

SOMETHING ABOUT MARY*

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Summary

Jackson's black-and-white Mary teaches us that the propositional content of perception cannot be fully expressed in language.

In one of the earliest and best replies to Frank Jackson's knowledge argument, Horgan claimed, in effect, that the argument illegitimately draws a *metaphysical* conclusion – that physicalism is false – from an *epistemic* premise – that physically omniscient Mary would not know everything. Horgan's response has become standard. And, as it happens, I think it is correct.¹ But although physicalism survives unscathed, Jackson's thought experiment does hold an important lesson.² It suggests, I shall argue, that the propositional content of perception is *ineffable*, in the sense that it cannot be fully expressed in language.

This conclusion will be reached by considering a puzzle about perception posed by a slightly modified version of Jackson's thought experiment. As will become clear, the puzzle has affinities

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1. Moreover, I think Mary's physical omniscience and logical acumen would not enable her to know much of anything expressible in everyday vocabulary (Byrne 1999).

2. Horgan himself thinks a repaired version of the knowledge argument does threaten physicalism (Graham and Horgan 2000).

with Kripke's puzzle about belief and Molyneux's problem, although these connections will not be explicitly traced.³

Before explaining the puzzle, some preliminary remarks are needed.

1. *Mary's new belief, and the content of perception*

The new belief. When Mary leaves her room and sees a ripe tomato for the first time, she learns, Jackson tells us, a fact about *experiences* (1986, 293). And commentators almost invariably follow Jackson in taking this to be the fundamental intuition at work in the knowledge argument, either to be defanged, or explained away. Horgan, for instance, formulates Mary's new knowledge as follows:

Seeing ripe tomatoes has *this* property,
where 'this property' is used to designate the colour-*quale* that is
instantiated in her present experience. (1984, 151)

Now I don't want to deny that Mary learns something about the experience of seeing ripe tomatoes. But recall G. E. Moore's much-cited observation that "[w]hen we try to introspect the sensation of blue, all we can see is the blue: the other element is as if it were diaphanous" (1903, 450).⁴ Surely Mary also learns – or at least comes to believe – something about *tomatoes*.⁵ "Good grief," we can imagine her saying, "so ripe tomatoes have *this* property; I daresay it's the

3. Thau (1998) proposes a solution to the puzzle, which he integrates with a lengthy defense of Millianism. As will be apparent in section 3 below, I disagree with Thau's solution, but I am greatly indebted to his discussion. I should emphasize that I only consider an early formulation of Thau's view that was not intended for publication. A more developed and doubtless somewhat modified version will appear in Thau forthcoming.

The puzzle is also discussed in important papers by Nida-Rümelin (1995, 1998). Ignoring good advice from David Chalmers and Sven Walter, I only read these after it was too late to take them into account.

4. Shoemaker (1990, 112-3) first pointed out its importance.

5. Horgan would now emphasize just this feature (Horgan and Tienson 2000).

property red – fancy that!”

So Mary seems to acquire a belief about tomatoes, moreover one that she would naturally express using a demonstrative to refer to the property red. It would be nice, though, to set tricky issues about demonstrative belief aside. Fortunately we can do that by noting that there is another belief that Mary seems to acquire: the tomato appears a distinctive way to her, and she comes to believe that it is that way. Here the property red is not the *subject* of predication, picked out by ‘*this property*’; rather, it is the property predicated.

The content of perception. Perceptual experiences, like the familiar propositional attitudes, are representational or intentional mental states. And, also like the propositional attitudes, they have *propositional* content, which specifies *the way the world seems to the subject*. If the world *is* this way, the experience is veridical. If the world is *not* this way, the experience is some kind of illusion. At any rate, it is widely accepted that perceptual experiences have propositional content, and here it will be assumed without argument.

2. *The puzzle explained*

It will be useful to focus exclusively on a particular example. Partly to get off the restricted diet of tomatoes, and partly in honor of G. E. Moore, let it be the experience of looking at a “blue bead” (Moore 1903). This experience is an event: when it occurs, the world appears a certain way to its subject. Setting aside a worry about whether the bead is represented *as* a bead, and temporarily glossing over the fact that the bead looks to be a *specific shade* of blue, this much seems right: the content of the experience is, *inter alia*, *that the bead is blue*. Although the experience *represents* the bead as blue, that doesn’t mean that the experience *itself* is blue, as Moore saw very clearly. (Good job too, because the experience *isn’t* blue.)

Mary has never seen any blue objects. In fact, nothing has even looked blue to her. She has fully functioning color vision. Moreover, Mary knows a lot about the colors, and in particular she knows a fair amount about the color blue: that the sky and sapphires are blue, that ultramarine is a shade of blue, and so on. We need not suppose that

Mary is as knowledgeable as Jackson describes her – indeed, perhaps she’s a scientific ignoramus. And maybe Mary has even seen a few objects with colors other than blue. One day she learns she will be shown a blue bead. Imagine that Mary is confident about the reliability of her visual system. What will happen when Mary is shown the bead? Intuitively she will acquire the belief that the bead is a certain highly distinctive way; as I shall cautiously put it, Mary will acquire a belief *about the color of the bead*.

If Mary really does acquire such a belief, this is very puzzling. When she sees the bead, vision supplies her with the information *that the bead is blue*. (It also supplies her with other information, for instance about the bead’s shape; but this does not seem to be relevant.) However, Mary *already* believes that the bead is blue. So why would she *acquire* a belief about the bead’s color? For vividness, imagine that Maud is Mary’s visual system. When Mary sees the bead, Maud tells Mary that the bead is blue. However, this was entirely to be expected, because Mary believes that the bead is blue and that Maud is a reliable guide to Mary’s environment. Mary, then, ought to be entirely unimpressed by Maud’s old news. But that’s wrong: the colorful condition of the bead as revealed by Maud will come as a big surprise.

Setting out this reasoning a little more formally:

1. Before seeing the bead, Mary believes that the bead is blue.
2. Mary’s visual experience represents that the bead is blue.
3. If someone believes that an object is blue, and then has a visual experience that represents that the object is blue, then (various qualifications aside), she will not acquire a belief about its color.

Therefore:

4. When she sees the bead, Mary will not acquire a belief about its color.

The complement clauses should be read opaquely. Thus if Mary only believes that the bead has such-and-such surface spectral reflectance, then premise 1 is false, even if blueness *is* the property of having such-and-such reflectance.

The “various qualifications” in premise 3 need not detain us: the person must identify the object she sees as the one that she believes

is blue; she must not take herself to be the victim of some kind of illusion; her visual experience must not also represent the bead as being some *other* color; and so on.

The difficulty is that this argument has plausible premises, an implausible conclusion, and it's valid (or, more exactly, would be if we filled in a few details). The puzzle is to explain either why one of the premises is false, or why we should embrace the conclusion.

3. *Some suggestions*

Well, why not embrace the conclusion?

First Suggestion: embrace the conclusion

According to this suggestion, our intuitions to the contrary notwithstanding, Mary will not acquire any belief about the color of the bead.

Since Mary certainly seems to acquire *something*, a proponent of this suggestion has to equip Mary with some surrogate that we have mistakenly taken to be a new belief about the color of the bead. Perhaps the surrogate is some *other* belief. But what might that be?

Suppose Mary believes – as she would put it – that George W. Bush is in town. Mary's aunt Maud (not to be confused with her visual system of the same name) now says to Mary, "Dubya is in town", to which Mary replies, "Fancy that!" Mary evidently acquires a belief. Suppose, though, that Uncompromising Millianism about names is true – the semantic content of a name is just its referent, and coreferential names are substitutable *salva veritate* in propositional attitude contexts. Then, since Dubya = George W. Bush, Maud apparently told Mary what she believed already, that George W. Bush was in town. So Mary ought to be entirely unimpressed by Maud's old news. Isn't this a big problem for Uncompromising Millianism? No. Even if Mary believed all along that Dubya is in town, there are many candidates for the belief that she acquires when Maud says to her, "Dubya is in town". An obvious one is a belief about the representation Maud uses to express the proposition that Dubya is in town: for instance, that someone called 'Dubya' is in town.

If this is a promising analogy for the perceptual case, it suggests that when Mary sees the bead she acquires a belief about the *representation* Maud uses to convey the information that the bead is blue. For instance, Mary might acquire a belief about *mental paint*: “Mental properties of the experience that represent the [blueness of the bead]” (Block forthcoming, 9).

However, part of the point of contemporary insistence on the “diaphanousness” or “transparency” of experience is that one is *not* aware of perceptual representations, unlike linguistic ones. When one sees a blue bead, one is aware of *what* is represented, not of what does the representing. This way of developing the first suggestion is therefore not phenomenologically plausible.⁶

Following Lewis (1983) and Nemirow (1980), perhaps Mary simply acquires a cluster of abilities, which Lewis characterizes as the “abilities to remember, imagine, and recognize” experiences of colors (1988, 289). We can add the ability to recognize colored objects by sight to the list. Insofar as it makes sense to recognize an *experience* as of a blue object, one does it by concentrating on the colors in the scene before the eyes. If Mary acquires the ability to recognize visual experiences as of blue objects, she therefore also acquires the ability to recognize objects as blue by sight.

It is very plausible that Mary acquires the ability to recognize objects as blue by sight. However, it is very hard to maintain this while denying that Mary acquires a belief about the color of the bead. Consider two scenarios. (A) Mary believes that the bead is blue; we don’t show her the bead, but instead a blue ball, without telling her its color. Despite believing that the bead is blue, Mary won’t recognize the ball as being the same color as the bead. (B) Mary believes that the bead is blue, sees the bead, and then we show her the blue ball, again without telling her its color. Because Mary acquires the ability to recognize objects as blue by sight when she sees the bead, this time she will recognize the ball as being the same color as the bead.

Because Mary in (B) recognizes the ball as being the same color as the bead, she must have remembered something about the bead’s color. What is that she remembers? Not something that she could re-

6. Admittedly this is a bit quick (for the reason why, see Block forthcoming, 7-9); because of space limitations, it will have to do.

member in (A) – in particular, that the bead is blue – because otherwise in that scenario she would recognize the ball as being the same color as the bead. Mary therefore remembers something, and so believes something, about the color of the bead in (B) that she doesn't in (A). She acquires this belief when she acquires the ability; hence Mary acquires a belief about the color of the bead when she sees it.

Second Suggestion: deny premise 1

According to this suggestion Mary doesn't believe that the bead is blue, at any rate before seeing it. Neither does she believe, for instance, that the sky is blue. In other words, using 'concept' in a standard and unobjectionable sense, Mary lacks the concept BLUE.⁷ This is because one needs to have certain kinds of experiences in order to possess the concept BLUE – experiences that Mary doesn't have before seeing the bead. To be sure, Mary utters sentences like 'The sky is blue' before she sees any blue objects, but Mary is not thereby expressing the belief that the sky is blue; rather, she is expressing the metalinguistic belief that the sky has a property called 'blue', or something of the sort.

7. In this unobjectionable sense, an instance of 'S possesses the concept F' is true iff a corresponding instance of 'S ϕ s that ... F ...' is true (where ' ϕ s' is replaced by a propositional attitude verb like 'believes'). On another usage, concepts are modes of presentation or Fregean senses. In order to "possess a concept" in this second sense (according to Peacocke 1992), the subject has to meet the concept's "possession condition", which "states what is required for full mastery of [the] concept" (29). Clearly it does not follow that if S possesses the concept F in the first sense she possesses it in the second (someone who rejected Fregeanism entirely could of course hold that people possess concepts in the first sense). And in fact Peacocke's own theory allows that S may believe that ... F ... without having "full mastery" of the concept F, and so without possessing it (1992, 27-33).

This last observation suggests the following way of responding to the puzzle. Suppose it could be made out that Mary lacks "full mastery" of the concept BLUE, but that despite this she *does* believe that the bead is blue (following Burge 1979). On this view, premise 1 is *true*, but because of Mary's lack of conceptual competence there seems to be some prospect of denying premise 3. However, surely Mary does *not* lack "full mastery" of the concept BLUE. (In Burge's terminology, Mary does not have an "incomplete understanding" of the "notion".) We need not suppose that Mary is under any misconception about the boundaries of the color, for instance (cf. Burge 1979, 81-2).

Anyone attracted by this account will say that Mary *acquires* the concept BLUE when she sees the bead. Suppose she gives the name ‘B’ to the distinctive property that the bead appears to have, and then draws the conclusion, as she would put it, that “B is the property blue”. Her way of stating the conclusion is misleading: Mary has actually concluded that the property blue is called ‘the property blue’.

It is an interesting sociological fact that philosophers are sharply divided about whether someone in Mary’s predicament would have the concept BLUE, which on the face of it seems to be a fairly simple issue. Some, following a tradition probably as long as philosophy itself, find it obvious that she doesn’t, others find it obvious that she does.

Ignoring some exegetical subtleties, those who hold that Mary *lacks* the concept BLUE include Wittgenstein, Nagel, Williams, Peacocke, McDowell, and Harman; those who hold that she *has* the concept include Frege, Smart, Jackson, Block, Shoemaker, and Fodor.⁸

Nagel, for example, writes of “a martian scientist” who “would never be able to understand the human [concept] of [a] rainbow”, which is “connected with a particular point of view and a particular visual phenomenology” (1974, 443). On the other hand, Jackson apparently supposes that Mary has color concepts despite lacking color experiences: she is the world’s greatest color scientist, after all. Physically omniscient Mary understands ‘red’ as well as anyone, and knows she will see a red object when she is released from her cell. The only thing she doesn’t know is what seeing red is like.

Despite the weight of tradition, it isn’t very plausible to hold that Mary lacks the concept BLUE before seeing the bead.⁹ Take cases more extreme than Mary’s – the blind and those suffering from various forms of color blindness. Such people can use color vocabulary perfectly well, and give every indication of believing, for example,

8. See Wittgenstein 1977, I, 13; Nagel 1974; Williams 1978, 241-52; Peacocke 1984; McDowell 1985; Harman 1990; Frege 1918; Smart 1963, 80-1; Jackson 1982; Block 1990; Shoemaker 1994; Fodor 1998. Perhaps the exegetical subtleties are not quite so subtle: some of those classified as holding that Mary *lacks* the concept may well only admit that someone *blind* would lack the concept, for instance Peacocke and Harman.

9. Here I agree with Thau (1998, ch. 5).

that the sky is blue. In fact, the acquisition and use of color vocabulary by young children doesn't seem to vary very much between the blind and the sighted (Landau and Gleitman 1985). Evidently the blind lack something very useful: they can't recognize the colors by sight. But it isn't clear at all why this should prevent them from fully understanding 'blue' or from believing that the sky is blue, any more than someone's inability to recognize a chiliagon by sight or another sensory modality should prevent her from fully understanding 'chiliagon' or from believing that chiliagons have many sides.¹⁰

Of course, the other side of the debate does have a point. It is not implausible at all to think that Mary *does* lack a concept before seeing the bead.¹¹ However, this missing concept is *not* the concept BLUE, for the reasons given, and therefore even if the missing concept can help with the puzzle, it won't allow us to deny premise 1. So we should press on.

Third Suggestion: deny premise 2

According to the third suggestion, Maud is not telling Mary that the bead is blue. There are three main ways this suggestion can be developed. First, the Fregean way: Maud is telling Mary that the bead is blue*, where 'blue*' has the very same *reference* as 'blue', but a different *sense*. (This comes in different flavors, depending on the preferred conception of sense.) Second, Maud is telling Mary that the bead is, say, blue₁₇ – a specific shade of blue. Third, Maud is telling

10. Yablo (1995, 492) makes the interesting observation that we are tempted to treat 'square' differently from 'chiliagon' (or 'milliagon', to use his example). In the former case of 'square' we *are* inclined to say that someone doesn't fully understand the word if she lacks the appropriate perceptual recognitional capacity. (However, this inclination is mistaken, or so I've suggested.) A similar contrast applies to 'blue' and 'image blue' (as used by the Glidden paint company to name a fine-grained shade of blue). Despite lacking (as we all do) a recognitional capacity for fine-grained shades, the Glidden people presumably understand their own terminology (cf. Block 1999; see also the discussion of 'blue₁₇' under the "third suggestion" below).

11. See Crimmins 1989. According to him, and in my terminology, Mary has the concept BLUE, but lack a concept of the same property with more demanding possession conditions. (In Crimmins' terminology, Mary has a *idea* of blue, but lacks the *concept*.)

Mary that the bead has some *non-color* property, which we may call ‘phenomenal-blue’ (Thau 1998, ch. 5).¹²

The following objection applies to all these ways. Take, for example, the proposal that Maud is telling Mary that the bead is blue*. Imagine that we introduce the expression ‘blue*’ into our language. Surely Mary could understand it without having had special kinds of experiences. After all, once it is agreed that Mary needn’t have special experiences in order to understand ‘blue’, there doesn’t seem much motivation for insisting that ‘blue*’ should be treated any differently. (And if special experiences *are* required in order to understand ‘blue*’, the present proposal is superfluous: we might as well deny premise 1 instead.) So we may suppose that, before seeing the bead, Mary understands ‘blue*’ and believes (on the basis of testimony) that some things are blue*, in particular the bead she is about to see. Intuitively, Mary will *still* acquire a belief about the color of the bead when she sees it. This is the puzzle about perception all over again, with ‘blue’ replaced by ‘blue*’. Thus no progress has been made.

Similar remarks tell against the second and third ways: replace ‘blue*’ in the above paragraph with either ‘blue₁₇’ or ‘phenomenal-blue’.

Fourth Suggestion: deny premise 3

The third premise, recall, is:

3. If someone believes that an object is blue, and then has a visual experience that represents that the object is blue, then (various qualifications aside), she will not acquire a belief about its color.

Taking a hint from Dennett (1995), perhaps premise 3 fails because the content of Mary’s visual experience is very rich. Mary’s visual

12. Cf. Shoemaker 1994. Thau’s proposal is analogous to Castañeda’s response to Frege’s puzzle: the morning star *isn’t* identical to the evening star (Castañeda 1974).

Because phenomenal-blue is *not* a color, Thau embraces the conclusion in addition to denying premise 2. According to him, Mary *doesn’t* acquire a belief about the color of the bead. She does acquire *a* belief, though – unsurprisingly, one about the *phenomenal-color* of the bead.

system Maud isn't just telling Mary that the bead is blue, she's telling her that it's blue and flat in this tiny region, blue and curved in another region ... and so on and so on. It's a long story, and in any realistic description of Mary's initial predicament she won't believe anything quite so complicated. When she sees the bead, she acquires this complicated belief about its color.

The difficulty with this attempt is that intuitively Mary will acquire a belief even if we drastically impoverish the content of her visual experience. If we imagine Mary looking through a reduction screen at a tiny blue patch, and so imagine that the content of her experience is relatively poor, it seems just as plausible as it did originally that Mary will acquire a belief about the color of the thing she sees.¹³

Taking a hint from Fodor (1990), let us try something else. To simplify matters, suppose that Mary has a "belief box" in her head, in which expressions taken from Spanish, French and English may be inscribed (in a special Mentalese font). And suppose that the Mentalese predicates 'azul' and 'bleu', despite having the very same semantic content – the property blue – have different "functional roles". In particular, 'bleu' is intimately linked to the production of Mary's utterances of sentences like 'The bead I am about to see is blue', 'The sky is blue', etc. 'Azul', on the other hand, is intimately linked to her visual system. When Mary sees the bead, and has an experience with the content that the bead is blue, the sentence 'The bead is azul' appears in her belief box. Following Fodor, suppose that beliefs are not just individuated by their contents, but also by the functional role of their mental representations. Then Mary acquires a new belief, because the sentences 'The bead is azul' and 'The bead is bleu' play very different roles in Mary's cognitive economy.

However, this proposal is *at best* an explanation of why Mary will acquire a belief about the color of the bead if she possesses a *particular cognitive architecture*. But the guiding intuition in the Mary example is that *any rational person* in Mary's epistemic position who gets information about the bead in the visual way Mary gets it and who trusts her senses will acquire a belief about the color of the

13. See Block 1995, 277, and Thau 1998, ch. 5.

bead. It is hard to see how the present proposal can explain this. Suppose Mary's Mentalese only contains 'bleu', linked as before to sentences containing 'blue' and also linked to her visual system in the manner of 'azul'. So, when Mary sees the bead, the sentence 'The bead is bleu' will appear in Mary's belief box – if it's not there already. Since it *is* there already, seeing the bead will produce no change. Mary will not acquire a belief about the color of the bead: she won't express any surprise or amazement when she sees it. How, on the present proposal, could Mary's failure to acquire a belief possibly be irrational?

4. *The limits of language*

To try to break the gridlock, let us return to the Fregean proposal: Maud is not telling Mary that the bead is blue, but rather that it is blue*, where 'blue*' has the same reference as blue, but a different sense. The objection was that the puzzle arises all over again, with 'blue*' in place of 'blue'. That objection relied on two principles. The first is that Maud's pronouncement about the bead could be expressed in language.¹⁴ The second is that no linguistic expression requires special experiences in order to be understood. The first principle allows us to introduce the expression 'blue*', and putting that together with the second principle gives us another version of the puzzle, with Mary initially believing that the bead is blue*. Could either of these principles be resisted?

The second principle seems on firm ground. Understanding language is in a way cognitively undemanding, as Kripke and others have observed. In order to have the English expressions 'Aristotle', 'tiger', and 'water' in one's vocabulary, for example, one need not be at all epistemically intimate with their referents. Someone not perceptually acquainted with tigers, and profoundly ignorant of basic facts about them, is not thereby prevented from fully understanding 'tiger'. With any system of communication there's a tradeoff be-

14. Given that Maud's pronouncement is explained in terms of "a different sense", on a strict Fregean usage it immediately follows that it *is* linguistically expressible. The usage in this paper is therefore not so strict.

tween the amount of specialized knowledge and experience required to master it, and the size of the community who can use it. Language has erred on the side of inclusivity: children, couch potatoes, and Helen Keller can all speak of topics of which they have little knowledge or first-hand experience.

The first principle, though, is more open to question. And if it is incorrect, then the puzzle can be solved as follows. Premise 2 is false. Mary's experience doesn't represent that the bead is blue, but rather that it's ... well, *ex hypothesi* no bit of language will do the trick! Using 'ϕ' to pretend to say what can't be said, Mary's experience represents that the bead is ϕ. Since Mary trusts her senses, she acquires the belief that the bead is ϕ. This new belief is a belief about the color of the bead, because 'ϕ' refers to the property blue. (So, on a transparent reading, Mary's experience *does* represent that the bead is blue – but recall that the complement clauses should be read opaquely.) The puzzle cannot be resurrected for 'ϕ', because that could not be an expression of a natural language: the proposition that the bead is ϕ is not *linguistic* content.^{15,16} If this solution to the puzzle is right, the content of perception, although it can be remembered and believed, cannot be (entirely) expressed in language, and is in this sense *ineffable*.

In fact, there is already a theory of ineffable perceptual content in the literature. According to Peacocke's *A Study of Concepts* (1992), perceptual experiences have “nonconceptual content”, a special kind of propositional content that is a combination of “scenario content” and “protopositional content”. These two sorts of abstract objects are built to Russellian specifications: a protopositional content *is* a Russellian proposition, while a scenario content is something more complicated, but constructed along similar lines. Language and thought, on the other hand, exclusively have contents that are composed of Fregean senses or “concepts”.¹⁷

15. Let us not fuss about ‘the bead’: insert another squiggle, if you wish. It is worth noting that some theories of propositions tie them too closely to language for our purposes, for instance Schiffer's “pleonastic” theory (1996).

16. Since formal “languages” are cheap, the proposition that the bead is ϕ could be expressed by a sentence of *some* language. But such a language could not be used for communication in the manner of natural languages.

17. Cf. ‘concept’ as introduced in section 3, and fn. 7 above.

However, Peacocke's nonconceptual content, although ineffable, isn't quite what we want. Nonconceptual content cannot be believed, but Mary believes the ineffable proposition that the bead is \wp when she sees it. Still, Peacocke's discussion amply demonstrates the important point that ineffable content need not be immune to rigorous theorizing. The proposition that the bead is \wp is not expressible in language, but that is no barrier to a substantive account of it.

The thought that *something* about perceptual experience is ineffable is hardly new. According to Frege, for instance, the "inner world" of "sense impressions" and other "ideas" resists linguistic expression. No sentence, he thinks, can ever fully characterize my "sense impression of green". One of his reasons – perhaps charitably interpreted – seems to be this. If there is such a sentence, then the semantics of language can be made to vary just by varying the "ideas" in the minds of speakers. In particular, the inverted spectrum hypothesis should be an example of "inverted semantics": what you mean by 'red' is what I mean by 'green', and vice versa. But this is absurd: you and I speak the *same* language.¹⁸ (The later Wittgenstein may be represented as endorsing the reasoning, but instead locating the absurdity in Frege's ineffability hypothesis, concluding that there is no inner world of "ideas", as Frege conceives it.¹⁹)

Another example is C. I. Lewis's rather obscure doctrine that "the given" cannot be "described": "in a sense the given is ineffable, always" (1929, 52-3). Lewis also mentions the inverted spectrum, apparently thinking along lines similar to Frege's (73-6).

Peacocke is not the only contemporary proponent of ineffability. In footnote to the passage we examined earlier in section 1, Horgan all but explicitly says that Mary's new knowledge is not linguistically expressible (1994, 151, fn. 5). Block has claimed, using reasoning of the sort we just attributed to Frege, that "phenomenal character is not expressible in English" (1996, 47). Jackson commits himself to the view that some knowledge about qualia cannot be stated in language (1986, 295). And Raffman has argued at length,

18. The argument is suggested by Frege 1918/1997, 334-5, together with Frege 1879/1980, §27.

19. See the "inverted beetles" and "absent beetles" of §293, Wittgenstein 1953.

using music as the main example, that a certain level of perceptual representation is ineffable (1993).

On the position defended here, these philosophers have an important insight.

Unfortunately, we cannot conclude by announcing that the puzzle about perception has received a *satisfying* solution. For that, we need a theory of linguistic content, and a theory of perceptual content, which together explain why perceptual content, even though it can be the content of belief, isn't (or isn't entirely) linguistic content. But I hope a mere solution is enough for one paper.

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