense of consciousness, in which (1) you can know with first-person warrant that verbal and other imagery as well as sense-experiences are conscious, and which (2) allows you to conceive of the absences of conscious visual experiences described in the prompted, spontaneous, amblyopic and reflective blindsight thought experiments. Now I think that, if you have succeeded in doing this much, you grasp well enough what I mean by 'consciousness' for us to get started. So to get this foothold in the topic, it seems to me totally unnecessary to reach for terms like 'awareness' and 'qualia' or to get C.I. Lewis or Bertrand Russell down off the shelf. However, if one wants to do that, I think the preliminary understanding of consciousness I establish in Chapter Three puts us in a position to answer the questions that then arise--at least, it does so, once we have clarified the questions adequately. And I believe what I have said in Chapter Four gives us a basis for doing that.

So, we may ask, *would* it be correct to say that what my spontaneous, amblyopic, reflective blindsighter Belinda is missing, in missing a conscious visual experience of left field stimuli, is a *visual* awareness of them? Well, not if it is enough for visual awareness

that Belinda issue her "visual" judgments-her spontaneous verbalized judgments of the sort one can conceive her to make about optical stimuli that trigger them, but don't *look* any way at all to her (Siewert, 1998, Section 4.2). But if that doesn't suffice, and instead we identify visual awareness with its looking some way to someone (in the sense of 'look' in which it never looks any way at all to the totally blind), then: yes, what Belinda lacks is visual awareness of her left field stimuli.

Another question: would it be right to say that what Belinda lacks is "awareness of visual information"? Not if the higher order thought or judgment her reflective blindsight enables her to make-that she visually judges that there is (e.g.) a flash of light on her left-counts as awareness of visual information. (p. 116) And not if it would be enough for awareness of visual information that one spontaneously thought one possessed a "visual quality" of the sort we could coherently suppose our blindsighter Belinda to have. For that kind of higher-order thought is neither sufficient nor necessary for conscious visual experience. (pp. 117-126) What if we take one's "awareness of visual information" to be one's judging that it looks some way to one? I do assume Belinda would not judge that it looked some way to her on her left. But it would be a mistake to suppose that the presence or absence of this higher order judgment constitutes the difference between her and Connie, for 'looking' in this sense entails conscious visual experience in my sense; (and, as I argue in Section 4.5) consciously seeing is not just thinking that you do.

But what about what Lycan has in mind when he considers whether what Belinda lacks is what he calls "awareness of qualitative content"? Lycan introduces the notion of "qualitative content" (or "character") by reference to C.I. Lewis and "qualia," saying that almost everyone agrees that there are qualia in this sense: "seemingly monadic qualitative features of apparent phenomenal individuals." But at the risk of once again seeming to Lycan to make common cause with the only philosopher (Daniel Dennett) he can confidently place on my "enemies list," I must express some unwillingness to join in the chorus. Just what are "apparent phenomenal individuals"? Are they individuals (e.g., colored patches in one's visual field) which appear to one (*apparent individuals*), and which have just whatever character they appear to have (apparent *phenomenal* individuals)? Then they are what I imagine "sense-data" are supposed to be, and since I don't think sense-data exist (Section 7.4), I don't think they have any features--"seemingly monadic" or otherwise. To agree that there are apparent phenomenal individuals, would it be enough to agree that some people (not me) have thought (and in that sense, it has "appeared" to them that) there are phenomenal individuals (sense-data)? Presumably not. For then it makes no sense to talk of the seemingly monadic qualities of apparent individuals, unless that means just the qualities philosophers who have believed in sense-data have thought them to have-such as color and shape, and position in an array. And I take it by "qualia" Lycan does not just mean these qualities.

Thus I am not happy to identify phenomenal consciousness with "awareness of qualitative character," as Lycan suggests, if this latter notion rests on the notion of qualia, explained in this way. However, Lycan has, in correspondence, suggested to me another way of getting at what he means here. We might consider "phenomenal properties," (e.g.) colors, as these somehow figure in the type of experience so dear to the sense-data

philosophers-the yellow of an after-image, say-where this is thought to be a property distinct from color *simpliciter*: rather, it is *yellow-as-it-looks-to-us*, or some such. Even if we leave aside the notion of phenomenal individuals as bearers of such properties, still we can recognize that in visual experience we represent something as having these properties. We might then ask whether what I want us to suppose Belinda to lack is visual representation of such phenomenal color properties. This may be fine with me, but, for a couple of reasons, I am a little leery of relying on this as a way of explaining what I mean by phenomenal consciousness and character. First, I am unsure of how this notion of a phenomenal property is to be understood generally-in particular I wonder if it presupposes a certain conception of the primary/secondary quality distinction, and how it is to be interpreted in cases where we don't distinguish between a visually apparent property (e.g., shape-as-it-looks) and a property that perception-independent objects actually have. (And I confess here that I am not sufficiently sure what to say about the metaphysics of color to proceed with confidence in these matters.) Second, I suspect this notion of phenomenal properties is not broad enough to allow us to capture all the differences in phenomenal character I want to recognize (e.g., differences in the phenomenal character of visual experience in Gestalt shifts, and differences in phenomenal character that are distinctive of conceptual thought).

Now, instead of talking either about "seemingly monadic qualities of apparent individuals," or about the awareness of "phenomenal" color properties involved in after-image experiences and the like, one might just identify qualitative content or character with "phenomenal character," where that notion is understood relative to the notion of phenomenal consciousness, explained through my positive first-person examples and negative hypothetical blindsight examples in Chapter Three. This would be fine with me, except then I would still worry about taking phenomenal consciousness to mean awareness of qualitative character, since that latter expression might seem to commit us to the idea that phenomenal consciousness essentially involves some kind of higher order representation. Here finally we nudge up against my basic disagreement with Lycan: I would not accept an account of consciousness in terms of "inner sense," "inner scanning," or "higher order perception" along the lines he proposes.

In a little bit I want to try to clarify the nature of that disagreement and indicate briefly why I hold the position I do. But first I want to comment on this. It may seem that Lycan and I are just locked in some absurd terminological wrestling match. He thinks talk of "visual awareness" and "qualitative content" are clear enough starting points, and finds my talk of "phenomenal consciousness" obscure unless it can be translated into these terms. Meanwhile I think I know well enough what *I* mean by 'phenomenal consciousness' and find *his* favored lingo "opaque" and in need of clarification. Each of us may seem to be trying to get his own point of view across by framing the discussion in terms of his preferred terminology (which one might then suspect brings with it some stacking of the philosophical deck).

Much as I would be honored to keep company with the mutual exasperation society that Lycan suggests he has formed with Ned Block, Joseph Levine, and Georges Rey, I would not accept this reading of the dialectical situation, and do not think we have to regard an

impasse as inevitable. For I don't simply proceed on the basis of finding 'consciousness' intuitively clearer than 'awareness.' In fact, I don't assume that our usage of either term is initially clear, and I suspect that both are confused, rather than just ambiguous. (You may, if you like, regard my attempt to explain what I mean in Chapter Three by 'consciousness' as an attempt to get you to construct a sense for that term out of an initial jumble of usage, rather than to focus on a meaning that is already definitely distinct in common speech.)

So where *do* I ask us to start? First, just clear from your mind whatever you're tempted to regard as a synonym or paraphrase of 'conscious' or 'conscious experience'-for this may be misleading. Now see if you can interpret 'conscious' in such a way that you can both apply it univocally to your imagery and sense experience with first-person knowledge, and employ it in the blindsight thought experiment that ends in considering such absences of conscious visual experience combined with discriminatory ability as I attribute to Belinda. If you succeed in doing this, you grasp what I mean by 'phenomenal consciousness' well enough to appreciate the ensuing argument. If however, you sincerely say that you simply cannot understand the term 'conscious' in line with these instructions, then I may have to throw up my hands. But again, I do not see why it should be either necessary or helpful here to appeal to the terms 'awareness' and 'qualia,' or raid the attic of philosophical terminology. Of course, there are questions one can pose about the implications of Belinda's situation employing those terms, but I do not know how to answer them without asking for a little clarification of phrases like 'awareness of visual information,' 'apparent phenomenal individual,' and the like. However, I see nothing prejudicial or unreasonable about such requests, and it is not tendentious to respond to them, as I do above, by employing what we have gained through the initial clarification of 'phenomenal consciousness.'

But why am I so wary of employing Lycan's terminology to get us started? I have already indicated a little about why I am not happy with his 'qualia' and 'apparent phenomenal individuals.' Now I should explain why I am also suspicious of his prefixing 'awareness of' to these phrases. Here I should perhaps say a word or two about what I call in the book the "conscious-of trap," and how I think it relates to Lycan's view. The trap, I say, is the tendency to take as a point of departure in philosophizing about consciousness some assumption to the effect that conscious states are mental states one is conscious of (or aware of) being in-where this is taken to imply that we form some kind of representation of them, that some sort of higher order intentionality is trained upon them. This is a "trap," I think, because it is not initially clear, and we should not simply assume, that we have mental states that are conscious in some sense that makes a form of higher order representation of those states either necessary, or necessary and sufficient, for their being conscious. And this point holds, even if we find it plausible to say that our conscious states are states we are conscious (aware) of. For first, even if we interpret the 'of' in this phrase as the 'of' of intentionality, we may read the whole claim as committed neither to strict necessity nor sufficiency. (p. 195) And second, we may alternatively interpret this 'of' as *other than* the 'of' of intentionality (p. 196). And perhaps the claim is true only if we interpret it in one or the other of these ways that do not support higher order representation theories of consciousness. Anyway we have no right to assume otherwise.

One will object: "But why can't we just *stipulate* that one's mental state is conscious, in the sense at issue, if and only if it is a mental state one is conscious (aware) of, where this 'of' is the intentionality 'of'-and then proceed to theorize about the kind of higher order representation this involves?" Of course, one can stipulate one's meaning however one likes, but this procedure would be truly innocent of unwarranted assumptions, only if it involved explicit consideration of the question: which, if any, mental states are we warranted in thinking are objects of the kind of higher order representation posited by the theory? However, I think there is a danger that, instead of doing this, one will begin by presuming some rough, intuitive, pretheoretical assignment of mental states into conscious and nonconscious ones. Then one just assumes this distinction reflects the stipulated "higher order representation" definition of 'conscious.' And so one finds it easy to suppose that whatever right we have for applying the distinction between conscious and nonconscious states as we do also gives us warrant for applying, to the same cases, the distinction between those states that are, those that are not, objects of higher order representation. But while I grant that normal adults do typically have a form of higher order representation (higher order beliefs) about their conscious states, it's not clear that we are entitled to assume that whatever has conscious states in the same sense, has higher order representations of them. The point is: we should be wary of reading the higher order representation idea into some pretheoretical understanding of consciousness by means of shifts between 'conscious' and 'conscious of.'

In the book I claim a number of philosophers have succumbed to the "conscious-of trap"-including Brentano, Sartre, Rosenthal and Lycan. In correspondence, Lycan has objected that he should be removed from this list. For, while he does assume that there is at least one sense in which saying that some of our mental states are conscious means that we are conscious (or aware) *of* them, he does not merely *assume* that some of our actual states of mind are conscious in this sense. He argues for this, by producing examples. And he certainly does not merely assume the inner sense theory gives a good account of this, but argues for his view in some detail. I will say here, in my defense, that my criticism was not that Lycan does not argue for those things just mentioned. The idea was that he does not argue for what may be distinct from these, viz.: the view that we have conscious mental states in a sense such that: it is either necessary, or necessary and sufficient for it to be true that x has conscious state m, that x is conscious of being in m-where this last is taken to entail that x forms some sort of higher order representation of m. However, I do now concede that even this is misleading, and my talk of a "trap" into which all four of the named philosophers fall was simplistic at best. What I would retain from my criticism of Lycan, however, is this. I do not think he adequately considers and argues against the following suggestions. (1) While the conscious mental states of us normal adult humans may be such that we are conscious or aware of them in a way that entails we have some sort of higher order awareness of them, it is not necessarily the case that every being with states that are conscious in the same sense as ours has higher order awareness of them. (2) But if we say that we here do intend 'conscious state' to carry just the implication that this is necessarily the case, then that is a sense in which we can have conscious mental states (and be conscious of them) even while dreamlessly sleeping-presumably not the sense Lycan is interested in. (In this sense, I can truthfully say, "x has the conscious belief that some nationalities are superior to others," or "x has the conscious intention of

ruining her rival's career," without implying "x is not now dreamlessly sleeping.") (3) And the only sense in which our mental states are conscious, where their being conscious follows from our being conscious *of* these states (e.g., conscious of our thinking, our feelings), and which does entail that we are not at the time dreamlessly sleeping, is one that does not entail that we are then forming higher order representations of these mental states.

I wouldn't, however, say that my criticisms here are sufficient to accuse Lycan of neglecting phenomenal consciousness--though he is correct that I do count Dennett, Rosenthal and Tye as "neglectors." (I don't think I would care to count any of them as *enemies*--but I guess Lycan is just teasing me with his hair-raising talk of an "enemies list.") Nonetheless, the question remains: does Lycan neglect consciousness, by my criteria? No, I don't think so. (And incidentally, in response to one of his questions--there are a lot of contemporary philosophers whose views about mind and consciousness do not neglect phenomenal consciousness! Off the top of my head--Bealer, Block, Chalmers, Flanagan, Jackson, Levine, McGinn, Seager, G. Strawson--and I apologize in advance for leaving anyone out.) Now I don't say Lycan neglects consciousness, because I don't think that it would be fair to see his theory as committed to proclaiming either the inconceivability or the metaphysical impossibility of Belinda-style blindsight. And Lycan emphatically assures me in correspondence that on his view, the possibility of such blindsight is left open.

However, even though we agree about this, we still appear to be deeply at odds. For again, I don't think that, distinct from higher order thought about our own sensory states, we enjoy a kind of higher order perception--an "inner sensing" of them. And obviously I can't accept a theory of phenomenal consciousness that would identify it with something I don't think we have, because I think we do have phenomenal consciousness.

It can be seen then that my objection to a Rosenthalian higher order representation theory of consciousness, and my objection to the Lycanian version, are significantly different. While I agree with Rosenthal that we do indeed (sometimes) have higher order thoughts about our mental states, I think he leaves out phenomenal consciousness from his theory of what makes conscious states conscious. For there appears to be no place in his theory for recognition of consciousness, either in what he calls "sensory quality" or in higher order thought--neither allows us to leave open Belinda-style blindsight. The first does not because, while Belinda would lack conscious visual experience of left field stimuli, I don't think someone of her discriminatory talents would lack anything she needs for Rosenthalian (visual) sensory qualities (pp.118-20). And this is why I do not consider it misguided to try to look for an account of phenomenal consciousness in Rosenthal's story about higher order thought. But I also do not find it there, because either the higher order thought that one has a visual state is such as could be true even in a blindsight case (pp. 116, 124-5), or it is one we can't reasonably suppose all phenomenally sighted subjects have (pp. 121-4, 202-8). Or else it amounts to the thought that one has a conscious visual state (a state of its looking to one somehow), in which case the thought presupposes and cannot constitute the difference between phenomenal visual consciousness and its

absence (p. 130-3). (This last is the "consciously seeing is not just thinking you do" point again.)

By contrast, I do not accuse Lycan of leaving out consciousness. I would do this, only if it were clear to me that identifying Belinda's missing visual consciousness with a missing higher order sensing of visual qualia offers us no reasonable alternative to declaring Belinda's blindsight impossible. But this is not clear to me, because while I understand well enough what "higher order thought" is, it is very unclear to me just what this higher order *perception* is that Lycan would attribute to us. And so I am not sure it's no more reasonable to identify that with phenomenal consciousness than to deny the existence of the latter entirely, by asserting the impossibility of Belinda.

I may seem to draw a rather fine line between the charge of mischaracterizing consciousness and that of neglecting it altogether. Perhaps it does not really matter which way I describe Lycan's view, since, if I say he recognizes conscious experience, I will still say that he goes on to speak of it in a way I do not agree is applicable to it. (More generally, I would say, the point of my talk of "neglect" is not so much to divide the world of philosophy cleanly up into camps of neglectors and acceptors, as it is to provide a challenge to all to define their positions more exactly and defend them against the criticisms my discussion raises.) So, the crucial question is not whether I regard Lycan as suffering from consciousness neglect, but just why I reject his "higher order perception."

The basic problem is to explain this notion of higher order perception in a way that enables us to make it clear that we actually have it. It is not enough here to appeal to an agreement that we have some "introspective" knowledge of our own mental lives. We may agree that we have a warrant for judgments about our own minds distinct in kind from the observationally based warrant others have for making such judgments about us. But this does not commit us straight away to the idea that first-person knowledge of mind involves something we should classify as a "sensing" of, as distinct from a judging or believing about, one's states of mind. It seems at least part of what we need to do here is to explain in what way the inner sense we're alleged to have is like the outer senses (vision, hearing, proprioception, etc.) that we already agree we have. So--with a sense such as vision, we can distinguish between perceptual judgment on the one hand, and perceptual experience or appearance on the other, while recognizing both as species of representation of, or intentionality directed upon, a perceived object. Now we need to try similarly to distinguish between higher order judgment or thought about one's state of mind on the one hand, and higher order "inner" sensing or scanning of that state on the other. But (as I argue, pp. 212-3), there is this problem: when I try to draw the distinction between higher order thought and higher order sensing in any of the ways by which I can make evident to myself the distinction between sensory appearance and perceptual judgment or belief, I find the effort fails.

For I cannot conceive of what would constitute an inaccurate appearance of a sensory state, as opposed to a false thought/belief/judgment about it. And I cannot contrast a normal case of its looking some way to me with a hypothetical "inner" higher order blindsight case, in order to make the distinction. (For that either fails to distinguish the

absence of inner sense from its presence, or it fails to distinguish the absence of inner sense from the absence of outer sense (looking, visual appearing.) And I cannot conceive of the inner sensing of my visual state varying--as visual appearance does--with perspective or shifts in attention, throughout which I judge the object to remain constant. No more can I conceive of judging that the putative object of inner sense alters while its appearance stays the same.

It doesn't help here to suppose that there may be some sense (as Lycan says) in which one can be *in* pain when one does not *feel* pain, or in which one can have visual states in the absence of "visual sensations." For even if we agree to that, it will still be unclear that *these* states comprise objects of a type that--when one *does* feel pain, or visually sense--become the objects of a kind of sensing, which is distinct-from-but-somehow-analogous-to the visual appearing of an object seen, or the proprioceptive feeling of one's own body.

I don't find Lycan's examples of inaccurate appearings or sensings of qualia a helpful way to prise off the alleged inner sensing both from the object sensed and from higher order thought. My visual field may in some sense "appear" to me larger than it is. But it seems to me that, if this is true, it only means: I tend to overestimate the extent of visual stimuli of which I have visual experience during a given time. And (to take another--the "frat boy initiation"?--example) when I strongly expect to feel intense heat this may affect the character of my experience when something is thrust against me other than the burning iron I anticipate. (My feeling does not have the character it would have had without the expectation.) But I don't think this experience is well described by saying that something inaccurately feels like burning or pain, or some such.

Finally, I don't think it makes things any easier to insist, as Lycan does, that the objects of higher order perception are not supposed to be one's *experiences*, but only their "qualitative content." Can I conceive of the alleged appearances or sensings of these *contents* varying while we judge that they themselves remain constant? Can I judge the contents themselves to vary while the inner appearances of them do not? I cannot, partly because it is still insufficiently clear to me what qualitative content--if it is neither sensory experience, nor phenomenal character (in my sense), nor sense-data--is supposed to be in the first place. And if qualitative contents are supposed to be these functionally defined pains without feelings, or visual whatnots without visual experience, then the problem remains: why should we think such things ever become the objects of some kind of distinctively sensory (but "inner," not "outer") representation?

Furthermore, there is this difficulty: if qualitative contents are not first-order appearings, and they are not sense-data, in what way are the sensings of qualitative contents supposed to be *higher order* representations? Why are they any more "higher order" than the (first order) *thinking* of (propositional) contents?

To all this it may be objected that, of course, inner sense is not like "outer" sense in every respect, and my effort to find inner sense fails only because I foolishly look for some analogue to the differences in phenomenal character that distinguish outer judgment from outer appearance--and admittedly none can be found. But then where *do* we look for a

distinction between sensing and judging, analogous to that which we can apply to vision, hearing, touch, etc.? Lycan speaks of "attentional mechanisms" that are shared between outer and inner sense. But what does this come to? Perhaps something like: there is a way in which one can direct one's attention to objects one perceives by vision (or other outer senses) that does not amount simply to a change in the representational content of one's thoughts, beliefs, or judgments about those objects. And there is also a way in which one can attend to one's own states of mind (e.g., one's current sense experience) that does not amount simply to a change in the representational content of thought, belief, judgment about these. That much I would agree with.

However, first (as I remark on pp. 206-7), that there is this attending to one's experience does not seem enough to me to warrant the positing of a form of higher order *thought*. It makes sense to suppose that an animal's feeling of pain "occupies the center of its attention," is what it is "paying most attention to" at a given time, without thereby supposing that it is thinking something true or false of its feeling at that time. Do we then have reason to take this to involve some higher order representation, distinct from thought? But we have, as far as I can tell, no reason to suppose that paying attention to one's feeling or visual experience must involve forming this kind of representation, accurate or inaccurate, of it. For what leads me to recognize there is a form of attending to one's experience, which cannot be identified simply with the occurrence of some new content in one's beliefs or judgment about it, is this. I recognize the way in which the phenomenal character of experience can change with attention. For example: as one attends to a feeling it becomes more intense; also: the way it seems to one to see is transformed as one attends to how things look to one, in order to make a perspectival drawing of a scene. But in order to recognize such changes in phenomenal character, and describe them in this way, one needn't think of *attending* to one's experience as forming a non-conceptual *representation of it*.

In fact, it is unclear how we are even supposed to conceive of the postulated other-than-conceptual forms of higher order representation. Granted, the ("outer") senses represent objects as in particular regions of space, and this seems to be different from applying general concepts to them. But what form of non-general, non-conceptual representation is *inner* sense supposed to employ? We might try saying, "it represents one's own mental representations as occurring at particular *times*," but to represent one's own representation as "occupying" a particular time (now!) is not to represent it in any way that differentiates it from the object of one's first order representation. The fundamental difficulty is: there appears to be no candidate mode of representation that could distinguish the putative *higher order non-conceptual* representation, both from *higher order conceptual* representation, on the one hand, and *first order non-conceptual* representation, on the other.

Let me summarize my position here. The key question is whether Lycan's account of consciousness applies to what I call phenomenal consciousness. What Lycan says about qualia and qualitative character leads me to think phenomenal consciousness is not covered by that part of his theory. (If it doesn't necessarily feel any way to have a pain quale, as Lycan says, I suppose Belinda could have visual qualia of her left field, even

when nothing there looks any way to her. And the talk of "apparent phenomenal individuals" leads me to wonder whether I believe I even have qualia, in Lycan's sense.) If I then go to Lycan's inner sense story to look for an account of consciousness, I run into this further problem. If I try to understand the notion of a higher order representation that is a sensing, as distinct from a thinking, or that is non-conceptual as distinct from conceptual in content, I find I cannot succeed in doing this in any of the ways I can make this distinction intelligible to myself in the case of "outer" senses like vision. And an appeal to the notion that conscious states are ones we are conscious of, or to "shared attentional mechanisms" does not fill the gap. Part of what we need here is a clarification of the terms of the analogy between outer sense and the alleged inner sense, which also makes it clear that we do indeed have this sort of inner sense. Since I cannot find this, but instead only reasons for pessimism that it can be provided, I do not think consciousness can be accounted for as inner sense. In short: I do not accuse Lycan of neglecting consciousness, but I do reject his attempt to construe it as inner sense—a notion that I find grows more elusive and doubtful, the more one seeks to specify it sufficiently to warrant its application.

References

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