Chapter Four

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Resolute Disjunctivism

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John McDowell has suggested that his disjunctivist account of perceptual experience affords a useful way of reformulating the nub of the Kantian critique of the Cartesian conception of perceptual experience. The aim of this paper is to present an internal critique of McDowell's version of disjunctivism and to elaborate a reformulation of it that more fully realizes its original Kantian ambitions.

1. Early McDowell on Cartesianism vs. Disjunctivism

It is useful to start with some of McDowell's earliest statements of a disjunctivist strategy in order to get clear about what its original philosophical ambitions were supposed to be. In his comparatively early article "Singular Thought and the Extent of Inner Space," McDowell summarizes what he takes to be problematic in (what he calls) "a fully Cartesian picture" and what its subsequent effect on philosophy then came to be as follows: "In a fully Cartesian picture, the inner life takes place in an autonomous realm, transparent to the introspective awareness of its subject;

the access of subjectivity to the rest of the world becomes correspondingly problematic, in a way that has familiar manifestations in the mainstream of post-Cartesian epistemology."[1] This picture forms the primary target of this early article. Its various disastrous effects come in for illuminating discussion. The most disastrous of these is the effect of putting our "very possession of an objective environment in question."[2] It is in this essay—in his effort to spell out what is involved in making sense of the very idea of an alternative picture, one that is able to avoid this disastrous consequence by countenancing cases of the exercise of our perceptual capacity in which we enjoy direct access to external reality—that we find the following helpfully pithy statement of the original idea that animates McDowell's disjunctivism:

> Short of that picture, the newly countenanced facts can be simply the facts about what it is like to enjoy our access, or apparent access, to external reality. Access or apparent access: infallible knowledge of how things seem to one falls short of infallible knowledge as to which disjunct is in question. One is as fallible about that as one is about the associated question how things are in the external world. So, supposing we picture subjectivity as a region of reality, we need not yet be thinking of the newly recognized infallibly knowable facts as constituting the whole truth about that region. Of facts to the effect that things seem thus and so to one, we might say, some are cases of things being thus and so within the reach of one's subjective access to the external world, whereas others are mere appearances.[3]

The disastrous assumption that underlies the Cartesian picture is this: our subjectivity (what goes on in our mind as a consequence of our exercising our cognitive capacities) constitutes a self-standingly intelligible "region of reality"—"an inner realm." This conception of subjectivity, in turn, encourages the following idea: the only sort of fact that can be fully transparent to the mind—that can be fully, directly, transparently, and, as such, infallibly known—is a fact pertaining to the layout of this inner realm. The idea of an outer world then threatens to become the idea of a region of reality whose layout can be "known" only in a manner that contrasts sharply with the manner in which we have now, under the influence of Cartesianism, come to conceive what is involved in knowledge of

our own minds. The layout of the outer world comes to be the realm of that which can only be putatively, indirectly, opaquely, and, as such, always only at best "fallibly" known. On this understanding of the meaning of the term "fallible," it is predicated not just *of the capacity* to know (in order to express a characteristic of the capacity and a form of defect to which it is liable), but predicated distributively of *its exercises*—so that it applies immediately to each and every exercise of the capacity, no matter how unimpeded or undisturbed its operation. On this conception of a perceptual capacity, pending some supplemental rescue operation, the most that *any* act of the capacity itself can deliver off its own bat is always something that falls short of being a case of knowing how things are without the mind.

A capacity for "knowledge" so conceived—one whose exercises as such must always fall short of yielding knowledge of anything that lies without the mind—is a "cognitive" capacity in name only. So here we come upon the first desideratum that must be satisfied by the sort of account of a cognitive capacity with which McDowell seeks to replace the one that figures in the Cartesian conception. On the alternative conception, "a capacity for knowledge" properly so-called must not be conceived as operating merely within—and hence only upon items available within—a self-standingly intelligible "interior" region of reality. It must allow for the idea that the exercise of such a capacity, when all goes well, affords an unencumbered glimpse of some aspect of the layout of outer reality. It must allow for the possibility of a form of exercise of our cognitive capacity that is fully, directly, and transparently of what *is* the case—and not only always merely of what *seems* to the be the case to the bearer of such a capacity.

One burden of that early article of McDowell's is to argue that many contemporary philosophical attempts to leave behind the idea of a Cartesian mental substance, a *res cogitans,* unwittingly retain what is most fateful in Descartes's understanding of what it means to say of our cognitive capacity for knowledge of the world that it is fallible—namely, by leaving in place the assumption that we must "break the link" between the concepts of knowledge and of infallibility in the manner that the Cartesian picture does in its account of what must be involved in any attempt to direct our capacity for knowledge at anything without the Cartesian mind. This leads the modern philosopher to suppose that the following conclusion should be taken to be unobjectionable: each act of a perceptual

capacity—due to the infallibility inherent in the capacity—must as such yield something less than knowledge. To arrive at knowledge, the exercise of such a capacity cannot in and of itself suffice. It requires further supplementation—if not from Descartes's God, then from an inference to the best explanation, or through a reliability inference, or through something else, with which its initial form of actualization must be supplemented—so that we are not only afforded an experience of the perceptual state in question "within the mind" but are entitled to regard it as accurately representing how things are without the mind. This leads to a second desideratum for a satisfactory alternative to the Cartesian account of a cognitive capacity (one that must be in place if we are to properly make good on the first desideratum mentioned above): the alternative account must allow that there can be exercises of such a capacity that are per se knowledgeable—that, through being the exercises of the sort of capacity they are, *suffice* to yield knowledge, without requiring further supplementation through acts on the part of an additional faculty seeking to remedy the insufficiency of the act of the original (putatively "cognitive") capacity.

McDowell sees that in order to make good on these two desiderata, the alternative form of account he seeks to recommend must relieve the post-Cartesian philosophical pressure to break the link between the concepts of knowledge and infallibility—a break that comes to be felt by modern philosophy to be necessary as soon as we turn our attention to cases in which our cognitive capacity purports to represent how things are without the mind. Fully to abandon the Cartesian picture, according to McDowell, means to allow that "the infallibly knowable fact—its seeming to one that things are thus and so—can be taken disjunctively, as constituted either by the fact that things are manifestly thus and so or by the fact that that merely seems to be the case."[4] If we can allow this, then "the idea of things being thus and so figures straightforwardly in our understanding of the infallibly knowable appearance; there is no problem about how experience can be understood to have a representational directedness towards external reality."[5] This leads us to a third desideratum that our alternative account of a cognitive capacity must satisfy: it must allow us to retain or recover the link between the concepts of infallibility (or, as we shall call it below, indefeasibility) and knowledge—a link that comes to be severed in most post-Cartesian epistemology.

The question of the remainder of this paper may now be stated as follows: How is the disjunctivist proposal broached in this comparatively early article of McDowell's best spelled out if the ensuing conception is to fully vindicate these three interrelated philosophical ambitions?

2. Conjunctivism vs. Disjunctivism

An important insight of McDowell's critique of the Cartesian conception—one that it nonaccidentally shares with Kant's critique of that conception—is the following: as soon as one endorses a crucial assumption underlying the Cartesian picture, it becomes impossible to head off the threat of skepticism. Classical forms of Cartesian skepticism about perception turn specifically on the challenge that it is impossible to maintain both of the following two thoughts at once:

(1) In virtue of perception, we can come to know about the world around us.
(2) A subject currently having a veridical perception is having an experience that is exactly the same as the experience she would be having were she instead having an indistinguishable nonveridical perception.

The Cartesian skeptic about perception, in effect, attempts to argue as follows: since (2) is evidently correct, we must reject (1). Is it impossible to maintain both (1) and (2)? Is that right? Well, it depends in part upon how one understands (2)—in particular, upon what it means to claim that one perceptual experience is "the same" as another.[6] There is an understanding of (2) according to which it expresses a truism. What McDowell seeks to show is that the Cartesian's understanding of (2) turns it into something that is by no means platitudinous.

A crucial logical feature of the picture McDowell wishes to target can be helpfully brought into focus by considering why it might be apt to speak of that picture as resting upon (what I will henceforth call) a *conjunctivist* analysis of experience—that is, a conception according to which the epistemically good and bad cases share a logically highest common factor. According to conjunctivism, the good case consists of a conjunction of two factors: the factor it shares with the bad case (things seeming just that way

to the subject) *plus* an additional factor (things actually being just that way). Conjunctivism purports to furnish the first half of an overall story about how we acquire perceptual knowledge, while leaving it open exactly how we come to know that the second factor is indeed in place. The disjunctivist wants to expose how the very shape of such a story is hopeless: how the crucial move in the philosophical conjuring game has already been made if we allow for this philosophical two-step—one that both the Cartesian skeptic and the typical antiskeptic equally take to be a philosophically innocent move.

The problem for conjunctivism may now be put as follows: Even if some marvelous additional story about considerations bearing on the second factor is supplied by the conjunctivist, given the epistemic impotence of the first factor considered in isolation from the second factor, how can it ever hope to qualify as an account that recovers the truth of (1)? McDowell has taught us to reject any such conjunctive form of analysis in favor of one that partakes of a disjunctive form—one according to which there is a logical asymmetry between the successful and the failed exercise of a rational capacity.

The Cartesian conception of experience contrives to make it seem as if, in order to count as a knower, the occupant of the good disjunct has to determine which of the two disjuncts she occupies and that she has to do so on some ground wholly independent of the mere exercise of her capacity for perceptual knowledge, no matter how responsible. What McDowell seeks to show is that if we have a sufficiently firm grip on the concept of a nondefective exercise of a capacity for knowledge, then we can appreciate that the subject who successfully exercises the relevant capacity *knows,* without requiring any Cartesian detour to reach an entitlement to knowledge. We can now summarize a crucial aspect of the point of McDowell's disjunctivism as follows: the Cartesian conception of the exercise of a perceptual capacity—and the conjunctive form of analysis upon which it rests—has the relative logical priority of the defective and the nondefective exercises of the capacity backward. What we require is a form of account that allows us to appreciate how a proper conception of the logical character of a defective exercise of the capacity presupposes prior conceptual clarity regarding the character of its nondefective exercise. We must come to appreciate how the relation between a defective and a successful exercise of our perceptual capacity is never that of a

highest common factor to a case in which something further has been added to that factor, but rather always that of a privative exercise to one that is wholly free of any dimension of privation in its exercise.

3. McDowell on Perception as a Capacity for Knowledge

In some of his most recent work on disjunctivism, McDowell invites us to consider what it means to claim (as he thinks we should) that perception is a *capacity for knowledge*. He encourages us to distinguish carefully between what goes on in these two fundamentally different sorts of possible exercise of such a capacity: the good case of its exercise which yields knowledge, and the bad case which does not. The aim of the passage we are about to consider is to show us how to conceive of these two cases as related to one another, if we wish to conceive that relation in properly disjunctivist terms. The passage occurs in the context of replying to Tyler Burge. It seeks to clarify what it means to say of a perceptual capacity that it is fallible—as well as how, if we wish so to conceive it, we ought to understand the character of the logical difference in the two respective forms of exercise of the capacity to be associated with each of the two disjuncts in the disjunctivist schema:

> A perceptual capacity, in the sense that matters for the disjunctive conception I have sketched, is a capacity—of course fallible—to get into positions in which one has indefeasible warrant for certain beliefs. That is what the capacity is a capacity to do, and that is what one does in non-defective exercises of it, exercises in which its acknowledged fallibility does not kick in. For instance, a capacity to tell whether things in one's field of vision are green is a capacity—of course fallible—to get into positions in which the greenness of things is visibly there for one, so that one has indefeasible warrant for believing that they are green. That the capacity is fallible means that a possessor of it can be fooled; for instance, if the light is unsuitable for telling the colors of things, one can take something to be green when it is not. It is wrong to think it follows that even when one is not fooled in an exercise of this capacity, one's position must fall short of having the greenness

> of something visibly present to one, and thereby having an indefeasible warrant for believing the thing to be green. Fallibility is an imperfection in cognitive capacities. But the mistake I am pointing out is easier to recognize if we consider its analogue in application to other sorts of imperfection in capacities. Some people have a capacity to throw a basketball through the hoop from the free-throw line. Any instantiation of such a capacity is imperfect; even the best players do not make all their free throws. Burge thinks that there cannot be a fallible capacity in whose non-defective exercises one gets to have indefeasible warrant for certain beliefs. One might as well think that there cannot be a capacity—of course not guaranteed success on all occasions—in whose non-defective exercises one actually makes free throws.[7]

On McDowell's understanding of the terms "perceiving" and "seeing," an act of such a capacity presents me with a judgable content—one that may eventuate in knowledge through a further act in which I accept what I thus "perceive" or "see" as true. I do not wish to dispute that there are scenarios in which my perceptual capacity is in act in such a manner—so that there indeed needs to be a logically distinct further act of acceptance in order for my cognitive activity to yield a form of perception-based knowledge. One question that will eventually occupy us in this paper will be the following: Should the unqualifiedly nonproblematic exercise of a capacity for "perceiving" or "seeing" be conceived as equally partaking of such a logically composite structure or should in such a case "perceiving" or "seeing" be taken to denominate a particular manner of *judging*—a particular way (as Kant would put it) of actualizing our general capacity for judgment? This, in turn, will lead us to a second question: Is "perceiving" understood along the lines McDowell here recommends (as the name of a capacity that puts me in—what he calls—"a position to know") a form of capacity whose most basic exercise is an act of self-consciousness?[8]

4. Merely Seemingly Seeing vs. Successfully Seeing

Before taking up these two questions, I would like to mark some distinctions and introduce some terminology for keeping track of them—terminology that will prove helpful later. While doing so, I would also like

to underscore what I do *not* wish to object to in McDowell's disjunctivism. For I agree with much of what McDowell intends the lesson of the above passage to be. We might put the most central point with which I wish to agree as follows: just as a proper appreciation of the fallibility of the practical capacity of shooting a free throw is no bar to allowing that when an appropriately accomplished player shoots the ball through the hoop, a proper comprehension of his practical capacity suffices to explain the possibility of its nondefective exercise, so too, a proper appreciation of the fallibility of our theoretical capacity for acquiring perceptual knowledge ought not to stand in the way of an acknowledgment that (for example, in a situation where I am entitled to claim "I see *p*") my seeing is due to the nondefective exercise of my capacity to see what is so. The nondefective exercise of such a capacity suffices. Suffices for what? McDowell and I agree on the following: in the successful case, it suffices to ensure that there is no gap to close between representation and world.[9] We therefore agree on this point: the conjunctivist is wrong in thinking that there is a highest common factor across the two disjuncts—across nondefective and defective exercises of our perceptual capacity—so that even in the good case the question remains no less open than in the bad, whether the representation in question is appropriately world-involving. Only once one is forced to spell out one's answer to the foregoing question—"Suffices for what?"—does the point at which McDowell and I diverge come fully into view. McDowell will say in answer to that question: a nondefective exercise of my capacity for perception (if it is to be conceived as a capacity for knowledge) suffices *to put me in a position to know*. I will say: an in-no-way defective exercise of this capacity suffices *for me to know*—this is what it means to say that it *is* an in-no-way defective exercise of a capacity for *knowledge*.

We will explore what this disagreement really comes to below. Before we do, let us first get clearer about the wider background of agreement against which this intramural disagreement between two types of disjunctivist takes place. McDowell would rightly regard a certain sort of response on the part of a conjunctivist to his version of disjunctivism as utterly point-missing. I will raise the worry toward the end of this paper whether McDowell's own way of seeking to resist my preferred conception of a perceptual capacity for knowledge replicates a feature of what is point-missing in the following possible response to disjunctivism on the part of a philosopher who remains in the thrall of the conjunctivist

conception. But first we need to be clear about exactly why this sort of response to McDowell is point-missing. To this end, imagine a conjunctivist who seeks to head off McDowell by saying the following:

> Consider a person who thinks her visual experience puts her in a position to say that she is seeing an oasis. But she later realizes she was wrong about that and says something on these lines:
>
> "I thought I was seeing an oasis but I now realize that what I was seeing was just a hallucination."
>
> According to this quite intelligible remark, it was true at the relevant past time that she was seeing something. Indeed, she could have had that very *same* visual experience whether what she saw was a hallucination or a real oasis. If she subsequently learns that what she had been seeing was merely a hallucination then she will withhold her assent from the visual appearance that there was an oasis. But whether she subsequently withholds her assent from that visual appearance or not, what she then saw was the *same*. So, in such a case, there is a highest common factor between seeing a hallucination of an oasis and seeing an oasis—namely, a certain sort of visual appearance.

Our imaginary conjunctivist interlocutor's way of using the verb "see" here involves a conflation of two different uses—which Gilbert Ryle teaches us respectively to recognize as the use of a verb of success and a mere-appearance use of that same verb. Let us call the latter sort of "seeing" *merely seemingly seeing*.[10] Let us try calling the other sort *successfully seeing*. The conjunctivist is vulnerable to the charge that he fails to appreciate the grammatical relations that obtain between these two ways of speaking of what someone sees.

The wrong sort of fixation on the surface grammar of these two ways of speaking, however, might well at first appear to confirm the conjunctivist's picture: for, taken together, this pair of locutions invites the idea that they respectively refer to the members of a pair of ways of doing one and the same thing ("seeing")—merely seemingly doing it and successfully doing it—where each of the adverbs modifies the same common core of visual activity, albeit it in two very different ways. This goes with the following picture of how to understand the success use of the verb: it involves a linguistic device that allows its user through the employment

of a single word (that is, without the need for an additional adverbial modifier) to single out a very particular way of doing something (namely, doing it successfully) from a much larger manifold of possible ways of doing that same thing. To understand the point in this way would be precisely to misconstrue the relation of logical priority between success and nonsuccess uses of a verb.

Ryle writes: "We shall see later that the epistemologist's hankering for some incorrigible sort of observation derives partly from his failure to notice that in one of its senses 'observe' is a verb of success, so that in this sense, 'mistaken observation' is as self-contradictory an expression as 'invalid proof' or 'unsuccessful cure.' But just as 'invalid argument' and 'unsuccessful treatment' are logically permissible expressions, so 'inefficient' or 'unavailing observation' is a permissible expression, when 'observe' is used not as a 'find' verb but as a 'hunt' verb."[11] When one speaks of "mistaken observation," one is not using the verb in its success sense. Conversely, if one is using the verb in its success sense, then the concept *observation* does not admit of the qualifier *correct* (for it in no way qualifies). One moral to be drawn from what Ryle says here is that in my foregoing use of the locution "successfully seeing," the "successfully" is at best redundant and at worst misleading, so it should be scrapped. This is the right conclusion to draw, if the locution is understood to imply that "successfully" seeks to introduce a modification into what otherwise would be a logically less complex description of an act. If one means to *use* the verb in its success sense, then the "successfully" is logically otiose. J. L. Austin, for one, would therefore have vehemently disapproved of my use of the adverb "successfully" and his worry would not have been entirely misplaced: "Only if we do the action named in some *special* way or circumstances, different from those in which such an act is naturally done (and of course both the normal and the abnormal differ according to what verb is in question) is a modifying expression *called for* or even *in order*."[12]

Austin's remark here is directed at those philosophers who he thinks manage to confuse themselves through the use of idle modifying expressions that in no way determine the verbs they modify. If we have no occasion to speak in such a manner in ordinary life, then, *ceteris paribus,* that qualifies for Austin as a sufficient ground for concluding that we ought not to speak that way as philosophers.

One can sympathize with Austin's thought that only under the pressure of philosophy will someone be prone to go in for such nonmodifying uses of adverbs without thereby endorsing his conclusion that any instance of such a form of use ought to be placed on the index. Such merely apparently modifying expressions (that do not serve further to logically determine the concepts they apparently modify) play an essential role, for example, in the philosophical practices of both Kant and Wittgenstein. One will encounter such forms of use wherever these philosophers seek to characterize (what Kant or early Wittgenstein call) the logical or (what later Wittgenstein calls) the grammatical form of a concept. In what we might call its *formal* use, the word "successfully" serves such a philosophical purpose. When so employed, the adverbial expression bears an altogether different logical valence than does an adverb (such as *alertly*) when used to materially characterize the particular manner in which one sees. So even if Austin is right about the logically otiose character of saying one is "successfully" φ-ing, where what is at issue is a material use of φ and φ denotes a verb of success, this still leaves room for a philosophically elucidatory use of such an adverb to assist in the task of bringing to logical self-consciousness an aspect of the formal character of the concept under investigation.

In employing the expression "successfully seeing" to elucidate what is philosophically confused in the conjunctivist's conception of "seeing," the aim is precisely not to introduce a determination into a broader genus of seeing in order to isolate a species thereof. The role of the adverb is to highlight a formal aspect of the concept under investigation. Successfully seeing (so understood) stands to merely seemingly seeing for McDowell's disjunctivist as the nondefective stands to the defective exercise of a capacity. That is to say, the expression "successfully" as used here merely indicates a form of exercise of the capacity that is free of any dimension of logical privation.[13] The elucidatory role of the word "successfully" in this context is simply to make wholly explicit such an absence of logical privation—hence properly to isolate an act of the capacity that is in no way encumbered: that is fully *spontaneous* in the Kantian sense of the term. So employed, the formal use of "successfully" functions as a philosophical device for clarifying what a case of *simply* seeing comes to.

One way to characterize the conjunctivist's philosophical blind spot would be to say that he misapprehends the formal role of "successfully"

in characterizing the logical grammar of perceptual verbs that are—in Ryle's terminology—verbs of success. The Cartesian conception of sense experience requires one to construe the grammar of "successfully" as if it were on a formal par with the role of "merely seemingly"—that is, as if it indicated some form of modification of the logically most basic exercise of one's capacity for seeing. One way to put the disjunctivist's teaching would be to say that she seeks to show the conjunctivist how he comes to misconstrue the logical relation that obtains between these cases—and, in particular, to show him that merely seemingly seeing is logically parasitic on the success sense of (simply) seeing. When I (in the success sense) see *p,* I see what is so (not just what seems to be so); when I merely seemingly see *p,* there is no world-involving state of affairs *p* that I see.

McDowell rightly assigns an absolute significance to this dimension of success in an account of the logical grammar of perceptual verbs of success. The way McDowell puts this is to say that for me to count as (really, simply, successfully) seeing, my seeing must reach all the way to the fact and must put me in a position to know; merely seemingly seeing does neither of these things—it neither reaches all the way to the world in the relevant sense, nor does it put me in a position to know. Hence, for the disjunctivist, any grasp of a merely seemingly seeing sense of the verb "see" would have to be logically parasitic on a prior grasp of the logically more demanding success sense of the verb.[14] One way of putting what McDowell's version of disjunctivism teaches would be as follows: in misconceiving how merely seemingly seeing stands to successfully seeing, what the conjunctivist takes for a highest common factor is a philosophical illusion—one that can be dissipated through a grammatical investigation of the relations of logical priority that obtain between these two ways of using a cognitive verb and hence between the correlative (defective vs. nondefective) forms of exercise of a cognitive capacity they denote.

As long as the conjunctivist's picture remains in place, it can seem as if we have no option but to conclude that any nondefective exercise of our perceptual capacity must share in the nature of a defective exercise of that same capacity in the following respect: all any act of perception can ever yield is a form of representation restricted to the Cartesian conception of the perceptual sphere—hence one that does not reach all the way to the things themselves. McDowell's disjunctivist analysis seeks to show that there is a fundamental asymmetry between a nondefective and a defective

exercise of a perceptual capacity, such that the former reaches all the way to the things themselves, whereas the latter does not. These two disjuncts stand to one another not as two species of a genus, but rather as stage thunder to thunder—as simulacrum to genuine article. McDowell's point against the conjunctivist might therefore be put as follows: we should not read the logical structure of the defective exercise of the capacity into that of its nondefective counterpart, so that we end up conceiving of the latter as a composite of an appearance and a reality. The disjuncts do not share a common factor; they involve logically fundamentally distinct *forms* of representation—or, to put this point in the Kantian idiom that I have been employing: they result from logically distinct forms of exercise of and one the same cognitive capacity—the form of the first is that of a genuine appearance (in which we see what is so); the form of the other is that of a *mere* appearance (in which we at most only seem to see what is so). We can see McDowell here as attempting to remain faithful to the following philosophical maxim: Do not try to read the formal character of the logically primitive phenomenon off the model of its logically privative counterpart! The question that will occupy us in the remainder of this paper may now be put as follows: What does full faithfulness to this philosophical maxim require of us when elaborating a disjunctivist conception of how properly to discriminate the full range of logically distinct forms of exercise of a perceptual capacity for knowledge?

5. Putting Oneself in a Position to See vs. (Successfully) Seeing

Once we become clear in this way about where the real nub of the disjunctivist critique of a Cartesian conception of experience lies, it opens up the following question: How should we conceive the formal character of the logically privileged disjunct? From what point(s) of view must it be possible for the perceiving subject to answer the question: Do I myself occupy *that* disjunct? Does it suffice if that question can be answered from a point of view *outside* the unity of apperception of she who exercises the self-conscious cognitive capacity? Or must the knowledge that I am an occupant of the disjunct in question be *self-consciously* available to me

from *within* the scope of a successful act of the perceptual capacity itself?

Before we take up this question, let us note that McDowell's conception of (what is involved in my doing what he calls "non-defectively exercising" my capacity for) perceptual experience still leaves room for a highest common factor across the following two cases: (a) the moderately happy case in which an exercise of my perceptual capacity successfully gets me into a position in which I have "an indefeasible warrant" for *p* but I still need to make a mediating reflective maneuver in order to exploit that warrant, and (b) the even happier case in which I simply exploit that same warrant and thereby immediately come to know *p*. One of the places in which McDowell takes particular pains to defend this structural feature of his overall conception is in a response to Barry Stroud. Stroud says this: "A person who sees that it is raining judges or believes or accepts or otherwise puts it forward as true that it is raining."[15] McDowell comments in response to this:

> I think that is simply wrong about a perfectly intelligible notion of seeing that something is the case. And this other notion is the right one for my purposes. Certainly one will not *say* one sees that *p* unless one accepts that *p*. But one can see that *p* without being willing to say one does. Consider a person who thinks her visual experience does not put her in a position to say how things are in some respect. But she later realizes she was wrong about that, and says something on these lines:
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> > I thought I was looking at the tie under one of those lights that make it impossible to tell what color things are, so I thought it merely looked green to me, but I now realize that I was seeing it to be green.
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> According to this quite intelligible remark, it was true at the relevant past time that she was seeing the tie to be green, but at that time she did not in any way put it forward as true that the tie was green. She does now, but that is irrelevant to Stroud's claim that the seeing itself must have involved endorsement or acceptance. She withheld her assent from the appearance that the tie was green that her experience presented her with—an appearance

> that was actually the fact that the tie was green making itself visually available to her. Stroud thinks withholding one's assent from an appearance is incompatible with seeing that things are that way. But this person, as she now realizes, did see that the tie was green, though she withheld her assent from the appearance.[16]

McDowell's example here involves a variation on Sellars's famous parable of the tie shop. In the original Sellarsian tie-shop scenario, I can come to be in a position to know a tie in the tie shop is blue even though it appears green to me, thanks to an additional piece of knowledge that I can acquire: knowledge regarding how I am perceptually circumstanced—specifically knowledge to the effect that under the conditions of the yellow lighting in the tie shop a blue tie will appear green.[17] McDowell's example asks us to imagine someone who believes herself to be in Sellars's tie shop, but does not realize that the proprietor has now arranged for the lighting to be fixed, so that blue ties now appear to be blue and green ones appear to be green. Absent this knowledge—still operating under her prior belief that she is in a tie shop in which blue ties appear green—a longtime customer of the establishment will not know right off when looking at a green tie that it is green. This is not something she will know—absent a further mediating inference—simply by looking at the tie and perceptually apprehending its (apparent) color.

McDowell, in effect, suggests here that reflection on his modified version of the parable of the tie shop ought to enable us to distinguish two different but equally valid paths by means of which one can come to occupy the good disjunct: there is the familiar direct route (in which one knows by just looking and seeing what is the case and accepting it to be so), but then there is also the route traveled by the protagonist of the parable (who can say "I now realize that I was seeing the tie to be green"). She, too, counts for McDowell as an occupant of the good disjunct.

Admittedly, the situation of the parable's protagonist is initially slightly less optimal than that of her more celebrated (and initially reflectively less unfavorably circumstanced) co-occupant, but McDowell in effect urges: Do not let that distract you from what matters! If the parable achieves its intended purpose, it will have shown you that our protagonist does not differ in any way that ought to matter for homing in on the rele-

vant concept—namely, that of a *successful* exercise of a rational perceptual capacity. The crucial point is that these co-occupants of the good disjunct are equally able to pass the following test with flying colors: they can each truthfully claim to have "successfully" "seen" the tie to be green. We are invited to conclude that the sentential verbal twins that form the members of the pair of claims that they will thereby respectively utter bear a common logical form. That the respective perceptual accomplishments of our co-occupants are fully on a par (in the logically relevant respect) will come clearly into focus for us, McDowell suggests, if we properly reflect upon the significance of the fact that they express *one and the same claim* when each of them says: "I saw the tie to be green." That they are in equally good positions to make such an avowal shows them to have equally valid title to a perch within the good disjunct. For it shows them to have been equally able via a fully successful act of their perceptual capacity to take in what is the case. Is that right?

This example brings out a critical feature of McDowell's conception of what qualifies someone as an occupant of the good disjunct—of what constitutes a minimal case of someone's having cleared the threshold for counting as having successfully seen what is so. Though, of course, he nowhere formulates the upshot of his discussion in these terms, McDowell's midrash on the parable, in effect, depends upon the possibility of a revelation of a highest common factor across the two scenarios distinguished above. On this conception of perceptual experience, the sentence "I saw that *p*" expresses the very same perceptual thought *p*—equally available to the two co-occupants of McDowell's good disjunct—and it does so regardless of whether the subject of the perceptual experience initially accepts *p* or not.

This much seems right: it is equally linguistically appropriate for an erstwhile occupant of either of these scenarios in retrospect to conclude something that she may express by calling upon the words "I saw that *p*." But that still leaves open the question whether these two fully apt employments of one and the same form of words express *the same thought* across these two circumstances of use. The question that we now need to explore in order to get clear about this is the following: Do these two uses of a perceptual verb across the two scenarios denote the *same* form of exercise of one's perceptual cognitive capacity?

6. Self-Consciously Seeing vs. Self-Alienatedly Seeing

Now I do think there is *a* use of the verb "see" that approximates what is here desired by McDowell (when he speaks of "a perfectly intelligible notion of seeing that something is the case" which is—as he puts it—"the right one for my purposes"),[18] but on the sense that the verb acquires through that form of use, it now admits only of certain forms of conjugation.[19] We can begin to see why this is so by assembling a few observations about what is being said about the "perceiver" who "sees" on such an employment of the verb. Notice first: without the interpolation of a further perspective—either that of another perceiver or of a retrospective perspective of my own on my previous act of "seeing"—the only way I can know that the first of the following two claims is true is if I already know the second is true:

(1) I am in a position to successfully see *p*.
(2) I see *p*.

Notice second: there is nothing that the following could amount to: my knowing (1) while not yet being able to claim the following:

(3) I know *p*.

Now notice third: if I am conjugating both of the two verbs at issue here (the verb for putting oneself in such a position and the verb for self-consciously seeing) in the first-person present indicative, there is no act of the mind that can express the joint affirmation of (1) and the negation of (3).

On the use of the verb "to see" for which McDowell wants to allow, *someone else* can say of the perceiving subject who attempts to see the color of the tie under the reflectively unfavorable circumstances sketched in McDowell's tie shop scenario: she is (according to "the right notion" for McDowell's purposes) "seeing" it to be green (though she doesn't realize that she is, because she thinks the lighting in the tie shop causes blue things to look green). Later, after she learns that the shop's lighting does not cause blue things to appear green, she'll be able to say in the first-person past indicative something that resembles what the observer of the original event of "seeing" can already say about her in the third-person present

indicative. But do the two uses bear the same logical form? Let us suppose that they do. If so, then the logical grammar that the verb "see" bears on the supposed form of use common to these two speakers is one that *does not admit of a first-person present indicative employment*. A logical link that ordinarily obtains on the logically full-blooded success use of verbs for self-conscious forms of cognitive activity has here been severed—the link that, for example, ordinarily underwrites a third-person observer's ability (say, in a normal tie shop) to move from claiming (about a customer sampling a tie) that "she sees *p*" to inferring that this same piece of knowledge is expressible by the customer herself in the form of a first-person indicative present tense avowal.[20]

I want to claim the following holds of the relation between the notion of seeing that Stroud seeks to elucidate and the notion of "seeing" that McDowell seeks to single out as putatively "the right one" for his purposes: the latter stands to the former as privative to nonprivative exercises of one and the same capacity. The very intelligibility of McDowell's protagonist's manner of employing a perceptual verb (where the aforementioned link is severed) is parasitic on a logically prior use of any such verb, where it expresses a fully successful exercise of a *self-conscious* capacity for knowledge—one that *can* be expressed in the form of a *first-person present-tense avowal*. It is the mark of the relevant class of verbs when employed in their logically full-blooded success sense not only that they admit of such a first-person present indicative use, but also that this use expresses the logically fundamental form of exercise of the rational capacity they self-ascribe.

We might express this point as follows: on the logically full-blooded use of the verb, the "I see" must necessarily be able to accompany any *p* I can be said to see (just as for Kant, it is the mark of self-consciousness that the "I know" must necessarily be able to accompany any *p* I can be said to know). Let us call this the *self-consciously seeing* sense of "see." On the logically derivative use of the verb we here seek to understand (the one that occurs in the protagonist's remark "I now realize that I was seeing it to be green"), any *p* I can be said to see (by someone else or by my later self) is not only now no longer *necessarily* accompaniable by a first-person present indicative use of "I see"—it is not even *possibly* so accompaniable. The concept of "seeing" employed by the parable's protagonist requires the following remarkable logical feature to be in place: that the subject lacks

(what we might call) *perceptual unity of apperception*. We require a logically peculiar concept here because we want to speak of someone who suffers from a logically peculiar form of perceptual *disunity* of apperception. A variant on our logically full-blooded concept of "seeing" can come into play here, but only if that concept first comes to suffer privation along the requisite logical dimension.[21]

Let us call the logically secondary concept of seeing that comes to be generated in this manner that of *self-alienatedly seeing*. How does this concept differ from that of self-consciously seeing? It helps to register a difference in the two concepts of seeing that come into view here if we reflect on the forms of relation they respectively bear to Moore's paradox.[22] On the self-consciously seeing use of the verb, the following sentence is Moore-paradoxical: "I see *p* but I don't know that I am seeing *p*"—and so, too, is its first-person past-tense indicative counterpart. This formal dimension of the concept pervades the entire logical space of its use. On the self-alienatedly seeing use of the verb, the following sentence is not Moore-paradoxical: "I saw *p* but at the time I didn't know I was seeing *p*"—and this entails that it has no first-person present-tense indicative counterpart. This moment of self-alienation pervades the entire logical space of the use of this concept of what is to see.[23]

Someone might miss the force of this by trying to object along the following lines:

> The following is paradoxical for any *r,* provided the following sentence is well-formed: "I *r* but I don't believe I am *r*-ing." Meanwhile, the following sentence is never paradoxical: "I *r*-ed but at the time I didn't know I was *r*-ing." For example, "I walk but I don't believe I am walking" strikes me as paradoxical, if well-formed, and "I walked but at the time I didn't know I was walking" does not strike me as paradoxical. Yet, presumably, your argument above about "seeing" is not meant to extend to "walking." So I am worried that your argument doesn't work because it threatens to show that "walking" bears a logical peculiarity you want to attribute specifically to "seeing."[24]

Contrary to what the objector here presumes, the point is meant to possess a degree of generality he supposes it cannot mean to have. The logical peculiarity in question is not peculiar merely to the perceptual cognitive

achievements (as opposed to the nonperceptual ones) of a self-conscious being, but rather to all logically full-blooded exercises of self-consciousness (be they acts of our capacity to know the world or ones of our capacity to intellectually act within or upon the world). The point in question, if developed with sufficient care, may and should be extended to *walking*—or more precisely: to cases where the verb *to walk* expresses the full-blooded intentional exercise of the sort of capacity for practical knowledge that Anscombe elucidates in *Intention*.[25] Our interlocutor, however, is right about the following: the point cannot be extended to anything anyone might call "walking" on any possible occasion of use of that verb. In particular, it will no longer apply when the verb ascribes to a rational subject something other than a full-blooded exercise of her capacity for intentional action.

What the objection can serve to bring out—once the logical character of the use of the verb in question has been appropriately clarified—is a point that holds equally of seeing and walking. The negative way to formulate that point is as follows: when the capacity expressed by the verb is a rational capacity for knowledge (be it theoretical or practical), and if the form of the exercise is a self-alienated one (as opposed to a fully self-conscious one), then there will in such a case no longer be anything paradoxical about an utterance of the following form: "I was *r*-ing but at the time I didn't know I was *r*-ing." (Consider: "I was sleepwalking but at the time I didn't know I was sleepwalking.") Moreover, since the principle of charity behooves us to try to make sense of the utterances of others, when someone utters something of this form, it is natural to construe the verb in such a context of use as bearing some sense other than its full-blooded, self-conscious, success sense. Once it is so construed, the interlocutor's example ought not even to appear to tell against the crucial point. To formulate the logical peculiarity that here equally characterizes a self-conscious being's capacities for seeing and walking in positive terms: if the form of exercise of a capacity for knowledge that the verb *r* expresses is the one expressed by the logically full-blooded success sense of the verb, then an utterance of the form "I was *r*-ing but at the time I didn't know I was *r*-ing" will necessarily be Moore-paradoxical.

We can make the point more vivid by exploring the logical grammar of a concept that denotes a species of walking—as the concept of *sleepwalking* does—which exhibits a dimension of logical privation parallel to

that found in the concept of self-alienatedly seeing. The parallel may be put as follows: self-alienatedly seeing stands to self-consciously seeing as sleepwalking does to (intentionally exercising one's practical rational capacity for) walking. Just as it is not paradoxical for McDowell's parable's protagonist later to say of her former self "I was seeing it to be green, but at the time I didn't know I was seeing it to be green," so too there is nothing paradoxical about my later saying of my former self "I was sleepwalking, but at the time I didn't know I was sleepwalking." Correlatively, just as the verb for self-alienatedly seeing admits of no first-person present indicative sense, neither does the verb for sleepwalking. There simply is no form of knowledge which could be expressed by my saying—here and now, as I am doing it—"I am sleepwalking." As with self-alienatedly knowing, so too with the case of self-alienatedly walking here under examination: there is no thought to think which could be expressed through the self-predication of the verb to sleepwalk in the first-person present indicative. Conversely, in order for someone to be brought under that concept, a logical gap must be opened up between the one whose capacity for sleepwalking is *in energeia* and the one who speaks of that actuality. This gap can be opened up by the one who speaks of the sleepwalker being someone other than the sleepwalker himself (in which case she can say of him in the third-person present indicative: "He is sleepwalking"). Alternatively, if I wish to self-predicate the verb, then the requisite logical gap can be opened up through a modulation of the tense or mood of the utterance (hence I can, for example, express retrospective knowledge of what I had been doing at a certain time by saying "At the time I was sleepwalking").

The former of these two sorts of employment of a verb for self-alienated activity is available to a clued-in observer of the perceptual activity of the protagonist in McDowell's parable. On that employment of the verb, the words "she sees the tie to be green" (when uttered by such an observer) express the observer's knowledge of the protagonist's initially cognitively deficient relation to *p*. The initial applicability of the concept of self-alienatedly seeing here turns on the fact that it is not one and the same person who predicates the concept and of whom the concept is predicated. In order to understand the parable, we must enter into the perspective of the narrator: we, too, must become clued-in observers. Our prior grasp of the logical character of this third-person perspective (from which we initially comprehend what the protagonist may be said to see, even though

she cannot yet say this of herself) is a condition of our being able to understand the sense that the protagonist's own later ascription (to her earlier self) of "seeing" bears.

The preceding meditation aims to bring out the importance of the following point: the logically primary use of our ordinary verbs for rational cognitive capacities is the *first-person* present indicative. This is the perspective from which we comprehend the capacity *from the inside:* from within and through its exercise. It is the perspective of Descartes's thinker when he thinks the cogito, as well as that of Kant's logical I who thinks that anything he can think is necessarily accompaniable by the "I think." It is the perspective from which a proper philosophical elucidation of our cognitive capacities, as beings capable of rational thought, action, and speech, must begin. The logically primary use of the verb for the concept of seeing that figures in McDowell's parable is the *third-person* present indicative. The perspective from which to begin to comprehend the peculiar nature of this sort of seeing—self-alienated seeing—is *from the outside:* looking from sideways-on at a subject who exercises the capacity. Hence unlike Descartes's thinker who is unable (while thinking his doubt) to doubt that he thinks, she who thus "sees" (while she is self-alienatedly seeing) has no difficulty doubting that she sees. Unlike Kant's logical I, who (in thinking *p*) thinks the necessary accompaniability of *p* by the "I think," she who thus "sees" *p* (while she is in the act of self-alienatedly seeing *p*) is unable to accompany *p* by the "I see." Hence the perspective from which one must begin a proper philosophical elucidation of the logically peculiar concept of self-alienatedly seeing is that of the third-person. From there one can work one's way out to possibilities for employing the verb where it admits of conjugation in the first person.

My ability to employ the verb for successfully seeing in the first-person present indicative form is a condition of its genuinely being a cognitive verb of *success.* Conversely, there being nothing that counts as having conjugated it in the first-person present indicative is a sign that the verb that McDowell's parable's protagonist employs is not—at least not in the sense of the term I seek to specify here—a verb of success. The self-alienated sense that that latter verb bears flows from there being literally *nothing to think* through the first-person present indicative use of the verb. There is no employment of it that can bear the logical form "I see *p*." Indeed, it is her understanding of the nonavailability of such a form of thought that

enables McDowell's parable's protagonist to express, through the self-predicative form of use she does make of the verb, the logically peculiar thought she intends to express.

7. Resolute vs. Irresolute Disjunctivism

Having arranged for such a use of the verb within the parable, when McDowell goes on to explicate "the" character of the thought his sample sentence expresses, the intended topic is the logical grammar of "seeing" as such. His aim is not to explicate just the character of the protagonist's act of "seeing" within the frame of the parable. The aim is more general: to explicate the logical character of any act of seeing that can be expressed through the use of a verbal twin of the protagonist's sentence—even when it is uttered by a reflectively favorably circumstanced speaker going about her ordinary life outside the frame of the parable.

In outward sentential appearance, the deployments of the verbs for self-consciously and self-alienatedly seeing are identical, but not in inward logical form. If we fail carefully to attend to how such sentential verbal twins involve verbs for cognitive activity that are at best distantly related in logical form, then we will easily fall into the confusion of imagining that a single form of words expresses a common form of thought across these two contexts of use.

Thinking this allows us to fall into a subtler version of the conjunctivist's original confusion. We can rephrase a point made earlier about the conjunctivist as follows: the conjunctivist takes two uses of what outwardly is one and the same verb ("seeing") to involve two different employments of one and the same concept, and hence to refer to a pair of ways of doing one and the same thing—merely seemingly doing it and successfully doing it—where each of the adverbs modifies the same common core of visual activity, albeit it in two very different ways. The conjunctivist then regards the logical features that the verb exhibits in one of these uses (in its logically derivative nonsuccess use) to involve a common core of visual activity that recurs as a highest common factor in successful acts of seeing (where seeing *p* entails *p*). He concludes that all acts of seeing must involve such a logical moment of mere appearance.

Now we can say this about McDowell's version of disjunctivism: he takes two uses of what outwardly is one and the same verbal sign ("seeing") to involve two different employments of one and the same concept (of seeing), and hence to refer to a pair of ways of doing one and the same thing. He then regards the logical features that the verb exhibits in one of these uses (in a logically alienated use: where I can see *p* without my accepting *p*) to exhibit a common core of visual activity that recurs in self-conscious acts of seeing (where my seeing *p* goes with my knowing that I see *p* and hence with my accepting *p*). He concludes from this that all acts of successfully seeing must involve a highest common logical moment of an act of seeing *p* without, in so seeing, thereby accepting *p*. What it is for me to know *p* in virtue of my seeing *p* thereby comes to be conceived as a form of cognitive achievement that is necessarily logically composite, comprising two acts: one of seeing and one of accepting *p*.

I do not mean to deny that McDowell's conception of the matter is far superior to that of the conjunctivist. But I do mean to raise a question regarding what it means strictly to think through the central insight that animates disjunctivism. McDowell's conception of the matter is far superior because his conception of "a common core of visual activity" is nowhere near as logically anemic as that of the conjunctivist. McDowellian "seeing" improves on matters considerably because now seeing *p* entails *p*. But it still does not entail *I know p*. This is what allows there to be a structural parallel between what McDowell wants to show the conjunctivist and what I want to show McDowell. Let us call the species of disjunctivism that McDowell arrives at through his critique of the Cartesian epistemologist *irresolute disjunctivism* in order to set the stage for this question: What shape would a fully resolute account of the insight underlying that disjunctivist critique have to assume?

McDowell wants to show the conjunctivist that the two concepts of "seeing" with which the conjunctivist works stand in a logically asymmetrical relation to one another: one cannot work up to an account of perceptual success starting with the logically more anemic of these two concepts, where the first logical moment affords no more than mere *Schein* and the second supplements that common factor with something that secures a relation to *Sein*. The form of seeing one self-ascribes in ascribing the logically anemic concept to oneself is not one to which something can

be added to turn it into a case of successfully seeing. Success is not something that can be merely added to merely seemingly seeing to yield a case of successfully seeing. The two logical moments of seeing a "mere appearance" of *p* and knowing *p* when conjoined do not jointly yield something that has the logical form of successfully seeing *p*. For, in such a case, their connection is not secured through the logical link constitutive of successfully seeing. If it is somehow secured at all, it will have to be through an assurance afforded by a mediating act of reflection, external to the act of "seeing" per se: one that renders it intelligible how there comes to be a coincidence of the *p* which figures in the so-called act of "seeing" with the *p* which figures in the subsequent act of knowledge—hence how it is that *Schein* happens to be in perfect alignment with *Sein*. (This is the role Descartes assigns to the idea of God, permitting the meditator reflectively to surmount the obstacle that would otherwise forever block the very possibility of extracting knowledge from perception.) The ground of my knowing *p,* if it so obtained, is one that is not yet in place in (what is here called) my "seeing" *p*. It requires an additional source of ratification. It is precisely in this respect that it differs from the ground of the knowledge of *p* that one obtains if one successfully sees *p*.

Now the resolute disjunctivist wants to show the irresolute disjunctivist something structurally parallel: self-alienatedly seeing is logically less full-blooded than self-consciously seeing. It still severs the logical link between, for example, uses of the verb in the first-person *past* and in the first-person *present* indicative. Given the logically fundamental character of the severed inferential link, the overlap in surface grammar does not warrant an inference to an identity in the logical form of the concepts expressed by these different uses of an outwardly identical verb. This asymmetry suffices to reveal that the concept of rational cognitive activity expressed by the logically more anemic verb involves a dimension of logical privation. The protagonist in McDowell's parable both sees and knows, but when she "sees" *p,* she does not know either *p* or that she sees *p*. The self-ascription of such a form of seeing is only possible if it is ascribed either retrospectively (in the first-person past form) or imaginatively (in the subjunctive mood) by situating "oneself" within a very particular sort of frame. In either case, the form of seeing one thereby self-ascribes is not that of self-consciously seeing. Self-consciousness is not something that can be merely added to an act of non-self-consciously seeing to

yield a case of self-consciously seeing. The two logical moments of (what McDowell calls) "seeing" *p* and "accepting" *p*, when merely conjoined, do not jointly yield something that has the logical form of self-consciously seeing *p*. For, in such a case, their connection is not secured through the logical link constitutive of self-consciously seeing. If it is somehow secured at all, it will have to be through an assurance afforded by a mediating act of reflection external to the act of "seeing" per se, that renders it intelligible how there comes to be a coincidence of the *p* which figures in the so-called act of "seeing" with the *p* which figures in the subsequent act of knowledge. (This is the role McDowell assigns to reflection in his narration of the parable, so his protagonist may reflectively surmount what would otherwise block the very possibility of her extracting perceptual knowledge from her circumstances.) The ground of my knowing *p*, if so obtained, is not yet in place in (what is here called) my "seeing" *p*. It requires an additional act of ratification. It is precisely in this respect that it differs from self-consciously seeing *p*.

As with my earlier formal use of the locution "successfully," my present use of "self-consciously" will prove misleading if it is thought to introduce a modification into what otherwise would be a logically less complex description of the act in question. Here, too, we have a use of an apparently modifying expression that does not serve further to logically determine the concept it modifies, but rather to highlight a formal aspect of what is involved in the logically full-blooded case of seeing. The elucidatory role of the word "self-consciously" in this context—like that of "successfully" above—is to make explicit the absence of privation along a certain dimension in the logical form of the exercise of a rational cognitive activity. As before, so here too, the formal concept of *self-consciously* φ-ing functions as a philosophical device for bringing clearly into view yet a further dimension of what *simply* φ-ing comes to.

Let us now bring together the following three points: (1) the role of a properly unqualified concept of cognitive success is to render philosophically perspicuous what it is for the capacity under investigation to operate fully spontaneously (free of any dimension of privation); (2) the concept of self-alienatedly seeing *p* introduces a dimension of privation into the form of what it is to logically full-bloodedly see *p;* and (3) on the irresolute disjunctivist's conception of perceptual success, self-alienatedly seeing *p* qualifies as a case of (what he calls) a "successful"—that is, a

putatively in no way defective—exercise of the capacity to see *p*. It follows from these points that the irresolute disjunctivist's account of perceptual success fails to yield an adequate account of the concept we ought here to take as our starting point, if we wish properly to gather the logical form of the rational capacity under investigation.

Just as the irresolute disjunctivist tries to show the conjunctivist that what figures as two logically separable moments in his analysis of success is really just *one logical moment* in an act of successfully seeing, so too the resolute disjunctivist will try to show the irresolute disjunctivist that what he analyzes as separate logical moments form *one logical moment* in the logically full-blooded case of success. Just as the irresolute disjunctivist tries to show the conjunctivist that the only case that ought to be accorded the honor of being sorted into the good disjunct is the one in which seeing *p* can serve as an indefeasible ground for knowing *p,* so here again: the resolute disjunctivist will try to show the irresolute disjunctivist that only if self-consciousness of the indefeasibility of the ground figures *in* perceptual consciousness of the ground do we have a case of an act of the capacity that ought to be accorded the honor of being sorted into the most august disjunct. Just as the irresolute disjunctivist says to the conjunctivist: "What you take to be mere appearance does not stand to perceptual knowledge as the part stands to the whole but rather as the bad does to good," so too the one sort of disjunctivist says to the other: "What you take to be seeing does not stand to self-consciously knowing as part stands to whole, but rather as self-alienation stands to self-consciousness." As the one says to the other: "The proper understanding of what you take to be the logically complex success case (of appearance plus reality) needs to have the plus removed from it if we are to comprehend the logically basic act of the capacity; and what you take to be the logically simple case (mere appearance) is the logically privative form of exercise of the capacity," so too now the one sort of disjunctivist says to the other: "The proper understanding of what you take to be the logically complex success case (of seeing plus accepting) needs to have the plus removed from it if we are to comprehend the logically basic act of the capacity; and what you take to be the logically simpler case (something afforded through an exercise of one's perceptual capacity to which a judgment stroke needs to be attached) is the logically privative form of exercise of the capacity."

On the resolute conception, there are not two logically distinct acts that share a common content—one of seeing and one of knowing—rather,

these are two dimensions of a single self-conscious act. Qua logical aspects of a single self-conscious exercise of the capacity, they are merely notionally, never really, separable. Just as the disjunctivist says to the conjunctivist: "In the nondefective exercise of the capacity, your seeing the tie to be green does not fall in any way short of the green tie that you see," now the one sort of disjunctivist says to the other: "In the fully nonproblematic exercise of the capacity, your seeing the tie to be green does not fall in any way short of you *knowing* it to be green. In the logically basic exercise of the capacity, there is neither room nor need for a logical separation of your seeing *p* from your accepting *p*."

As we noted earlier, when McDowell speaks of "seeing" in the passage quoted above, he wants his use of the word to comprehend the kind of "seeing" he illustrates with his tie-shop parable (in which seeing *p* and knowing *p* admit of the sort of separation of logical moments that cases of self-alienatedly seeing plainly exhibit), while also wanting his deployment of the verb not to refer just to such cases. He also wants what he means when he speaks there of "seeing" to comprehend logically full-blooded self-conscious acts of seeing as well. He wants his use of the word "see" to cover both of these cases as if they comprised two species of a single formal genus. I have tried to show there is no such genus.

If this is right, the relation between the two sorts of seeing that McDowell's use of the verb "seeing" yokes together can be specified only disjunctively. Their logical relation can be properly elucidated only through a comprehension of how that which is logically constitutive of the primary case (self-consciousness) undergoes a form of privation (self-alienation) in the envisioned logically derivative employment of the verb. Much earlier, we saw the disjunctivist level the following critique of the conjunctivist: "What you construe as a highest common factor is a philosophical illusion engendered by your failing to distinguish properly between the cases of merely seemingly seeing and successfully seeing—an illusion that can be dissipated through a grammatical investigation of the relations of logical priority that obtain between these verbs and hence between the correlative (defective vs. nondefective) forms of exercise of a cognitive capacity." This schema may be redeployed. The one sort of disjunctivist may say to the other: "What you construe as a highest common factor (namely, the supposedly always logically separable moment of 'perceptual experience' to or from which I can give or withhold assent) is a philosophical illusion partially engendered by your failing to distinguish properly between your

protagonist's self-alienatedly seeing and someone's self-consciously seeing—an illusion that can be dissipated through a grammatical investigation of the relations of logical priority that obtain between these verbs and hence between the correlative (logically full-blooded vs. logically comparatively attenuated) forms of exercise of a cognitive capacity." Just as there is no highest common factor between merely seemingly seeing and successfully seeing, so too there is no highest common factor between self-alienatedly seeing and self-consciously seeing. Self-consciously seeing is not a form of cognitive capacity one comes to exercise by supplementing an act of seeing with a further act of self-consciousness.

We have seen that McDowell's version of disjunctivism admits of room for a highest common factor across the following two cases: the case of (what an analytic philosopher will call) "the veridical perceptual experience" that I am having now and to which I give my assent and the case of "the veridical perceptual experience" that I am having now and from which (due to reflectively unfavorable circumstances) I withhold my assent. On such a conception, what figures here as an exercise of a capacity to do something called "having a veridical perceptual experience" amounts to something that is less than an act of knowledge. The capacity for "perceptual experience" so conceived is not a concept of a self-conscious cognitive capacity. It is at best a concept of a form of exercise of the capacity that could be ingredient in a logically attenuated case of arriving at knowledge through an act of perception mediated by one of reflection. For perceptual experience, so conceived, only eventuates in knowledge if I do something beyond enjoying the experience: if I (paraphrasing Frege) advance from a grasp of the content of the thought delivered up to me through the perceptual experience to an acknowledgment of its truth-value. This, in turn, yields a conception according to which the exercise of my capacity to gain knowledge via perception stands to my capacity to have veridical perceptual experiences as something logically composite to something comparatively logically simple. On McDowell's version of disjunctivism, whenever I know via seeing, there are necessarily two logically (though not necessarily temporally) distinct moments: the one in which I see and the one in which I judge what I see to be so. A resolute disjunctivism will seek to expunge from its form of account this residual dimension of logical conjunctivism in the characterization of the logical form of the act of the capacity that is fully free of any modicum of defect or privation.

8. Felicitous and Infelicitous Disjuncts vs. (Merely) Good and Bad Ones

There are two philosophical lessons we can learn from Kant upon which I have drawn in the foregoing discussion—one about the relations of our general cognitive powers to one another and another about the relation of act to power. The first of these lessons is that in the case of a self-conscious capacity, such as our capacity for perceptual knowledge, the operation of the capacity is not to be factorized into the joint operation of two self-standingly intelligible capacities—say, one of perceiving and one of judging. The second lesson is that the nondefective case of the exercise of such a capacity is not to be analyzed as (what I called above) an attenuated case of its exercise plus something. This is close to the lesson I extracted above from McDowell's own critique of Cartesianism, but it cuts slightly deeper. Putting the various lessons together, we get this: to perceive (in the relevant success sense of the term) *is* to know (and to fail to know is for the capacity in question to encounter or suffer some kind of encumbrance, attenuation, or defect in its exercise).

If we bring these lessons to bear on disjunctivism, then we arrive at the following reformulation: When I am an occupant of the good disjunct, the act of knowing does not differ from that of perceiving—there is one act; when I am an occupant of the bad disjunct, the exercise of my perceptual faculty is not per se an act of knowledge—if I am to acquire knowledge, further acts of mind are required. It is this feature of the latter disjunct that the Cartesian tries to read into the structure of even the best case of knowledge. We saw above that Cartesian skepticism results from the challenge that it is impossible to maintain both of the following two thoughts at once:

(1) In virtue of perception, we can come to know about the world around us.
(2) A subject currently having a veridical perception is having an experience that is exactly the same as the experience she would be having were she instead having an indistinguishable nonveridical perception.

The way of understanding the relation of the good to the bad case now under consideration retains the original virtue of disjunctivist analyses:

it blocks the reading of (2) that makes it seem incompatible with (1). But it provides further clarification on how properly to understand (1), so as to yield a principle for distributing cases across disjuncts that differs from the one that McDowell's version of disjunctivism invites us to adopt.

In McDowell's discussions of these matters, the good case is thought to be one in which I both perceive and know, and the bad case is thought to be one in which I perceive but do not know. The label of "goodness" may incline us to sort the cases in accordance with whether the story ends well for the occupant of the disjunct or not—in accordance with whether the exercise of her faculty issues in knowledge or not. The resolute disjunctivist offers a different account of wherein the true virtue of (what McDowell calls) "the good disjunct" ought really to be taken to consist. The proposed reconception of the disjunctivist schema turns on a more discriminating principle for sorting cases into some disjunct other than the optimal one.

On McDowell's version of disjunctivism, the philosophical joint at which the disjunctive distinction is carved is one that takes the crucial criterion to be a matter of whether the occupant of the disjunct can be said by a third-person observer to be in a position to know. Does this suffice to vindicate the philosophical aspirations of disjunctivism? Does it suffice that from *some* (for example, later, or other) point of view on the perceptual appearances of the perceiver she can be said (by herself or someone else) to have been in "the right position" for knowing—or must, as the resolute disjunctivist insists, the (so-called) point of view from which this can be said be in the logically strongest possible sense *hers*?

Let us henceforth refer to the two fundamentally different sorts of disjunct—one that is utterly free of any form of privation and one that is not—that the resolute disjunctivist's alternative principle of classification yields as a *felicitous disjunct* and a *nonfelicitous disjunct*. According to our reformulated principle, I qua perceiver count as an occupant of an infelicitous disjunct, not only if what there is to know and what I seem to perceive do not coincide, but also when they do not conflict (for example, in the manner allowed for by McDowell's parable, where I both seem to "see" *p* and *p* is the case), yet my act of perceiving and my act of knowing are disjoined in such a way that in (doing something a philosopher may want to call) "perceiving" *p,* it still remains the case that I myself do not self-consciously perceive *p*. Any scenario, regardless of how "good" its final

outcome might be, in which my act of perceiving and my act of knowing come apart (so that an exercise of additional capacities is required in order to arrive at knowledge) counts according to our new principle as a case to be sorted under the infelicitous disjunct.

As we have seen, resolute disjunctivism holds that there is no room for a highest common factor across the following two cases: the case in which I know in seeing (where the act of assent is not dissociable from the act of seeing) and the cognitively attenuated case in which I am able to come to know only through the supplementation of an initially logically attenuated act of perception with a further effort of mind, so that "perception" eventuates in knowledge through the mediation of reflection. On this alternative conception, the difference between the two disjuncts must now be specified in terms of the character of their logical form. The logically primitive form of exercise of the capacity (in which perceiving is, as such, an act of knowledge) represents the first disjunct. Any other form of its exercise that in any way attenuates or disrupts (and hence lacks accord with the form of) the capacity is to be classified as belonging to some further disjunct. Only now, we can no longer hold that there are just two disjuncts: the good and the bad one. To paraphrase Tolstoy: felicitous disjuncts are all alike in being felicitous, whereas each sort of infelicitous disjunct is infelicitous in its own way. On this conception, perceptual error is only one of the grosser and more extreme forms of perceptual infelicity. For there are many ways to deviate—to lack accord—with the form of felicity.[26]

It suffices to qualify as an occupant of the infelicitous disjunct if you are someone whose exercise of a perceptual capacity does not *as such* result in knowledge. This was, of course, true of the erstwhile occupant of the bad disjunct at issue in the original critique of conjunctivism: that "perceiver" suffers from a perceptual misapprehension without knowing that he so suffers. Hence, we may say of him (viewing him from the third-person point of view) that he is unable to distinguish the situation he is in from the one he takes himself to be in. But to say this, according to the new principle of classification, is not yet to furnish a full account of what places him into the infelicitous category. It is not simply his inability to discriminate his own situation from one of knowing (making it the sort of case upon which the Cartesian fixates in his preferred examples of defective exercises of a perceptual capacity). What places him in

the infelicitous category is a distinction that the Cartesian is unable to get into view. This classic occupant of the original bad disjunct is one of a whole possible range of possible cases of infelicity. Let us call the Cartesian's favorite variant of infelicity *the there-is-no-way-to-tell variant* of the infelicitous disjunct. The standard disjunctivist diagnosis brings out how the conjunctivist illicitly contrives to make it seem as if the case of the good disjunct shared a highest common factor with the there-is-no-way-to-tell variant of the infelicitous disjunct. This is a philosophical step in the right direction, but for the resolute disjunctivist, the there-is-no-way-to-tell variant of the infelicitous disjunct does not exhaust the category of infelicity. What makes something a case of the felicitous disjunct is not that I both perceive and (also) know; it is that I am sufficiently favorably circumstanced to know simply in virtue of perceiving. It does not suffice to disqualify a case as one of infelicity, according to the resolute disjunctivist's principle, simply to note that I am sufficiently well circumstanced that my perceptual engagement with the world is of a sort that it can serve as a step along the path from ignorance to knowledge. If the exercise of the capacity only "eventually"—rather than immediately—issues in knowledge, then it is not free of infelicity in the relevant sense.

So a whole range of further cases of forms of exercise of my perceptual capacity will count as cases of infelicity according to the resolute disjunctivist's principle. It will include, for example, any sort of case in which I have reason to stand back from a perceptual judgment that I might otherwise be inclined to make because of what I take myself to have reason to question about how I am circumstanced, reflectively or otherwise. Indeed, it will include any sort of case in which a gap can open up between perceptual taking and judging, even if the path to knowledge is one that may be extremely easily disencumbered of its initial obstacle—as, for example, in certain situations in which things are just as they appear but in which further reflection is required to credit that things really are as they appear. I am thinking here of a sort of case for which philosophers love to arrange, one in which I later learn that the circumstances under which I perceive turn out not to be unfavorable in a way that I initially had reason to surmise they might be.

Consider the following case: I point at features of something that I take to be the Müller-Lyer–style diagram I drew on the blackboard of my classroom at the beginning of the class and say to my students, "This line

merely *appears* to be longer than that one," strongly emphasizing the word "appears." While doing so, I, on the one hand, simply assume that it is the very same diagram that I drew earlier (and thus that it is, in the usual way, occasioning an optical illusion in me), while, on the other hand, I find myself thinking that the one line really does now seem to be *so* much longer than the other that it is proving even harder than usual for me to credit that they are, indeed, of the same length. I then realize, aided by their mischievous laughter, that the students of my introductory epistemology class have, during a very brief absence on my part from the classroom, contrived to *alter* the diagram (lengthening the apparently longer line) and that they have been eagerly awaiting the moment when I would again say, while pointing at the line in question, "This line merely *appears* to be longer than that one."

In this sort of case, though I end up with knowledge (in this case that the one line is really—and not merely seemingly—longer than the other), it is not simply in virtue of "perceiving" what is the case: I do the (business we are here calling) "perceiving," I hesitate, I marshal further considerations, and then I arrive at knowledge. In such a case, I both "perceive" and (in the end) I know, but the original act of "perceiving" is insufficient for the knowing. Let us call such a case *the insufficiency-of-the-act-of-the-perceptual-capacity-for-telling variant* of the infelicitous disjunct—or, for short, *the insufficiency-of-the-perceptual-act variant*. Something qualifies as belonging to this variant only if both of the following features obtain: First, unlike in cases in which blue merely looks green to the subject, in this case, the subject is (as McDowell likes to put it) "in a position" to conclude that things are *just as they appear*. Second, the subject in this variant comes to *know* things are just as they appear through an additional act of reflection.[27] The problem here lies not (as in the classic Cartesian version of the bad disjunct) in the fact that the subject misperceives or fails to be in a position to know, but in *how* she comes know. What is here called "perceptual knowledge" is a form of coming-to-know. It exhibits a logically processual character, comprising phases beyond that of the initial act of the capacity, such that the path from "perceiving" to "knowing" admits of possible interruption, for the overall achievement of knowledge requires a striving that exhibits the logical form of *inquiry,* comprising moments that bear imperfective and perfective aspect. The form of exercise of a cognitive capacity that is properly classified as

belonging to the felicitous disjunct for the resolute disjunctivist must not exhibit these logical features. Hence an employment of the verb "to see" that expresses the logically full-blooded act of self-consciously seeing is also one that does not admit of the imperfective form qua act of knowledge in its first-person present indicative use.

The resolute disjunctivist's ground for classifying the aforementioned *insufficiency-of-the-perceptual-act* case under the infelicitous (rather than felicitous) disjunct rests on the irresolute disjunctivist's original reason for classifying cases under the bad (rather than the good) disjunct: namely, the insistence of the absence of a highest common factor across the felicitous disjunct and any infelicitous disjunct. To say that even this scenario ought to be sorted as a variant of an infelicitous disjunct is to claim that there is no highest-common-ingredient act across the following two exercises of my perceptual capacity: (1) one in which I know that *a is F* in virtue of an exercise of my perceptual cognitive faculty, and (2) one in which it appears to me that *a is F* in virtue of an exercise of my perceptual cognitive faculty, but in which I only come to know that *a is F*—and thus come to know that I do not thereby perceptually misapprehend what is the case—through supplementing that act of perception with one of reflection. The temptation here, even for those who otherwise take themselves to have digested the lesson of disjunctivism, is to say that there a common act is ingredient in both of these exercises of my cognitive power—namely, "the" act that brings it about that things perceptually appear as a case of *a's being F when a really is F*. The temptation is to think that if "the" appearance is "the *same,*" and there is *no misapprehension* "in" the appearance, and things *are* as they appear, and so I come to *know* that things are as they appear because it is the things themselves that so appear to me, then all is fine: what more could you want? Aren't all of the crucial elements for qualifying something as a case of epistemic goodness of a sort that we should care about in place? The point of the new principle of classification is to insist that the two cases (the nondefective and the somewhat attenuated exercise of a cognitive faculty) differ in Kantian transcendental-logical form.[28] What we want to call, under the pressure of the aforementioned temptation, "the" act (allegedly equally ingredient in these two cases of exercising the same general capacity) is not a common act: in one case, the act in question is qua the very act that it is

an act of knowledge; in the other, it is an act of the power of knowledge which, as such, is insufficient for knowledge. The underlying error in construing these two exercises of the perceptual capacity as having a highest common factor is au fond the same as the one that animates conjunctivist analyses: that of reading what comes to be a self-standingly intelligible moment in the structure of a less than fully felicitous exercise of the capacity into the structure of the logically more fundamental case of its fully felicitous exercise, thereby decomposing the unity of the fundamental form of act of the power.

Now we can say, more precisely, what qualifies any case as one that ought to count as a variant of the infelicitous disjunct: the question is not whether I can be said to both perceive and (also) know, but whether my acts of perception and knowledge form the requisite sort of unity or not. So, even if I end up knowing the truth and even if the exercise of my perceptual faculty figures as a crucial first step in my eventually getting there, if the act of exercising my capacity for perceptual knowledge amounts to, qua the very act that it is, something less than an act of knowledge, then my knowledge is not grounded in a logically full-blooded act of Kantian perceptual judgment—but rather only in (what Kant would call) a problematic perceptual judgment, an act of the capacity that requires nonperceptual supplementation to issue in knowledge.[29] The fundamental point here is just an application of the more general point about the logical priority of power to act in a Kantian account of the form of our cognitive power. What we need to understand is not simply how to sort cases into those in which I both exercise my perceptual capacity and know and those in which I exercise that capacity but fail to know, but rather how properly to differentiate between the formal character of the logically prior case of the exercise of the faculty (in which it suffers no attenuation or interruption) and its range of defective or attenuated forms of exercise (some of which may nonetheless eventuate in knowledge).

The original disjunctivist diagnosis charges the Cartesian with illicitly equating a supposed feature of the case of the good disjunct with an actual feature of the there-is-no-way-to-tell variant of the infelicitous disjunct, thereby leaving the poor Cartesian with no way to tell knowing from nonknowing. This diagnosis, as indicated above, is fine as far as it

goes, but it is apt to leave the irresolute disjunctivist imagining that he has fully learned the lesson of disjunctivism while continuing to categorize the case of the insufficiency-of-perception-for-telling scenario as a fully happy case on the grounds that its occupant both "perceives" and knows. What the resolute disjunctivist's more penetrating diagnosis suggests is rather this: the Cartesian too closely assimilates the difference between the defective and the nondefective exercise of a perceptual faculty to the difference between the following two variants of the infelicitous disjunct—the there-is-no-way-to-tell variant and the insufficiency-of-the-perceptual-act variant. The optimal case of perceptual knowledge that the Cartesian is able to envision (after we receive the required assistance from God) is one that consists in a form of exercise of a cognitive capacity that nevertheless retains the infelicitous structure of the insufficiency-of-perceptual-act case. What the Cartesian lacks and what a properly prosecuted disjunctivist diagnosis of his error should yield is a properly delimited concept of a fully felicitous exercise of our perceptual capacity. There is nothing wrong with the idea that mundane cases of the insufficiency-of-the-perceptual-act-for-telling scenario exhibit just the order of epistemic priority that the Cartesian thinks every act of perceiving must stand in to an act of judging in order to result in knowledge. The problem with the Cartesian conception is that it writes this order of priority into the very idea of what it is to know something via perception. The Cartesian conception makes it look as if every case of perceptual knowing requires additional reflective entitlement in a sense in which the insufficiency-of-the-perceptual-act-for-telling scenario actually does. So when we turn to the best case of perceptual knowledge, one in which no further reflective entitlement is required, it still looks as if, absent an act of judgment that accepts what the act of our perceptual capacity delivers up to us, we remain without something further we need in order for perception to yield knowledge. This is the feature of the Cartesian conception that the resolute disjunctivist seeks to bring within his target range: its conception of the composite character of even the best case of perceptual knowledge, so that even such a case must partake of a structure that enfolds a pair of logical moments—one in which something is given to the perceiving subject and one in which the subject accepts what is thus given.

9. Fully Abandoning the Sideways-On Point of View

In the foregoing discussion—in order to bring out the contrast between resolute and irresolute disjunctivism—the focus has been almost exclusively on two ways of departing from felicity: the fully defective exercise of the capacity and the self-alienated one. The focus on the latter was in service of the following point: in a felicitous exercise of the capacity, there is no room for a Fregean dissociation of the act of perceptual thought from that of perceptual judgment. This means that, as we have seen, cases that qualify for the irresolute disjunctivist as sortable under the good disjunct do not qualify for his resolute counterpart as sortable under the perfectly felicitous disjunct. For in the fully felicitous case, there can be no logical separation of moments between what I see and what I judge to be so.

McDowell's own characteristic criticism of a great deal of modern philosophy is that it turns on a methodological fantasy of the priority of (what he suggestively calls) a *sideways-on point of view* on the relation of knowing subject to known world. Against this, he insists upon the fundamental methodological priority of those forms of knowledge that are available to us from *within* our cognitive perspective onto the world. The manner of reconceiving the fundamental insight underlying disjunctivism proposed here grows out of an attempt to execute as resolutely as possible this very methodological turn in philosophy that McDowell himself has so eloquently proposed and deftly defended. The reconception turns on an insistence that the logical priority upon which McDowell himself insists turns on a further dimension of priority that is logically nested within it: the availability of *my* first-person present indicative point of view onto my cognitive activity as a prior condition on the intelligibility of any other (third-person, and/or past, and/or subjunctive) point of view onto that same activity.

McDowell's original point against the conjunctivist is that we should not read the logical structure of the defective exercise of a cognitive capacity into that of its nondefective exercise (so that we end up conceiving of the successful case of knowledge as consisting of a composite of a factor of mere appearance and a further factor that somehow secures a relation

to reality). I suggested earlier that McDowell, in so arguing, seeks to adhere to the following philosophical maxim: Do not try to read the character of the logically primitive phenomenon off the model of its logically alienated counterpart! It is on precisely these grounds that I have been concerned to argue that we should also not read the logical structure of what it is for me to have seen *p* under reflectively unfavorable circumstances into the structure of what it is for me to see *p* under fully felicitous circumstances, so that even in our account of the nonproblematic case we continue to take it that there is an isolable (albeit veridical and genuinely world-involving) appearance awaiting combination with a logically distinct operation of judgment.

This reconception of the relation between the logically primary disjunct and its comparatively logically privative siblings yields a different—and, I contend, deeper—diagnosis from McDowell's original one of wherein the seemingly innocent first step in the Cartesian philosophical conjuring trick actually lies. It lies not merely in the philosophically mistaken supposition that there is a logical symmetry across knowledge-yielding and non-knowledge-yielding ways of jointly exercising my cognitive capacities (though McDowell is absolutely right to think that there is a fundamental asymmetry and hence no highest common factor to be found across these cases). It lies more deeply in the philosophically mistaken supposition that there is a logical symmetry across fully self-conscious exercises of my cognitive capacities and less than fully self-conscious exercises of my cognitive capacities. The recommended conception accordingly holds that there is a fundamental logical asymmetry between those forms of knowledge that can be expressed through the use of a cognitive verb—for instance, know, judge, see, hear, etc.—used in its first-person present indicative grammatical form (and hence from what a philosopher may be inclined to call the first-person present indicative "point of view") and those forms of knowledge that involve some dimension of self-alienation (and hence express a form of knowledge that is in the first instance available only from some other point of view).

To appreciate why an exercise of our perceptual capacity for knowledge that issues in a judgable but unjudged "experiential content" is a case of its infelicitous exercise is to become fully clear about what is philosophically required in order not to fall back into even the subtlest of versions of a highest-common-factor conception of experience. This is the

point that I take the following series of remarks from Barry Stroud to be making:

> The fact that judgments made in perceptual experience are revisable in the light of reflection or further experience can make it seem that continued acceptance of a perceptual judgment about the independent world cannot be based solely on the original experience that gave rise to it; further reflection or experience serves to support it as well. And this can make it tempting to suppose that the content of that original experience in itself must have implied nothing about the independent world. . . . .[30] But yielding to this temptation is another way of falling into the "highest common factor" view of perception and reasonable belief that McDowell has rightly rejected. . . . [T]he content of an experience alone cannot give a person reason, or be a person's reason, to believe something. . . . It is not simply the content of a person's experience that gives the reason to believe something; it is the person's experiencing, or being aware of, or somehow "taking in" that content.[31]

This last remark could be paraphrased in our earlier idiom as follows: the perceptual (Fregean) thought, considered as mere judgable content, cannot, apart from the perceiving subject's recognizing it as true, amount to an act of knowledge; rather, it is only with the perceiving subject's perceptual *judgment* that such and such is the case that the subject commits herself to occupying a determinate position within the space of reasons. Only if the capacity for judgment can be *fully in act in perception* (in the manner indicated by Stroud) can perception as such be a capacity for knowledge. The moment our description of what perception yields begins to shade into a description of anything less than this—into a description of the mere deliverance or "presentation" of something judgable which the judging subject may hold at a distance and regard as not yet constituting knowledge until a further active step is taken on her part—then what we have offered is, by the lights of the resolute description, a description of a form of exercise of our perceptual capacity for knowledge that ought to be sorted into a disjunct other than the one that we reserve for fully felicitous exercises of the capacity. Admittedly, it is not a "defective" exercise of the capacity, if what that means is that it is

one that results in error—say, in the mistaking of how things merely perceptually seem for how things are. However, it is also not a fully felicitous case of the exercise of the capacity because it at best merely puts us in a position to know—the act itself is not one of knowing.

The form of the exercise of the capacity that should be accorded pride of place as fully felicitous, according to the resolute disjunctivist, is the one that reveals (what Kant calls) the form of the general capacity. The general capacity here at issue is one whose manifold of possible forms of actualization will be distributed across the manifold of possible disjuncts that a more complete and perspicuous form of disjunctivist account will need to furnish, once the disjunctivist begins to appreciate the importance of no longer simply equating the idea of freedom from perceptual error or illusion with the very idea of a best case of perceiving. For what a properly executed version of disjunctivism should want the sort of case that is sorted under its most privileged disjunct to reveal is the following: (what Kant calls) the logical form of the capacity. This is the form the capacity exhibits when it is able to operate under optimal conditions, hence fully unimpeded and unencumbered. It is only through such a case that its logically most basic form of exercise can be revealed. It is such a case—in which the form of the exercise is in perfect accord with the general form of the capacity—that a disjunctivist ought to call the truly good case.[32]