

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

HAVING A BODY AND HAVING A PERSPECTIVE:
AN ACCOUNT OF PROPRIOCEPTIVE AWARENESS

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Contents

Acknowledgements	iv
Introduction	1
1 The Perceptual View	14
2 Room for a Constitutive Role	43
3 What It Takes to Have a Body	66
4 Deafferentation and the Unity of a Subject's Perspective	92
5 Constitution and Self-Awareness	116
Concluding Remarks	137
Bibliography	139

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Introduction

Our having bodies is something that continues to vex philosophers when it comes to thinking about what it is we are. While most of us now don't tend to think that we are anything distinct from our bodies—at least not in the way that Descartes pictured us as being—and so don't confront the problems that come with thinking this, thinking instead that our bodies are in some sense a part of us poses its own problems. For, simply accepting that we are both subjects *and* living, breathing, bodily beings with arms, legs, and all the rest hardly suffices to reconcile these two disparate-looking halves of ourselves. As subjects, we are beings who think, perceive, imagine, desire, and so on. We are beings with psychological lives. But our having bodies, in a way, seems incongruous with this. They, in being composed of muscle, skin, and bone, hardly seem as though they could be a part of us inasmuch as we are subjects. This is not because the psychological is as such opposed to the material but because, in the case of something like a human hand, say, it can be difficult to see how the psychological could extend to it. Thought, if it is anywhere at all, seems to be in the head.¹ A hand, then, in being *merely* composed of muscle, skin, and bone, does not seem that it could be a site of the psychological. It is something that can be represented in, even

¹What I mean to be evoking here is the general naturalistic attitude that many in the contemporary philosophy of mind share. Holders of this attitude, while not necessarily intent on *reducing* psychological states to neurological ones, find it puzzling that anyone might want to locate psychological qualities anywhere but where there exists some of our neurological apparatus to support them. Consider, for instance, Murat Aydede's recent expression of such puzzlement with respect to pain: "Can they [pain scientists and clinicians] be serious in thinking that people can have subjective experiences in body parts like toes, guts, buttocks, etc.? This seems very unlikely. Subjective experiences like pains are said to be realized in the brain (or the central nervous system). Indeed, many pain scientists think of pain experiences as being in the brain. Clearly, toes, guts, buttocks and the like don't have the complex functional organization sufficiently similar to the brain (any brain) to support subjective experiences" (Aydede forthcoming).

moved by, thought. But it is not something that shares in it. Thus, with these being the pieces of ourselves we have to work with, what we end up with in trying to fit them together is, arguably, something that is still at odds with itself. Our hands and all the rest count as parts of us—caught up as they are in the vital activity that makes up our lives—but they nonetheless fall outside the circle of our subjectivity. They are what we immediately act on and what we are immediately affected by. There is a certain intimacy to this, but it is not the intimacy of thought. While we are able, then, to put ourselves back together this way, to be both subjects and bodily beings, the manner in which we are is still strikingly Cartesian. Thought resides in one place, body another.

Now, with all this having been said, there are many philosophers who accept something like this picture of ourselves.² Some of them may even be entirely untroubled by it. But for the most part, I take it, this picture’s eliciting such acceptance can’t be explained by any great attractiveness it has. After all, it is, as I have tried to suggest, one that is forced together and, because of this, unstable. One can try to keep its pieces together, but this takes serious work. We can see this most easily, I think, from cases in which philosophers have in the end foregone this work. Take, for instance, Derek Parfit. He is someone who takes seriously the idea that we are subjects, but this leads him to jettison the idea that we are human beings. As he puts it at one point: “...we are not human beings in the sense that refers to human animals, but are the most important parts of these animals, the parts that do all the things that are most distinctive of these human animals, as conscious, thinking, rational beings” (Parfit 2012, pp. 24-25). Each of us, he thinks, is “the part of the animal that does the thinking” (Parfit 2012, p. 24). “The body below the neck is not an essential

²It would take some work to establish how anyone I could identify in fact fits the above characterization. But one prime example, I think, is Donald Davidson. We can see how Davidson fits this characterization if we consider how he conceives of action. What an agent acts on most immediately when she acts is some or other part of her body—whatever it is she needs to move in order to tie her shoelaces, flip on a lightswitch, butter a piece of toast, etc. All of her agency, then, is concentrated into the act of causing this body part to move. All the rest—the actual bodily movement and whatever might follow from it—is just what is set into motion by her agency (Davidson 2001). Davidson, of course, is a leading proponent of the ‘standard story of action’. Anyone who follows Davidson’s lead, then, I take it, will also fit my characterization (so long as she does not deny that we are human beings). This is not to say that it is only philosophers of action who are taken with this picture of us. But given how the ‘standard story’ is told, they are the most obvious example.

part of us” (Parfit 2012, p. 17). Committing to the idea that we are subjects can make it difficult to find our way back to the idea that our bodies are a part of us. Pushed and pulled about by our subjectivity as they are, they are not properly a part of it. So, why should they belong to us, when what we are are subjects? As we can see, then, it is not hard for the pieces of this picture to come apart from each other. One needs to keep a firm grip on both if one wants to prevent the one’s pushing out the other.

But if this picture of ourselves is as fraught as I claim it is, why, then, is it one that many philosophers are drawn to? It is my hope that a fuller answer will emerge as we move through the dissertation proper. But, for now, the following will have to do. Part of it, surely, is that such philosophers want to be able to say both that we are subjects and that we are bodily beings. Going the way of Parfit and denying that we are human beings puts one at an extreme. There is something deeply attractive about the idea of fitting these pieces back together. The other part of it, I take it, is that there seems to be no alternative, if this is one’s ambition. These two pieces, as I’ve said, are the ones there are to work with. All that such philosophers can try to do, then, is maintain this picture, despite its instability.

All of this suggests, I think, that were there a different picture of ourselves available—one on which our having bodies did not threaten to divide us from ourselves—we should run with it. In what follows, what I do is try to provide just such a picture. But how, one might wonder, is there room for such a picture, given all that I’ve said? We will find, I think, that there is room, if we first allow ourselves to reconsider what is we have to work with in assembling such a picture. Above, I spoke about there being two pieces to it—our being subjects and our having bodies. This much, I think, is true. What needs to be reconsidered is their shape and how they might fit together. We said above that it was hard to see how something like a human hand, in being made of muscle, skin, and bone, could be something to which our subjectivity extended. This, I think, is also true. That is, it can be hard to see how this could be. But this is exactly what we need to do. For, it’s in accepting that such parts of ours fall outside the circle of our subjectivity that our having bodies cannot be

made to fit to our being subjects and that we find ourselves trying to force them together anyway. This, then, will be our focus in what follows—finding a way to see how it is that our bodies, even being composed as they are, can partake in our subjectivity.

The way that I will approach this task is through one particular topic that has generated a fair amount of discussion in recent years, namely, that of bodily awareness and how it is to be characterized. Bodily awareness is the distinctive and abiding awareness that we each have of the position of our limbs and other body parts.³ It is that in virtue of which, for instance, I can just say right now that my legs are crossed or that my arms are windmilling at my sides without having to look or feel for them first. Though we hardly notice this awareness in everyday life, it is always at work in the background. It is our primary way of knowing how things stand with ourselves spatially and enables us to move around in the world as we do.

The reason to start here is that the dominant view of bodily awareness that has come out of this discussion is one that tracks the understanding of our bodies I mean to undermine. What exactly is this dominant view? As we will see, philosophers tend to think of our bodily awareness as a form of perceptual awareness, an awareness that, broadly speaking, is to be modelled on the canonical senses. While there are a number of ways in which this awareness differs from the canonical five—it, for instance, is an awareness that each of has of ourselves and only of ourselves—most who have written about it think that it is obviously perceptual.⁴ This, as will emerge below, stems from their thinking of our bodies as mind-independent and

³The term ‘bodily awareness’ is used somewhat differently by different authors in the philosophical literature. Some, for instance, use it as a catch-all for the distinct and varied awarenesses we have of our different bodily conditions—from our awareness of pain to our vestibular sense of balance. I reserve this term for our awareness of the position of our limbs and other body parts or what is often now called our *proprioceptive awareness*. I use these labels interchangeably.

⁴Many philosophers these days think that there are *far more* than five senses, even setting aside the issue of where to put bodily awareness. This issue is taken up in many of the papers found in (Macpherson 2011). What the issue turns on, I suspect, is how we’re to understand what a sense is and whether we ought to distinguish between sensory and perceptual capacities. Because the general issue of how many senses there are is not something central to what I am interested in here, I tend not to make the distinction between sensory and perceptual capacities in what I say below. In querying about the nature of bodily awareness, I will sometimes ask if it is to be counted among the senses, when really what I am asking is if this capacity is a perceptual capacity.

so as falling outside the circle of our subjectivity. It is because they think this about our bodies that it then seems obvious to them that our being aware of them in this way is just another way in which we are impinged on by something from outside of our subjectivity. It is in the context, then, of showing that we should think of this awareness differently that I will develop a picture of our bodies on which they in fact share in our subjectivity.

But how exactly should we think of bodily awareness if not as a perceptual form of awareness? As I will argue, this awareness is not one to be modeled on the senses but, rather, on the typical awareness each of us has of our own beliefs, desires, and other psychological goings-on. We should, that is, think of this awareness as a form of *self-awareness*—an awareness that is *as such* an awareness a subject has of herself as herself. Now, there are, of course, different ways in which philosophers have understood what it is for something to be such an awareness. But I will not directly adjudicate among them here. The understanding that I adopt is one that in large part emerges out of opposing the perceptual view. Those who think that bodily awareness is perceptual—perceptualists, if you will—for the most part recognize this as another option. It is not one they tend to picture in any great detail, but it is something that they explicitly set themselves against. What I do, then, is draw out from what perceptualists themselves say the shape a view would have to take to oppose theirs and go from there.

This isn't to say that the position at which I arrive is without precedent. What I say does come into contact with wider discussions about what something's being a form of self-awareness comes to. My position is a form of what sometimes gets called *constitutivism*. This is the view that what distinguishes an awareness that a subject has of herself as a form of self-awareness is that it has a role in constituting that of which it is an awareness. What a subject is aware of in this way thus depends on this awareness for what it is.

Now, it isn't entirely an accident that this is how things have turned out. This is because the views of one philosopher in particular, Sydney Shoemaker, have loomed large in perceptualist discussions of bodily awareness and have, in turn, influenced me. Shoemaker

too is a constitutivist about self-awareness, and in arguing that our introspective awareness of our beliefs and other psychological states is not perceptual, provides a powerful set of characterizations of what makes a form of awareness perceptual. These characterizations are ones that perceptualists in various respects have latched on to in their arguments. It is not surprising, then, that, in arguing against the perceptualists, I've arrived at a view with a strong constitutivist bent. While I do not draw explicitly on Shoemaker much in spelling out my positive view, it is worth pointing now at the outset to what of his has most shaped my thinking and what I will go on to say:

...in the case of perception, the mechanisms involved are ones whose function it is to give us knowledge of an independent reality, one that was not made to be accessible to us and our faculties. In the case of introspection, on the other hand, the reality known and the faculty for knowing it are, as it were, made for each other—neither could be what it is without the other (Shoemaker 1994b, p. 289).

What Shoemaker means here is that there is constitutive dependence between a subject's psychological states and her introspective awareness of them.⁵ When a subject is aware of believing *p* or anticipating *q* in the typical way, her having this awareness is not accidental. She has this awareness in virtue of being the very subject who believes *p* or anticipates *q*. It is, moreover, central to what it is for her to have beliefs or anticipations, in general, that she be aware in this way of having them. This is what Shoemaker means when he says: "...there is a conceptual, constitutive, connection between the existence of certain sorts of mental entities and their introspective accessibility" (Shoemaker 1994b, p. 272). And it is this constitutive connection, he thinks, that makes a subject's awareness of her psychological states, not perceptual, but a form of *self-awareness*, an awareness that is *as such* an awareness of herself.

I will argue that a subject's body and her bodily awareness of it are also "made for each other" in Shoemaker's sense and thus that this awareness too is a form of self-awareness.

⁵Others apart from Shoemaker who treat at least *some* of our psychological goings-on along these same lines include (Moran 2001), (Boyle 2009), and (O'Brien 2007).

This particular conception of what makes something a form of self-awareness is also, I should note, particularly suited to our broader ambitions—to showing, that is, how it is our bodies can share in our subjectivity and so how our having bodies needn't come apart from our being subjects. This is because, on this conception, something's being a form of self-awareness is not, as it has often been thought to be, a matter of a subject's having privileged access to her own states. What it comes to is her awareness' being an ineliminable part of that of which it is an awareness and, so, in the case of bodily awareness, this awareness' being an ineliminable part of her having a body. What we will have, then, when we have shown that bodily awareness is a form of self-awareness, is the picture of ourselves that we were after all along—one on which our subjectivity extends to our limbs and we are not divided from ourselves.

I begin, in Chapter 1, by establishing that there is a common thread running through the arguments various philosophers make in favour of bodily awareness' being perceptual and so that there is in fact something called *perceptualism* against which to argue. Just from looking at what these philosophers say, this is not all together obvious. While they all, of course, claim that this capacity of ours is a perceptual one, it isn't clear that each of their doing so comes to the same thing. The arguments that some make do not seem as though they could have much to do with others. While, for instance, John Schwenkler points our attention to certain kinds of mistake to which we are susceptible in bodily awareness—say, experiencing one finger as being bent when really it is another—and insists that it is perceptual because we are so susceptible, philosophers like D.M. Armstrong and Lucy O'Brien appeal to the possibility of our having bodily awareness of bodies other than our own. The fact that we now do not, they argue, is a purely empirical limitation, and this, they think, shows that this awareness is perceptual. It can thus be hard to discern what could hold such arguments together, what common conception of the perceptual could be at work in each of them.

What I do in this chapter, then, is show that there is such a common conception, that there is in fact something that we can call *the* perceptual view of bodily awareness. I do

this by showing that all the considerations that philosophers appeal to are meant to connect bodily awareness to something basic to any form of perception. Perception makes available to the perceiving subject an *independent* reality; it picks up on what is already there. Pointing to how we can go wrong in our bodily awareness, making plausible the possibility of extending its range—these, I argue, are ways in which perceptualists attempt to show that what our bodily awareness makes available, i.e., the body, is independent of it and, through this, that our awareness is perceptual. This, then, sets the agenda for everything that follows. In order to show that our bodily awareness is not perceptual, we need to show that our bodies are not independent of our awareness of them, that our bodies are in fact constitutively dependent on our having such awareness.

In Chapter 2, I return to the perceptualist arguments considered in the previous chapter and show where these fall short. There are, as I argue, two categories into which such arguments fall, and I treat these each in turn. In the first are arguments like Schwenkler's, which, in pointing to some or other way in which things as we feel them to be in bodily awareness can turn out not to be as they in fact are, try to show that our bodies are independent of our having this awareness of them. I might, for instance, feel my arm to be bent when it is not. This, according to such arguments, shows that my arm does not depend on my awareness of it. It is another constituent of the mind-independent world, and my awareness another way I have of coming to grips with it. Such arguments, I acknowledge, do show that that a subject's bodily awareness does not determine *how* it is she is positioned. Such positions are determined independently of her awareness. But showing this, as I argue, falls short of showing that a subject's body does not depend on her bodily awareness *at all*.

I draw here on the case of a subject's typical awareness of her intentional actions to illustrate what I mean. This, arguably, is a case of an awareness that is *as such* an awareness a subject has of herself as herself and is made so because of the constitutive dependency that exists between this awareness and what is an awareness of. A subject's intentional doing of *A*, say, counts as an intentional doing of *A* only because she is aware of it as such, and this is

only so in the case of her and her own actions. Now, this relation cannot be an *exact* model for the relation in which a subject's bodily awareness stands to her body. For, a subject's awareness of her action typically determines the *type* of action that it is. Her awareness of what she is doing as, say, *signalling to a friend* is what makes what she is doing such a signalling. There is no analogue to this in the case of bodily awareness, since, again, how a subject is positioned is not determined by her awareness of her position. But this is not the only kind of determination at work in the case of a subject's action awareness. It is not just that a subject's signalling could not count as a signalling were it not for her awareness of it as such. It could not count as an intentional action *at all* were it not for her awareness. The analogue of this in the case of bodily awareness, as I argue, is the *bodily* nature of what this awareness is of. A subject's bodily awareness may not determine *how* it is her body is positioned. The bentness of her arm may be just what it is, whether or not she is aware of it. But this says nothing about her arm. Its being something *bodily*, its being *an arm*, may yet depend on her awareness of it. This possibility is not one that the relevant perceptualist arguments speak to. This, then, I argue, is a possibility we need to explore.

In the second category of argument are those like Armstrong's and O'Brien's, which make use of what seems like an intelligible enough possibility—that of being proprioceptively connected to a body other than one's own—to try to show that one's relation to one's body is no different from the relation in which one would stand to any other body through this awareness. What this awareness does is pick up on whatever body or bodies are within range of the relevant nervous receptors. The only body that ever happens to be in range ordinarily is one's own. But if this range could be extended—say through the use of sophisticated radio transmitters—one could be aware of someone else's body in just the way that one is now aware of one's own. This, then, is supposed to show that one's body, just like anyone else's, is what it is independent of this awareness. One's relation to it in this awareness is nothing special.

I argue that the way in which philosophers like Armstrong and O'Brien understand

what this possibility comes to is wrongheaded. There is, to be sure, nothing unintelligible about being proprioceptively connected to a body other than one's own. But being so connected to another's body is not the same as *being aware of* that body as one is one's own. What prevents this cross-connection from providing one with such awareness, I argue, is the *structure* of bodily awareness. What it presents to one it presents *as one's own*. Should one find oneself in the position, then, of being proprioceptively connected to another's body instead of one's own, one will *mistake* this other body for one's own. One will be in the throes of a proprioceptive *illusion*. This would, moreover, remain the case were one to find oneself in this position routinely. The other's body would still *seem* to one to be one's own, even if one knew that it were not. So, the possibility of being proprioceptively connected to another's body does not show that one can in fact be aware of such a body in the way that one is one's own. It does not show that one's relation to one's own body through this awareness is not special. Thus, nothing that perceptualists say in favor of their view is decisive. There is room yet to think that having a body constitutively depends on having bodily awareness and so that this awareness is a form of self-awareness.

In Chapter 3, I turn to the question of what it is that makes a subject's body what it is. Perceptualists, I suggest, assume that a subject's body is more or less a physical object like any other. It, after all, is something composed of muscle, skin, and bone and is open to empirical study and explanation. In what way, then, could something like this depend on our awareness of it in being what it is? While, as I acknowledge, we can get the idea that a subject's body is a physical object like any other because we can *abstract from* its being a subject's—we can think of it just in terms of the subject's physiology—we should recognize this for what it is, i.e., an abstraction. We only get what a subject's body is in full view when we recognize it as being a subject's. This, I argue, is because a subject's having a body is not just a matter of her taking up space, even the self-directed, self-organizing matter of a living thing. A subject has a body in *being present* in the space that she takes up. What this comes to is her having certain capacities as a subject that enable her to locate herself

where she in fact is and orient her in her surroundings. A subject thus has a body, I argue, in having the capacities to perceive, feel, and act. This does not mean that a subject cannot lose one or more of these capacities and still have a body. It is just that her having a body, even in such circumstances, has to be understood against the background of these capacities as ones that belong to bodies as such.

In Chapter 4, I show how proprioceptive awareness specifically figures among the capacities constitutive of our bodies. I do this by considering a case that looks problematic for my view, that of *deafferentation*—a form of neuropathy in which a subject loses proprioceptive awareness of most of her body and must rely on her eyes to know her bodily position and control her movements. The fact that such a subject can act with those parts of her body of which she is no longer proprioceptively aware might suggest that such awareness has no essential role in bodily agency. If her vision can compensate, there seems to be nothing distinctive about proprioceptive awareness as such.

This, I argue, is not the case. Proprioceptive awareness gives form to the perspective we have on our surroundings. This, in part, has to do with the structure of this awareness. In it, one is not presented with parts of oneself as *standing in relation to one*. One's hand's feeling to one to be to the left is not at all like one's, say, seeing a cup as being to one's left. One's hand, unlike the cup, is presented to one as a part to which one oneself extends. One's feeling it as being to the left, then, is one's feeling it to be to the left *of the rest of one*, not one's feeling it to be to the left of one. One's proprioceptive awareness, in short, is not egocentrically structured, unlike one's vision or touch. This non-egocentric structure allows one's proprioceptive awareness to play a distinctive role. It, in being so structured, provides one with the standpoint from which one perceives, and this, in turn, is how one's seeing what's around one can bear directly on one's possibilities for movement. When I, for instance, see a cup in front of me, my having proprioceptive awareness of my hand means that the standpoint from which I see the cup extends to my hand. My seeing the cup is my seeing it in relation to, among other parts of me, my hand. I can thus, just in seeing the cup,

know what I can do with it with my hand, e.g., move in *this* direction to pick it up. With proprioceptive awareness, then, it is not just that I'm aware of certain of my possibilities for bodily movement but that my awareness of these possibilities is a part of my outwardly directed perspective. I am *practically present* in my hand in a way that is integrated with what I'm experiencing around me. It is in this way, then, I argue, that our proprioceptive awareness makes us present in the space that we take up and so is constitutive of our having bodies.

By the end of Chapter 4, the work of showing that a subject's having a body is constitutively dependent on her having bodily awareness of it is more or less complete. What remains in Chapter 5 is showing that this constitutive relation, now that we have spelled out what it comes to, can bear the weight it was intended to all along. We have to show, that is, that bodily awareness' playing the kind of constitutive role that it does in fact suffices to show that it is a form of self-awareness. The way that I proceed is by addressing two worries one could still have about this constitutive relation. The first has to do with the kind of constitutive relation it is. One thing that a subject's bodily awareness does not do is make that of which it is an awareness hers. An arm's being hers does not depend on whether or not she has bodily awareness of it but on whether it is attached to the rest of her and caught up in the vital activity that makes up her life. One might wonder, then, whether this awareness is in fact a form of self-awareness. Can a subject's awareness of herself be an awareness of herself as *herself* when the awareness does not make that of which she is aware hers? This, after all, is how things seem to be in the case of a subject's introspective awareness of her beliefs and other psychological states. The second worry starts from a comparison of the account we've provided with a certain account of color—one on which what it is for something to be a given color is in part constituted by perceivers' experience of it. Arguably, the kind of constitutive dependence we see in the case of the body and bodily awareness is structurally similar to that which dispositionalists about color maintain exists between color properties and subjects' experiences of color. The worry, of course, is this:

there being such constitutive dependence in the case of color does not get in the way of our color experiences' being perceptual, so why should there be any difference in the case of the body and the constitutive dependence that we find there?

I show in this final chapter that the account that we've developed is robust and that it has the materials to answer these lingering worries. What we've already said about the structure of our bodily awareness and about the particular role it plays in making us present in the space that we take up helps us get past them. This, then, leaves us free to say that bodily awareness is a form of self-awareness and that having a body is a part of our being the subjects we are.

Chapter 1

The Perceptual View

1.1

Bodily awareness is a phenomenon with which we are all familiar. It is that distinctive awareness that each of us has of our body and only our own body, quietly accompanying us through all of waking life. It is what makes available to each of us the abiding presence of our body and, along with this, our body's position and movement. This awareness is familiar, then, in the sense that we all have it and make use of it in getting around in the world as we do. And so, if someone were to name and describe to us what it was—as I just have—we would immediately recognize what it was that was being talked about. This, then, reveals a different sense in which this awareness, at least for most of us, remains unfamiliar. It is something we hardly notice as we go about our lives. We would be at a loss were we suddenly to be without it. We would certainly notice *that*. But our having it, as we ordinarily do, is not something that draws attention to itself.

This, at least to some extent, explains why, up until very recently, bodily awareness was not a topic of discussion in philosophical circles at all.¹ It, for a long time, was not something that even had a name.² Since, then, however, a number of philosophers have

¹In *Intention*, G.E.M. Anscombe mentions the knowledge each of us has “of the position of [our] limbs” and calls it knowledge “without observation” (Anscombe 1963, p. 13). She later elaborates on what she means in (Anscombe 1962). But it is not until the publication of Brian O’Shaughnessy’s difficult but singular two-volume work, *The Will*, that we get anything like a thorough philosophical treatment of this capacity of ours. See, especially, Chapters 5-8 in Vol. 1.

²Charles Bell first notes something that he calls ‘muscle sense’ in his 1833 work on the human hand

taken an interest in it, inquiring into its character and, especially, into its role in bodily action. Arguably, this theorizing is still in its early stages. There is still much to be worked out about how, even, to talk about it. For, it can seem that, even when it comes to the basics, those theorizing about it lack a common vocabulary. Nowhere is this clearer than with the comparisons that many of them make between this awareness and the canonical senses. Statements like those that follow are not uncommon, but it can be hard to see what these come to, much less whether they come to the same:

...we have a sense, or group of senses—bodily awareness—other than the traditional five with which to gain information about our own bodies (O’Brien 2007, p. 191).

Just as we perceive the world through the five senses, we perceive our own bodies ‘from the inside’. For instance, one can be aware of sensations in one’s body, and of the position of its parts with respect to one another (Pickard 2004, p. 212).

...there seems to be no good reason to regard the ‘outer’ awareness of one’s body—through, say, vision or touch—as perceptual but the ‘inner’ awareness of it as not so: it is true that the outer senses take things as their objects that the inner ones essentially cannot, but the two cases seem to share a common essence (Schwenkler 2013, p. 471).³

This is because those making these comparisons do not say much about what they mean in claiming that bodily awareness is perceptual. To do so, it seems, is to do more than claim that there exist certain similarities between this awareness and the canonical senses. This one could do without making any such claim. To make the claim, as these philosophers do, seems to be to *classify* bodily awareness in some important way such that we’d be missing something crucial about it if we failed to recognize it as such. But just what this is is not something that gets explicitly articulated.

(Bell 1979). C S. Sherrington in 1906 coins the term ‘proprioception’ and speculates about its function (Sherrington 1907). Both Bell and Sherrington, however, are physiologists and, so, are mostly concerned with the automatic and non-conscious activity in which our muscles engage in response to various proprioceptors’ being stimulated. We, by contrast, are interested in the *awareness* of position that also arises from such stimulation.

³See also (Armstrong 1968, pp. 147, 307), (Richardson 2015, p. 148), and (Martin 1995, p. 268).

This is made worse by the fact that the kinds of considerations to which philosophers appeal in the course of making their arguments vary so widely. It can be hard to see what all of them have to do with one another. Some philosophers, for instance, are impressed by subjects' susceptibility to certain sorts of illusion in bodily awareness.⁴ Others attempt to show that a subject's body needn't be the only object of which she is aware in this way, that bodily awareness, at least in principle, is a capacity for awareness of bodies more generally.⁵ None, however, have much to say about why this or that consideration should decide the matter. Worse still, there are cases in which philosophers' wider commitments seem in obvious conflict. While, for instance, a number of the relevant philosophers contrast perception with self-awareness or introspection, there are then those others who hold that bodily awareness is a form of perceptual awareness *and* a form of self-awareness and sense no conflict in their doing so.⁶ So, even if the terms in which these claims and comparisons are framed resemble one another, it isn't obvious what is really common among them. Once one gives these views serious attention, one can easily come away worrying that 'perception' in the mouths of each of these philosophers may mean something different, that there is, after all, no such thing as *the* perceptual view of bodily awareness on which these philosophers converge.

But it is one of the stated aims of this dissertation to show that the perceptual view is wrong. What we will do in this first chapter, then, is establish that there is in fact such a view for us to oppose. Despite the differences in their approach, in the considerations they bring to bear, in their broader commitments, these philosophers, in claiming that bodily awareness is perceptual, mean the same thing. We will come to see this in recognizing that the different considerations to which they appeal point not just to a particular understanding of bodily awareness and its character but, at the same time, of the body itself. While, then, the arguments made in favour of the view draw on a multitude of epistemic

⁴See, for instance, (O'Shaughnessy 2008) and (Harcourt 2008).

⁵See, for instance, (Armstrong 1968) and (O'Brien 2007).

⁶See, for instance, (Schwenkler 2013) and (Pickard 2004), on the one hand, and (Bermúdez 1998) and (de Vignemont 2012), on the other.

considerations—considerations which, for instance, make much of bodily awareness’ representational character or of the kinds of error to which a subject seems susceptible on its basis—what these arguments drive towards is something metaphysical, a particular view of the body as it relates to the bodily awareness of the subject whose body it is. They drive towards the view that a subject’s body, whatever else it is, is a *mind-independent object* and so does not depend on her bodily awareness of it for what it is. What this awareness does is pick up on what is already there, and it is this, crucially, that makes it perceptual. This, I will argue, is what brings these seemingly disparate views together and makes them all instances of the very same view.

1.2

To appreciate the disorderly state of things—and to then see that there is in fact order discernible in it—it will be necessary to enter into the thick of things and consider some representative views at length. In doing so, it is not my aim to assess these views against the truth. That is work for subsequent chapters. At this point, I want only to consider the various grounds on which the relevant philosophers make their cases in order to better understand why they take the respective grounds they do to be grounds for their claim. This will allow us to better see what the significance of an awareness’ being perceptual is in each of their cases, which in turn will allow us to see that, in the end, these all come to the same.

But before we do this, it important that we recognize one thing at the outset, namely, that for the philosophers under consideration, the claim that bodily awareness is perceptual is a *philosophical* one. It is a claim, that is, with which there comes a demand for argument, a claim that could not be settled by the physiological facts alone. Now, this might seem too obvious to state. But, given that other philosophers do seem to operate as though the matter has been settled by physiology (which is itself a philosophical position in need of defense), it seems worth making explicit.⁷ It is undeniable, of course, that there are

⁷See, for instance, (de Vignemont 2012), (Campbell 2004, p. 477), and (Rosenthal 1997, p. 734).

nervous receptors at the muscles, skin, and joints sensitive to changes therein that typically correspond with changes in posture and limb position. And we can, of course, observe the similarities between this network of receptors and the receptors that extend to the retina or the inner ear. But it is a premise of the relevant philosophers' respective undertakings that more must go into our thinking here. Even if it is a subject's physiological apparatus that makes it possible, perception is a capacity had by subjects. Making a determination about this mode of awareness thus requires that we look to things at the level of the subject—that we consider the character of the awareness in question and the role that it has in subjects' lives.⁸ Whatever the perceptualist claim amounts to, then, it will reach further than the physiological facts. It will bear on our thinking about what a perceptual capacity is.

On what sorts of grounds, then, do philosophers claim that bodily awareness is perceptual? In what follows, we will consider three different kinds of considerations to which philosophers appeal: (i) the experiential character of bodily awareness, (ii) the multiplicity of objects—distinct fingers, toes, and so on—within this awareness and certain errors to which this can lead, and (iii) the possibility of having bodily awareness of a body other than one's own. All of these, we will see, drive towards the same.

1.2.1

One common consideration appealed to is the experiential or representational character of this awareness.⁹ Edward Harcourt, for instance, is struck by the fact that a subject can under certain experimental conditions be susceptible to bodily illusions. “By stimulating the appropriate muscle tendons,” he says, “it is possible for example [...] to induce illusions of movement of the forearm” (Harcourt 2008, p. 314). This brings into focus the experiential character of bodily awareness. Even if this awareness does not have sensory qualities on a

⁸This general point about perception is one that John McDowell expresses rather nicely in a different context. (McDowell 1994).

⁹Notably, it is a feature that Sydney Shoemaker identifies in describing the “stereotype” of sense perception operative in much of our thinking. However, it is not clear from what he says just how much, in his view, turns on this feature (Shoemaker 1994a, p. 252). It is also a consideration that seems to move (Pickard 2004, p. 212) to some extent and, more obviously, (O'Shaughnessy 2008, pp. 184-185).

par with those characteristic of awareness through one of the five senses—there do not, for instance, seem to be distinct, identifiable sensations that need mediate a subject’s awareness of her arm’s being bent as opposed to its being straight—it nonetheless seems to be a kind of experiential awareness.¹⁰ She is aware of her body’s being a certain way in its appearing to her to be that way. And not only can it seem to her to be disposed in a certain way when it is not. She can, furthermore, judge that it only seems to her to be this way, knowing that it is not. Her bodily awareness is thus, as Harcourt says, “belief-independent” (Harcourt 2008, p. 315) and this, he claims, is “all that is in fact required by the concept of a perceptual way of knowing” (Harcourt 2008, p. 315).

But what lies behind this claim? Why should belief-independence suffice as a criterion? Harcourt does not provide much in the way of explanation. It may be worth noting, however, that he makes his claim in the context of trying to understand what Elizabeth Anscombe says about this phenomenon. He reads her famous denial about its being observational as amounting to the view that our capacity “reduces, in the normal case, to the exercise of a fallible disposition to judge these things” (Harcourt 2008, p. 307). He takes her to be saying, that is, that there is *no experience* involved in this capacity at all, that it is merely a disposition to judge. This, then, is the view against which he positions himself. And so, we can see how, in this context, he might think that showing our awareness to be belief-independent suffices. If these are our only two options—a fallible disposition to judge or a perceptual way of knowing—the fact that our awareness is belief-independent certainly favors the latter. Still, presumably, there is more that could be said in favour of belief-independence as a criterion, and we can sound this out for ourselves.

A subject’s awareness of her body’s being belief-independent sets it apart, for instance, from her awareness of her anger or her disappointment. For, though her awareness of her present affective state can in a sense be said to be experiential—she can describe her aware-

¹⁰For more on sensations and their role in bodily awareness, see (O’Shaughnessy 2008), (Anscombe 1962), (Harcourt 2008), and (Pickard 2004). All of them argue that the bodily sensations that can accompany a subject’s bodily positions and movement, e.g. feelings of strain, pressure, and stretching, are inessential. Such sensations do not reveal to a subject her present bodily disposition.

ness of her anger as her feeling it bubble up in her—it does not seem to be experiential in a way that makes her susceptible to illusion. She is not presented with a seeming, which may or may not veridically represent her present state. Her awareness of her feeling, rather, just seems to be her feeling this way—her feeling this way consciously. Bodily awareness, then, can strike one as being much more like awareness from the senses. For, though no sensory qualities mediate this awareness, it is nonetheless an awareness in which a subject is presented with something's being a certain way, and it could turn out to be other than as it seems.

But this, I think, if it is behind what Harcourt says here, still does not really show why belief-independence should be a mark of something's being perceptual and so does not really show what's at the core of perceptual forms of awareness. When a subject's awareness presents her body as being other than it is, this is a matter of some sort of interference or breakdown. And granted, interference and breakdown here are much like interference and breakdown as they occur in sense perception. But this should come as no surprise, for bodily awareness, like sense perception, reveals to a subject the present state of a physical object and reveals it to her *as the state of such an object*. In it, after all, she is made aware of the present position and movement of her limbs—her body as it is now configured in physical space. So when things go wrong, it should not be surprising that they go wrong in just this way—that she experiences her body as configured in a way other than as it in fact is. Her being susceptible to illusion in this way does not, then, just in itself constitute a reason for thinking that bodily awareness is perceptual. Her being susceptible in just this way might simply derive from her awareness' being of the physical as physical. A subject is not, after all, infallible when it comes to her anger or disappointment. Breakdown here is also possible. But such breakdown, in being in her awareness of an affective state, takes a different form. She, for instance, fails to recognise and identify with her anger, though it is apparent to everyone else from how she has been acting. So, it does not seem that we can conclude just from the fact of subjects' susceptibility to illusion in the case of bodily awareness that this

awareness is perceptual. While, then, the belief-independence of this awareness could very well be important to making the perceptualist case, it is hard to see at this point exactly what the significance of this criterion is and, so, what Harcourt's claim really amounts to. We ought, then, to set his case aside for the time being and consider others first.

1.2.2

Another common approach starts from a well-known set of claims made by Sydney Shoemaker. In setting out what he understands to be characteristic of perceptual awareness, he claims (i) that our ordinary modes of perceiving involve, either successively or simultaneously, a multiplicity of different objects, (ii) that, therefore, perceiving any such object involves being able to identify it by one or more of its perceived properties, (iii) that such identification allows the perceiving subject to track an object over an extended period, or failing that, to re-identify it by its perceived properties should she encounter it again, and, finally, (iv) that perceptual awareness thus leaves such a subject susceptible to *errors of misidentification*. That is, the subject can, having perceived some object and then lost track of it, mistake another with similar perceivable properties for the first on the basis of those properties (Shoemaker 1986, pp. 107-108). And from these, Shoemaker thinks, we ought to conclude the following—if a mode of awareness only ever presents a subject with a single object, and if in its identification by this object's presented properties, and with it, re-identification and misidentification, have no place, this mode of awareness is not perceptual (Shoemaker 1986, pp. 108-109).

While Shoemaker's intention with this line of thinking was only to single out introspection as being distinctly unlike our modes of perceptual awareness, other philosophers have come to recognize that it also seems to characterize bodily awareness, which, at least as we know it, seems to provide each of us with awareness of only one object, our own body.¹¹ Such

¹¹Shoemaker himself does not seem to think that the considerations by which he distinguishes introspective awareness from perceptual awareness pick out bodily awareness at the same time. He offers no explicit argument but says this in passing: "When one is introspectively aware of one's thoughts, feelings, beliefs and desires, one is not presented to oneself as a flesh and blood person, and one does not seem to be presented

philosophers, like John Schwenkler, in wanting to say that this awareness is in fact perceptual, thus see Shoemaker's view as placing a demand on them. The view, as they see it, calls on them to show that bodily awareness does in fact make available to subjects a multiplicity of objects, that it is a mode of awareness through which the identification and misidentification of objects is possible.¹²

Schwenkler's strategy in particular is to argue as follows. Even if bodily awareness is always confined to the body of the subject whose awareness it is, there is nonetheless room for misidentification in it. We can see this, he thinks, if we consider the way in which a subject's body is presented to her in this awareness. She does not experience it as a single, undifferentiated mass. Rather, she experiences it as articulated into distinct parts—fingers, forearms, shoulders, toes—and so effectively experiences it as multiple objects. This, then, he thinks, leaves room for error of the sort that Shoemaker identifies as characteristic of our perceptual modalities. Though it does not happen often, a subject can, for instance, think that she is moving one finger when she is really moving another (Schwenkler 2013, p. 468). Schwenkler concludes from this that our bodily awareness is in fact perceptual.

We should note here at the outset that Schwenkler, in using Shoemaker's argument as scaffolding for his own claim, must mean to take on at least some of the same dialectical assumptions. Specifically, it seems safe to assume that Schwenkler, in claiming that bodily awareness is perceptual, means to deny that it belongs with introspection, which as he says "is our model for a non-perceptual mode of awareness" (Schwenkler 2013, p. 471). This, then, orients his claim to some extent. But what exactly is it about bodily awareness that leads Schwenkler to think that it is not to be understood on this model? Schwenkler's argument itself does not provide much in the way of guidance. It does not tell us why misidentification of the sort discussed above should suffice for making his case. Turning back to Shoemaker's

to oneself as an *object* at all" (Shoemaker 1984, p. 102).

¹²José Luis Bermúdez is another example of someone who claims that bodily awareness is perceptual within this dialectical setup. However, his strategy is rather different from Schwenkler's in that it first involves treating bodily awareness as a part of our capacity for touch. I will not explicitly deal with this argument, but my reasons for rejecting it should become clear in the discussion in Chapter 4 (Bermúdez 1998, pp. 136-138).

claims would, then, at this point, be natural. These, after all, seem to set the bounds within which Schwenkler operates. It would not be unreasonable to think that his reliance might go further.

How, then, does Shoemaker's reasoning go? Why does he think that object identification and misidentification matter to whether a mode of awareness is perceptual? As we know, Shoemaker describes what he takes to be characteristic of perceptual awareness in order to contrast it with introspective awareness, with the awareness each of us typically has of our own mental states and goings-on. He thus singles out these features in particular because they seem to have no analogue in the case of introspection. While, for instance, in the case of hearing a siren or seeing a bird flit by, it might make sense for a subject to wonder moments later whether what she now perceives is the same siren or the same bird and not a second one, there seems to be no such question when it comes to her psychological states. She needn't, that is, keep track of these states in order to know that they are hers. If she is aware of a belief in the way she typically is, she knows, just in being aware of the belief, that it is hers. She needn't rely on some identifying feature of the belief or on some sort of continuous connection with it to know so (Shoemaker 1968, p. 558). Her awareness of the belief, it seems, is not distinct from her awareness of it as hers. This awareness requires no separate act of identification.

Now, can this thinking of Shoemaker's help us better understand Schwenkler's view? We know already that Schwenkler, in arguing that bodily awareness is perceptual, means to deny that this awareness is importantly like our typical awareness of our own mental states and goings-on. But what really is this comparison supposed to come to? And how are his claims about bodily awareness—about its being an awareness of multiple objects, about our susceptibility in it to errors of misidentification—supposed to support this thinking?

Probing further into Schwenkler's views leaves us with surprisingly little more to go on. In fact, such probing, I think, reveals Schwenkler's thinking to be strikingly disconnected from Shoemaker's. One reason for Shoemaker's taking the possibility of error through misiden-

tification to be distinctive of perceptual awareness in the first place is that this possibility seems to mark the kind of third-person relation in which we stand to objects of perception, even when we ourselves are such objects. When a subject perceives herself or is otherwise made aware of herself through a third-person mode, there is a sense in which she is not aware of herself *as herself*. Though what she is aware of is herself or something of hers—a belief, a feeling, a body part, etc.—and though she may well be aware of its being her or hers, it remains the case that what she is made aware of in this way on this occasion only *happens* to be her or hers. This is because the mode of awareness through which she is made aware of herself is a mode through which she could similarly be made of aware of another and her beliefs, body parts, etc. Whenever she is made aware of herself through such a mode, then, there is at least some possibility of her having been mistaken about what she was being presented with. She might, for instance, have been seeing someone else’s arm or poking at someone else’s anaesthetized hand rather than her own. And this seems to stand in contrast with such a subject’s typical awareness of her beliefs and pains. When she is aware of a belief of hers in the way she typically is, she is, just in being aware of the belief, aware of its being hers. Such awareness then seems characterizable as first-personal rather than third-personal in that it seems an awareness through which she is unfailingly aware of herself or part of herself. There seems no room for her mistaking someone else for herself through this mode, just as there seems to be no room for her thinking of someone else when attempting to think of herself under the first-person aspect.

So, if this is the basis on which Shoemaker claims that perceptual modalities are ones through which a subject must at least be potentially aware of multiple objects, it is then especially difficult to see what Schwenkler’s claim comes to. In bodily awareness, according to Schwenkler, a subject is aware of her body parts as distinct objects and so can mistake one part of her body for another such part. But this, at least in light of Shoemaker’s thinking, does not itself speak to whether the awareness is third- or first-personal in kind. Doing this would require showing that such a subject could in bodily awareness be aware of body parts

other than her own, that this awareness of hers might not unfailingly be an awareness of only her own body. And Schwenkler's argument does no such thing, nor does it seem meant to. So, though Schwenkler takes Shoemaker's claims about perception as his starting point, it does not seem that we can in fact understand his view in light of these. To see what 'perception' means in Schwenkler's mouth, we will have to look elsewhere.

We needn't look very far. After he presents his argument, Schwenkler then says the following:

We have shown not just that bodily awareness has a range of possible objects, but also that in such awareness a certain region of the mind-independent world is opened up to one: this region has its boundaries, to be sure, but it is presented to the mind principally as an assemblage of spatially distinct parts [...] thus there seems to be no good reason to regard the 'outer' awareness of one's body—through, say, vision or touch—as perceptual but the 'inner' awareness of it as not so... (Schwenkler 2013, p. 471).

These remarks, I think, are telling. Notice that Schwenkler speaks here as much about the body as he does bodily awareness. He advances a view of what it is and of its place in the world. Notice also that he takes this view to follow from his argument, which concerns the character of bodily awareness. And it is from this further thought that he then concludes that we have reason to regard bodily awareness as perceptual.¹³ So, how do these moves follow, one from the other? If we grant that Schwenkler's argument at least succeeds in showing that a subject's body in bodily awareness is presented to her as articulated into distinct parts and so leaves her susceptible to errors of misidentification, we can perhaps see the following as within reach of this argument. These features suggest that bodily awareness has the character of a perceptual mode awareness in that what it seems to present to the subject is a *mind-independent object*. In presenting the body as spatially articulated and in

¹³He also seems to think that, independent of this, his argument shows that bodily awareness meets the multiple-objects constraint and so just in itself gives us reason to think that this awareness is perceptual. He asks just before he makes the above remarks, "If the foregoing argument is sound, then there is no reason to think that bodily awareness should be classified as non-perceptual according to the multiple-objects constraint; but can more be said in favor of the idea that bodily awareness is a form of perception?" (Schwenkler 2013, p. 470). So, the present considerations, I take it, are supposed to be ones that provide *additional* support.

leaving the subject susceptible to errors of misidentification, bodily awareness shows itself to be a mode of awareness in which a small, spatially extended part of the world is represented as being a certain way, though it needn't in fact be that way. How things stand with the body is thus independent of how they are experienced in bodily awareness, just as they are in the case of vision or touch. And so, it is this—the body's independence from bodily awareness—that makes bodily awareness a form of perception. What begins as an argument concerning the epistemic character of bodily awareness thus turns out to be a metaphysical argument concerning the nature of the body and its relation to the subject. The argument, if successful, shows that bodily awareness is perceptual by showing that its relation to the body is much like that had by each of the canonical senses. It represents how things stand with the body, and how things stand is something independently determined. Perception, for Schwenkler, thus concerns the nature of the relation between a mode of awareness and its object. And so bodily awareness is to be understood as a form of perceptual awareness rather than something akin to introspection because what the body is stands independent of this awareness. Presumably, on this view, the same cannot be said of a subject's mental states and her introspective awareness of them.

At this point, it would be worth pausing briefly to assess where we stand. Of course, we will need to consider more cases before we can say that anything like a pattern has emerged amid the relevant philosophers' views. Even so, we can still note that Schwenkler's argument seems to share something in common with Harcourt's. Though, in drawing on Shoemaker's views of perception and self-awareness, it starts off in a very different place, Schwenkler's argument, like Harcourt's, turns out to rely on showing that a certain kind of error is possible in bodily awareness. And so, for both philosophers, it seems, bodily awareness' representational character plays a significant role in its seeming to them a perceptual form of awareness. Of course, only Schwenkler says anything explicitly about the body's mind-independence in connection with this. So, we cannot say anything definitive about Harcourt's thinking on this matter. Nonetheless, it seems plausible to think that Harcourt might be

similarly motivated in making his claim. Our being subject to illusion in bodily awareness reveals the representational character of this awareness and with it the gap that can open up between how things are and how we experience them as being (a gap of which we can become aware), and it is this that makes a form of awareness perceptual.

1.2.3

With Schwenkler's argument, we saw one way in which Shoemaker's thinking about perceptual awareness might be drawn on to understand bodily awareness. But this use, as we saw, did not go very far. Schwenkler drew little from what Shoemaker took to be important in marking off our awareness of our mental states from our perceptual awareness. There are, however, other philosophers whose thinking about bodily awareness aligns more closely with Shoemaker's on perception. They make more of the thought that perceptual modes of awareness involve a multiplicity of objects and hold that bodily awareness needn't simply be of a subject's own body, that it could in principle be an awareness of bodies other than the subject's own. It is to their claims that we turn now.

D.M. Armstrong is one such philosopher who takes the multiple-objects constraint seriously and so insists on the following:

Bodily perception has the peculiarity [...] which marks it off from all other forms of sense-perception: its object is private to each perceiver. Each of us has a way of perceiving what is going on in our own body that is denied to everybody else. [...] I have no such perceptual power with respect to another person's body. This privacy is purely empirical. If my nervous system were suitably connected with other bodies, and theirs with mine, the privacy would vanish (Armstrong 1968, p. 307).

If one were tempted to think that there was something special about this form of awareness in its being only of the subject's body, the above is supposed to assure one that there is not. The only reason that a subject is not aware of bodies other than her own in the same way that she is aware of her own is that the relevant nerves that make this awareness possible do

not extend beyond her own skin. There is, then, according to Armstrong, nothing mysterious about this form of awareness.

Lucy O'Brien is another philosopher who takes this line with bodily awareness. She puts her view in terms we should find familiar—self-ascriptions immune to error through misidentification relative to the first-person pronoun (Shoemaker 1968, p. 557). This, of course, is the phenomenon that Shoemaker identifies in considering our typical awareness of our own mental states, now put in the language of self-ascriptions. In judging, for instance, 'I believe *p*' or 'I feel *f*' on the basis of such awareness, a subject cannot be mistaken about who it is who believes *p* or feels *f*. And this stands in contrast with her perceptual self-ascriptions, which are susceptible to such error because the basis on which she makes the ascription involves an identification of an object as herself. The object she is presented with is in fact herself, but nothing about her awareness guarantees that it need have been. So, a subject's typical awareness of her mental states, according to Shoemaker, has a different character. In it, the subject is not presented to herself as an object, and so there is no room for her to misidentify herself. O'Brien considers bodily self-ascriptions against this background, asking whether such ascriptions are similarly immune to error through misidentification. While she accepts that in the normal case bodily ascriptions such as 'my legs are crossed' and 'my arm is raised' are immune, she, much like Armstrong, thinks that it is intelligible that one could be made aware of another's body in the same way that one is aware of one's own. She has us imagine the following:

...sometime in the future baby products manufacturers provide us with the new 'Internal Baby Monitor' (the IBM). In the case of a screaming child, one sticks the device to the baby and to oneself and one is then presented with the baby's body space 'from the inside'. It would be the bodily awareness equivalent of a CCTV. [...] Given regular use of such a device it is not hard to imagine circumstances when I wake—having gone to sleep with this gadget on—and wonder whether I have my leg bent over, or the baby has, on account of not being sure whether the device was on or off (O'Brien 2007, p. 206).

Were we to have this or a similar device available to us, according to O'Brien, ascriptions

made on the basis of bodily awareness would no longer be immune to error through misidentification. One could find oneself aware of some body “from the inside” and wonder intelligibly to oneself, “Someone’s legs are crossed, but are they mine?” As O’Brien sees it, the example thus shows that “...the perspectival nature of perception (in this case bodily perception from the inside) seems to be something we could come to separate from its being first personal content as long as we have the necessary background beliefs” (O’Brien 2007, p. 206). And she concludes, on this basis, that “bodily awareness [...] is not really in a position to be [a] primary source of self-knowledge” (O’Brien 2007, p. 209).

These views should, I think, raise a number of questions for us, chief among these being the following. Why do both Armstrong and O’Brien give such importance to the possibility of bodily awareness being of multiple objects? Armstrong puts this matter in terms of privacy and pointedly asserts that it is “purely empirical.” O’Brien gets at the same by having us imagine what she supposes is an intelligible scenario in which a subject is in fact aware of someone else’s body in bodily awareness. So, what, then, is the relevant contrast case? O’Brien, of course, deliberately draws on Shoemaker’s theoretical apparatus in making her claim and explicitly denies that bodily awareness can be a primary source of self-knowledge. We can safely assume, then, that the contrast case would be one in which the subject’s body was the only possible object of her awareness and so something about whose identity she could not be mistaken. But what sort of possibility would be involved here? Armstrong’s and O’Brien’s efforts to assure us that the privacy of bodily awareness is in fact empirical suggest that this contrast case would have to invoke something stronger.¹⁴

¹⁴We should note that while Armstrong and O’Brien’s views do share much in common, they differ fundamentally in the following way. Armstrong denies that our typical awareness of our own mental states is anything other than perceptual (Armstrong 1968, pp. 324-325). While he recognizes that such awareness is in a number of ways distinctive, he does not think that this requires a different account. The distinctiveness of such awareness can, he thinks, be explained without our going beyond the perceptual model. Unsurprisingly, then, Armstrong gives bodily awareness similar treatment. Though it differs from other modes of awareness in obvious ways—in being only of a subject’s body, in requiring the use of no sense organ, in involving no sensations—these distinctive features, according to Armstrong, do not make it anything other than a perceptual mode of awareness. But, despite this deep difference, we can still, I think, address O’Brien and Armstrong’s views together. This difference does not change what perception is for them. Armstrong is well aware of the kind of alternative that a view like O’Brien’s represents. He just thinks that nothing about our awareness of our mental states calls for such an explanation. As the analysis below will bear out, their

O'Brien discusses at length just the sort of contrast case we are looking for. While it is easy enough to imagine scenarios in which the immunity to error we possess with respect to our bodily self-ascriptions vanishes, she thinks, the same cannot be said for such immunity when it comes to our awareness of our own intentional actions. Though this awareness typically involves one's body too, it is not, she thinks, in the same way susceptible to errors of misidentification when we imagine ourselves in different circumstances. Even if, for instance, a subject were, just as described in the case above, commonly subject to circumstances in which she might be aware of another's bodily movements rather than her own, there would still be no question for her when it came to whose intentional actions she was aware of when aware of such actions in the typical way. This, as O'Brien argues, is because our awareness of our own intentional actions is not simply awareness of bodily movement. When a subject raises her arm, she is not just aware of her arm rising upwards. She is aware of it as an *arm-raising*, as a case of her arm moving as a matter of her own agency. So, even if a subject could find herself in circumstances in which she did not know whose arm she was aware of, she would still not be faced with a situation in which she was aware in the typical way of someone's raising her arm and could ask who it was who was raising her arm. If she is to be aware of this movement as an arm-raising at all, it must be her own doing and so her arm that she is raising. If instead it were the other's arm she was aware of, she could not be aware of it as an arm-raising but only an arm-rising—a movement that could have been willed but could just as well have been involuntary. Unless the movement she is aware of is her own, she cannot know it to be intentional. So, if she is aware of it as intentional, it must be her own, leaving no room for errors of misidentification (O'Brien 2007, pp. 215-216).

Now, I do not want to assess the soundness of O'Brien's argument. It is enough, I think, that we register the kind of case she is making when it comes to our self-ascriptions of intentional action in contrast to our bodily self-ascriptions. While O'Brien agrees with Armstrong about bodily self-ascriptions—a change in our circumstances can easily make us

disagreement is not about what perception is but the extent over which it ranges.

susceptible to error, when at present we are immune, indicating that the “privacy” involved in this mode of awareness is purely empirical—she denies here that we can draw a similar conclusion about our awareness of our intentional actions. Changes in our circumstances cannot change the character of this awareness, she thinks. It remains an awareness that we can only have of our own intentional actions. And this is supposed to indicate that this awareness is not therefore perceptual.

So, what exactly does this contrast case reveal about the understanding of perception at hand? Why is it important to both O’Brien and Armstrong that the limit we experience in bodily awareness only be an empirical limit? And what is it about failing to show that this holds of a given mode of awareness that would indicate that this awareness was not perceptual? To answer these questions, we need to better see just what kind of explanation O’Brien is offering in the case of our awareness of our intentional actions. It seems clear that this awareness’ being only of a subject’s own intentional actions is not supposed to be an empirical matter. Changes to her epistemic circumstances, to, for instance, the range of her awareness, do not affect what she can be aware of. Her being limited to awareness of herself in this case is not like being limited to her own body in the case of bodily awareness.

Why is this? O’Brien articulates her thinking on this in a number of interesting and suggestive ways:

When we do something consciously what we have is a single action done in a certain way. Rather than there being two actions, the doing of ϕ and the representation of the doing of ϕ there is rather just the one action; the doing of ϕ in a certain way or mode (O’Brien 2007, p. 183).

We can obviously fail to know that we are acting, as when we are acting absent-mindedly or are repressing what we are doing. But, it does not seem to be the case that our actions can, as a matter of brute fact, be beyond our ken. It is, I think, very hard for us to imagine an agent who is capable of asking herself the question ‘What am I doing?’ not being able normally to answer the question correctly. This would be to imagine the agent capable of reflexive thought, voluntarily carrying out one action, rather than another, and yet not knowing that she is acting. [...] There seems rather to be a necessary and conceptual

connection between a subject acting and her knowing what she is doing (O'Brien 2007, p. 169).

What they amount to, I think, is the following. A subject's awareness of her intentional actions is unlike her bodily awareness because of the role this awareness itself plays in her actions' being intentional. Such awareness, O'Brien seems to think, is not something that the subject has in addition to her acting intentionally. As she puts it: "...this is not an awareness that is occasioned by or distinct from my acting, but is rather part of my acting in the way I have" (O'Brien 2007, p. 187). It is not, then, it seems, an awareness that this subject could fail to have. If she were not aware of her action as something she was doing and something she meant to be doing, the action could not be intentional. It would just be a bodily movement that outwardly resembled such an action. This is the "necessary and conceptual connection" to which O'Brien refers. And, importantly, this connection—between awareness of an intentional action and the action itself—only seems to obtain between a subject and her own actions. If she sees someone else doing something intentionally, her awareness is not what makes the other's action intentional. The intentional character of this other's action is already set by her agency, her awareness. In seeing the action, our subject simply recognizes what is already there to be seen. If this, then, is the correct way to describe our awareness of our intentional actions, it shows us how an awareness' being only of the subject whose awareness it is can be something other than an empirical matter. It is conceptually necessitated, owing to the relation in which an intentional action, being what it is, must stand to the acting subject. So, this awareness' being only of this is not so much a limitation as it is a condition on acting intentionally. Things' being this way is, then, on this view a conceptual or metaphysical matter rather than an empirical one.

Now, this further spelling out of O'Brien's view gives us some insight into what the connection might be between an awareness' being perceptual and its being as a matter of empirical fact only an awareness of the subject whose awareness it is. For, with this thinking in view, we gain a better sense of why an awareness like that which a subject

typically has of her own intentional actions does not seem to be appropriately understood as a form of sensory awareness. In being an awareness of such actions without which they could not be what they are—namely, intentional—this awareness is something *internal* to a subject’s acting intentionally. And this does not seem to belong to our understanding of what a sense is. For now we can say: it seems part of our conception of a perceptual mode of awareness that it be open or receptive to whatever happens to fall within its range. So, though, of course, particular senses are only sensitive to particular kinds of features within the environment—vibrations in the air, a certain range of wavelengths of light—and so will only register features of the environment that have the appropriate properties, such senses are not keyed to any object in particular. They will pick up on any stimulus, on anything that happens to have the right properties and to be in range. So, even if a mode of awareness typically presents a subject with only one object, if this awareness is perceptual, it will be because this object is the only one in range. The limitation is thus empirical. And this, precisely, on O’Brien’s view, is not the relation in which our typical awareness of our intentional actions stands to such actions themselves. For, this awareness is keyed to just these actions. They would not be what they are absent this awareness.

We can now at this point, I think, say that a pattern is emerging. For, we have just articulated through O’Brien’s view of our typical awareness of our intentional actions a description of a form of awareness whose objects necessarily lack a certain kind of mind-independence. Intentional actions, in only being intentional because the acting subject is aware of them as such, are not on a par with other happenings in the world. Unlike a leaf falling or her heartrate rising, a subject’s actions, if intentional, cannot unfold without any awareness on her part. This means, then, that the awareness involved has a role in determining its object in a way that awareness from the canonical senses does not. Now, this does not mean that such awareness is infallible in what it presents. A subject can be failing at what she intends to do and so wrong in a sense about what she is now doing. Even so, her action’s being at all intentional—rather than reflexive or in some other way

involuntary—depends on her awareness of it as intentional, as what she means to be doing. So, just as it was for Schwenkler, and perhaps Harcourt too, mind-independence seems central on the present conception of perceptual awareness as it relates to its objects.

We can see this with greater clarity if we reflect again on the multiple-objects criterion. We are in a position now to appreciate the connection between this criterion and the mind-independence of perceptual objects. If a mode of awareness is at least in principle open to multiple objects, this shows that these objects do not depend on this awareness for what they are. For, to speak of such objects in the first place as being in or out of range of this mode of awareness, and to speak of it as being open to them, only makes sense if these objects have an existence independent of the subject for which they are potential objects of awareness. So, this, then, is the force of Armstrong's and O'Brien's insisting on the empirical contingency of bodily awareness' having only one object. A subject's body's being the only object of this awareness does not make it any less a self-standing object, for it is only one of potentially many such objects, and all such objects, being only potential objects of this awareness, must have an existence independent of it. It is on such thinking that their perceptual claims rest.

There does, then, seem to be something that we can call *the* perceptual view of bodily awareness shared among the representative views we have surveyed. Despite the differences in the considerations to which they appeal and the wider commitments to which they adhere, the relevant philosophers do at least have this much in common. They all make cases for bodily awareness's having a certain character or structure that they see as being important to perceptual modes of awareness, and these features, whether intended to or not, all have as their consequence the body's independence from bodily awareness and the subject whose awareness it is. This is most obvious in Schwenkler's case. He draws our attention to the possibility of errors of misidentification in bodily awareness, even when its only object is the subject's own body. And this possibility, he thinks, is enough to show that what the subject is aware of in bodily awareness is a small region of the mind-independent world. He thus expresses puzzlement about why anyone would want to distinguish bodily awareness as an

‘inner’ form of awareness, when it like the canonical senses makes available to subjects a part of this world. But even the cases of Armstrong and O’Brien, each of whom focus on making a case for bodily awareness as something through which a subject could be aware of bodies other than her own, the significance of this seems to be that the subject’s body is not something that depends on this awareness for what it is but stands, like others’ bodies, independent, available to be picked up by her or someone else’s sensory apparatus. As Armstrong puts it: “...body sensations are simply bodily perceptions: perceptions that may or may not correspond to physical reality. It is bodily sensation, then, that acquaints us with current bodily happenings...” (Armstrong 1968, p. 147).

This analysis of the perceptualist motivation even makes more sense of Harcourt’s claim that bodily awareness is perceptual because subjects are with respect to it susceptible to illusion. A subject’s experiences of her body in it are belief-independent, much as they are in the case of sense perception. Earlier, we were somewhat puzzled about Harcourt’s line of reasoning. It did not seem that he could conclude that bodily awareness is perceptual just on this basis. That breakdown or interference in the case of bodily awareness manifests as illusion seems that it could stem from the physicalness of the body and not from the character of bodily awareness. So, it seemed that one would have to assume first that all such awarenesses of the physical when belief-independent in this way were perceptual to draw Harcourt’s conclusion. However, the present conception of perceptual awareness can offer a different way of understanding of what might underlie Harcourt’s claim. If a subject is susceptible to illusion here, this shows that her experience of things and how things in fact are can come apart—that, specifically, how things are with her body is something determined independently of her awareness of it. And this, one might think, is a way in which bodily awareness differs from other ways in which a subject is aware of herself. Though, to be sure, unconscious beliefs and resentments are possible, it still seems important to the relevant concepts that for the most part having a belief or feeling resentment means doing so consciously, that they are, for the most part, states which depend for their existence on

our consciousness of them. And this, one might think, is not how it is with bodily states. A subject's legs' being crossed, the windmilling of her arms—these, in being physical states of her body, are what they are independent of any awareness she might have of them. And, thus, even when she is aware of them, she can be wrong about them. Her awareness is not constitutive of how things are with her body. Rather, her awareness of its states derives from these states and can, as a result, go wrong in how it presents these states as being.

And this, it seems, is just the conclusion that such philosophers should want. For, the body is, no doubt, a part of the world. It occupies space in this world and both is affected by the world and effects change in it. So, it should not be surprising that such philosophers would want to conclude that a subject's body stands independent of any awareness she has of it, that it is a part of the 'outer' world. It seems, after all, that a subject's body is what it is—muscle, tendons, bone, and blood vessels—and is positioned as it is—arms windmilling, legs crossed—regardless of her awareness. The body's properties are physical, and the properties of which a subject is aware in bodily awareness are physical and presented to her as such. So, it simply does not seem as though there is room to think anything else. All this, then, suggests that there is a unitary conception of perception at work in all of these claims about bodily awareness' being perceptual. Moreover, it suggests that what drives these claims is something basic and seemingly unquestionable—that the body belongs wholly to the mind-independent world and is what it essentially is apart from any awareness we may have of it.

1.3

At this point, it might be worth saying more about the notion of mind-independence I take to be at work here. Already, we have drawn from Armstrong and O'Brien a connection between perceptual awareness, the mind-independence of the objects of such a mode of awareness, and a certain kind of empirical contingency involved in just what those objects are. We have recognized that part of what it is to be a sense is to be receptive, to be open to what

is already there. Thus, just what a perceiving subject is open to is not specified by her perceptual capacity. What she can be made aware of is a function of the kinds of feature her capacity is sensitive to and the range over which it is so sensitive. This is why the case of a perceptual mode of awareness that only makes available one object must be a matter of empirical contingency. There is no room for another explanation, given what a perceptual mode of awareness is. But this, I think, is not all that we can draw out of this notion of mind-independence.

We can see this if we consider further the case of an object's being the only object made available through some perceptual mode of awareness. We have already granted that such an object, if it is an object of a perceptual mode of awareness, stands independent of this awareness of which it is an object. It is something that is already there, there to be registered by this mode of awareness. This means, then, that its relation to this awareness can be no different from that of any other potential object of this same awareness. That is, its relation to this perceptual capacity is a contingent one. That it is an object of this mode of awareness is to be explained in the same as in any other case: it lies in range. Thus, it is not only that this object needn't have been the only object made available by this mode of awareness but that it need never have been or needn't remain an object of this awareness at all. This is just the flipside of the contingency of its being this awareness' only object.

But it can be difficult to appreciate the significance of this point from this level of abstraction. So, let us consider it in connection with bodily awareness. According to the perceptual view, a subject's body happens to be the only object of her bodily awareness, and this is an empirical contingency. Her receptors do not extend beyond her skin. It follows from this commitment, I want to say, that her body, even if it is the only object of this awareness, need never have been such an object, and that it is, in a certain respect, just as contingent. This is just a consequence of holding that a subject's body is just another region of the mind-independent world. Now, perhaps some of the philosophers we've discussed would not take issue with this characterization of their commitment. It seems, after all, to

be just another way of saying that indeed a subject's body is what it is, independent of any awareness she might have of it. But it would be worth discussing the following possible line of objection, if only to clarify our talk of contingency and necessity here.

There seems room for a perceptualist to worry here that the above characterization of her commitment is too strong. She may want to insist that bodily awareness is perceptual but, nevertheless, that the relation in which a subject's body stands to her bodily awareness is not as contingent as the relation in which it stands to other possible objects of awareness. Though something like this may hold in the case of the other senses in relation to the perceiving subject—nothing in their nature, it seems, demands that such a subject ever be their object, even if glimpses of her own hands or brushings of one part of her body against another are inevitable, given how parts of her body are arranged in relation to each other—bodily awareness can strike us as different. It is, in a sense, meant to be directed at the subject's own body, even if it, like the other senses, is in principle open to whatever lies within range. We can appreciate this if we consider this obvious fact: a subject deprived of bodily awareness would surely perish. Without bodily awareness, she would not be able to make use of her limbs and so would not be able to perform any of the basic tasks that keep her alive. So, bodily awareness' being of the subject's body does seem necessary in at least this sense.

We can take this thought even further. Such bodily awareness of the subject's own body is not just necessary for any one subject like us. It seems that there would be no such subjects like us were it not for the fact that our evolutionary ancestors had a similar awareness of their own bodies. They could not have survived long enough to reproduce and adapt over generations to become us, were it not for an awareness of their own bodies. They too would have perished long ago. So, it seems that we can also say that we could not have been the very kind of biological beings we are were it not for bodily awareness. There is a kind of evolutionary necessity in our having the bodily awareness of ourselves that we do now.¹⁵ And

¹⁵Though, to my knowledge, no proponent of the perceptual view has ever raised this issue, William Lycan (who has many of the same basic theoretical commitments as Armstrong about our awareness of our own

so, we are being too quick if we think that all perceptual capacities relate to their subject as the canonical five senses do, i.e., contingently, for bodily awareness is an exception. It is perceptual in being an awareness that could in principle be of bodies other than a subject's own but nevertheless stands in special relation to this body. It is, just in the sense spelled out, an awareness that is as a matter of its nature directed at the body of the subject whose awareness it is.

We can, I think, concede to everything that such a perceptualist is gesturing at. There is room within the perceptualist picture to assert just these things about the relation between a subject's body and bodily awareness. An individual human subject would not, at least without significant and continuous assistance from others, survive without bodily awareness precisely because her body is a product of evolutionary development. And so, it is fair to say that her body is something that could not have come to be were it not for the bodily awareness her evolutionary ancestors had. Indeed, it is difficult to see even how some of these most distant ancestors could have gotten by were it not for something like bodily awareness. For, what use could something like a foot or a paw have been, if it were not something of which the subject could be immediately aware and so move around at will? If this is the case, then the genetic traits that together make for something like bodily awareness are indeed important. Limbs like ours (and all their precursors) could only have evolved together with bodily awareness. Without such awareness, nothing like our limbs in all their complexity would ever have developed, for their predecessors would not have been the least adaptive without this awareness either. Such predecessors, were it not for this awareness, would presumably have disappeared from the population in subsequent generations. So, in a way, the necessity towards which the perceptualist gestures runs deep. We could not have had anything like the bodies we do were it not for something like our bodily awareness in

mental states) says something analogous in responding to Shoemaker about awareness of pain: "Massive unawareness of pain is probably nomologically impossible for organisms like us, in whom pain hooks up with cognition and conation in complex ways. It may well be nomologically impossible for organisms of any very complicated kind, since a system of internal monitoring may be required for any such beast to succeed in the real world" (Lycan 1996, p. 18). I take it then that the concern above is one that a proponent of the perceptual view might raise.

our distant evolutionary ancestors. It, among many other things, of course, made possible the developmental direction that led eventually to our bodies.

But allowing this of the perceptualist does not make anything we've said about her commitments inaccurate. For, the perceptualist, presumably, still wants to be able to say that a given subject's body is still a part of the mind-independent world. This, after all, seems to be behind her identifying bodily awareness as a form of perceptual awareness in the first place. So, though this subject's body could never have come to be were it not for bodily awareness' co-evolving with the bodies of her distant ancestors, and though she herself would not survive long without it, there yet remains a sense in which this body of hers stands independent of her particular capacity for such awareness. Were, that is, she suddenly to lose this capacity, her body would be no less a body. It would, of course, be impaired in lacking this capacity, but it would be the same living and functionally organized arrangement of skin and bone, muscles and nerves, that it had been prior to this loss. So, while we can grant that the perceptualist can speak of a sense in which a subject's bodily awareness is in the first instance meant to be directed at her own body, given its evolutionary origins and its biological importance, there is still a sense in which her awareness is separable from her body. This capacity of hers does not make her body what it is. This is all that I need to establish, and it is a point that perceptualists should readily grant.

1.4

This analysis of various claims about bodily awareness' being perceptual allows us to draw two important and related conclusions. First, despite there being considerable differences in approach among the philosophers who make these claims, there is a shared underlying motivation to these claims that shows them to be versions of the very same claim and not just homonymous. All the views that we've considered either draw on or are made more intelligible in light of the following thought: perceptual awareness crucially involves awareness of objects that stand independent of the awareness itself. What such objects

essentially are is not somehow determined by the subject's awareness of them. A capacity for perception is a capacity to receive such objects as they are. This explains why philosophers like Armstrong and O'Brien argue that bodily awareness' being only of a subject's own body is a contingent matter. This capacity, being a perceptual capacity, is in principle receptive to other bodies in just the same way. Its range just needs to be extended. This also explains why philosophers like Schwenkler and Harcourt put emphasis on the errors to which one is susceptible in bodily awareness. Such errors point to the priority of the object of awareness over the awareness itself. One can be in error about the state of one's body or about which part of one's body is in a particular state because such states of one's body, in being physical configurations of a physical object, are what they are independent of one's awareness of them. So, though these philosophers attend to different features of our perceptual capacities in making a case for bodily awareness' counting among them, these features point to the same basic thought about perceptual awareness. And since what is true of objects of which we are perceptually aware seems obviously true of our bodies—they and their states are through and through independent of our perceiving them—these philosophers attempt to show that bodily awareness does not stand apart from the canonical senses and is a capacity to register the presence and positions of bodies already there for the registering. That this is their aim is typically left unstated in that there seems to be no room to think anything else.

Second, we can conclude that the perceptualists' claim is a *metaphysical* claim. Though, for the most part, the philosophers who make the claim discuss bodily awareness and the various features of this awareness, what underlies this discussion, as we have seen, is a view of the body itself. This, I take it, is what is really at stake in this discussion—the status of the body as a mind-independent object like any other. In making this claim about bodily awareness, one makes a claim about the body. The two claims, if our analysis is correct, are inseparable. Assessing the perceptualists' claim thus means not just assessing their claim about bodily awareness but about their view of the body itself.

In course of our analysis here, the idea of self-awareness came up more than once. This was no accident. If the perceptualist view is a view about what the body is and not just about a form of awareness, and if perceptual awareness is to be contrasted with self-awareness, as some of the perceptualist views we've examined assume, it seems only natural to ask how we should characterize the relation (if we should even call it that) in which we stand to our bodies. But before we can do this, much much more needs to be said about self-awareness and what it comes to. So, in what follows, we will consider further the relation between self-awareness and perceptual awareness, something of which we have only caught glimpses here. This will allow us to see that considering the body as it relates to what we are is the form that an assessment of the perceptualists' claim should take.

Chapter 2

Room for a Constitutive Role

2.1

In the previous chapter, we saw that there is in fact something that we can call *the* perceptual view of bodily awareness. The view comes to this—that bodily awareness, much like any awareness a subject receives through vision, touch, etc., is an experiential awareness that derives from something independent of it. Bodily awareness, like these other sensory capacities, then, is a way for the subject to come to grips with a small bit of mind-independent reality—in this case, a bit of it that also just happens to be a part of her. Thus, the view does not simply concern certain *epistemic* features of this awareness. Equally, it is a *metaphysical* view about a subject’s body as it stands to her, the thinking subject whose body it is. To be committed to this view is to think that a subject’s body is what it is independent of her awareness of it, that it does not depend in any way on this awareness in being what it is as it is.

Now that we have seen how the claims and arguments about bodily awareness that various philosophers make line up with commitment to this view, we can turn to the task of showing where these go wrong. The aim of this chapter is relatively modest. I want to show that these arguments are not definitive. While they succeed in pointing out various ways in which bodily awareness is like the forms of perceptual awareness with which we are familiar, none of these arguments suffice for showing that this awareness is in fact perceptual.

That is, they manage to show that there are some respects in which what this awareness is of is independent of this awareness—that this awareness does not determine what it is of through and through—but this, I will argue, does not show that what it is of is mind-independent and, so, does not show that this awareness is perceptual. There remains at least one important respect in which a subject’s body *could* depend on her bodily awareness, and this is something about which perceptualist arguments have nothing to say.

Something that I think helps to explain why perceptualists take themselves to have said enough to draw the conclusion that they do is the particular model that at least some of them have in mind in thinking about what it takes for something to be a form of self-awareness.¹ They take as their model something like the awareness a subject typically has of her intentional actions. This, then, is something that we will have to take a closer look at. What we have in the case of such awareness, we will see, is an awareness whose object is made what it is and made *hers* by this very awareness. Now, a subject’s bodily awareness, as perceptualists will be quick to point out, does deviate significantly in some ways from the model that a subject’s action awareness provides. (These are the respects in which it resembles the perceptual forms of awareness with which we are familiar.) But, as I will show, there are ways we can explain these without having to conclude that bodily awareness is perceptual. This is an indication that the model that perceptualists are working with is too narrow and that there is a more general model that awaits formulation. Perceptualists, then, despite their best efforts, leave us room to argue that bodily awareness is not perceptual but a form of self-awareness.

¹I do not mean to say that all the perceptualists discussed below understand or need to understand a subject’s awareness of her intentional actions in this way, (though Lucy O’Brien evidently does). But as will emerge below, all of their arguments do point to their having a conception of non-perceptual awareness where such awareness takes something like its form. It would be difficult to see what their arguments could be doing, otherwise.

2.2

Our goal is to show where it is the perceptualist arguments we canvassed in the last chapter fall short. But, to be in a position to do so, we first need to develop a better sense of the conceptual space in which these arguments take shape. Most importantly, we need to have a better sense of the view perceptualists oppose—both as it is represented as being in their arguments and as it *could* be, given what this conceptual space will allow. This, then, is what we turn to now.

Unfortunately, most of the relevant philosophers say little about what the view they oppose would amount to. They are, for instance, satisfied in thinking that they show that judgments made on the basis of bodily awareness are not immune to error through misidentification, in the way that, say, a subject's typical judgements about her own beliefs are. They see no need to further specify what the view would look like, taking themselves to have a way of ruling it out.²

2.2.1

The most determinate picture we have from their camp, then, comes from Lucy O'Brien. As we saw in the previous chapter, she contends that a subject's typical awareness of her intentional actions is not perceptual. It is not perceptual in that it is not an awareness that derives from its object. Rather, it has a constituting role. Were it not for this awareness, the action, its object, would not be the very action it is. As O'Brien says of such awareness: "...this is not an awareness that is occasioned by or distinct from my acting, but is rather part of my acting in the way I have" (O'Brien 2007, p. 187). A subject's action awareness, as O'Brien understands it, then, is precisely what her bodily awareness is not. It constitutes and is thus inseparable from its object. Its object does not stand independent of it. Now, though we need not accept O'Brien's view of such actions and their subject's awareness of

²I have in mind, for instance, something like (Schwenkler 2013), where immunity to error through misidentification is invoked as a mark of something's being a form of non-perceptual awareness but where there is little explanation for why it should be such a mark.

them, we ought to take her view as something on which to model a more determinate picture of the view of bodily awareness that she and the other perceptualists oppose.

O'Brien, in characterising a subject's awareness of her intentional actions, does not just deny that such awareness is perceptual. She claims over and above this that it is "agent's awareness" (O'Brien 2007, p. 201) or "self-awareness" (O'Brien 2007, p. 187), that it is "a way of knowing our own actions that is available to us in virtue of being the acting subject" (O'Brien 2007, p. 157). Why is she moved to do so? This aspect of her view is something on which we touched in the previous chapter. It helped us to make sense of the perceptualist claim that bodily awareness' being of only one object—viz., the body of the subject whose awareness it is—is an empirical matter. For, action awareness, as O'Brien understands it, is a contrasting case. Such awareness is something a subject has only of her own actions, no matter the circumstances. It is only her actions that are made the actions they are and made intentional by her awareness of them. The relation in which they stand, then, is not empirical but "necessary and conceptual" (O'Brien 2007, p. 169). And so, we can, to some extent, see the connection between such awareness' having a role in constituting its object and its being a form of self-awareness.

When, in the previous chapter, we first considered self-awareness, we took note of something that Sydney Shoemaker makes much of—that the typical awareness a subject has of her beliefs, pains, and other mental states and goings-on seems to be an awareness that is unfailingly of herself as herself, seems to be first-personal, much in the way that thought about this subject is unfailingly of herself when she thinks of herself under the first-person aspect and uses 'I'. When such a subject is aware of believing *p* or doing *A* in the way that she typically is, she cannot but be aware that it is *she* who believes *P* or is doing *A*. It would not make sense to suppose that it were someone else's believing *P* or doing *A* of which she was aware.

Now, we ought, I think, to see O'Brien's view as attempting to explain this phenomenon in the case of intentional action. The awareness a subject has of her intentional actions is an

awareness she has of only her actions because of its constituting role. As O'Brien observes, it is "only the agent *herself* [who] can choose to act in one way rather than another," (O'Brien 2007, pp. 167-168) and so when her action is "a result of an assessment of things she *can* do [...] that she grasps as things she *can* do," (O'Brien 2007, p. 168) when, that is, her action is intentional, "she has [a way] of knowing what she has done that could not be available to anyone other than the agent" (O'Brien 2007, p. 168). In such cases, she knows her actions "not by observing them, or by reflecting about them, or accepting some presentation of them, but rather by actively engaging in them" (O'Brien 2007, p. 187). So, this awareness the subject has, in constituting the actions of which it is an awareness, just is the awareness a subject has of *her* actions when they are intentional, when she chooses them as what to do. And because such actions result from such a decision, her awareness of them could only be an awareness of them as *her* actions. She chooses them as what *she* should do. This, then, explains one respect in which this awareness is a form of self-awareness. It is an awareness only of the subject's actions as her actions. So, when she is aware of an action in this way, she is unfailingly aware of an action of hers as such an action.

But there is, I think, a further respect in which we could call it this. When a subject is aware of an action of hers in this way, there is a particular sense in which this action is hers. It is hers not just in being or originating with a movement of her body but in being something that she chooses to do, that she sees herself as having *reason* to do. As O'Brien says, whose action a given action is

...depends upon *whose* reasons, desires, and so on are the direct determinants of the action. Thus, it is a constitutive impossibility for an action to be an *action* of A's but to be directly determined by B's reasons. For B to determine an action of A's, as opposed to a movement of A's body, he will always have to go through A herself: he will have to engage A's own reasons. (O'Brien 2012, p. 142)

So, for an action to be a given subject's, she must have the sort of awareness that O'Brien describes. She must be aware of the action as issuing from reasons and desires that she in fact has. It is made her action through this awareness.

To illustrate: such an action differs from something a subject does as a matter of hypnotic suggestion or some other, deeper kind of compulsion. When, for instance, the subject raises her arm on cue, having just been roused from a hypnotic trance, the movement is hers in that no external force caused this upward movement of her arm. It resulted, rather, from her sudden and overwhelming desire to do so. This, then, seems more an instance of her raising her arm, not of her arm's rising. But still, the movement is one alien to her in that she is unable to say why she made it, what seemed to her at the moment to speak in favour of it (rather than, say, leaving the arm where it was). The movement, rather, is one that she just finds herself wanting to make and then making, even as it baffles her. So, even if the cue were repeated and she raised her arm again, even if she connected the movement to the cue, all she could be doing is making an inference about her movement, just as she might in observing someone else. She could report on what she felt she must do as she did it and on how her desire changed as she carried through with the movement or as the cue came and went, but this would not be the awareness she typically has of her actions. Though the awareness would not be one just derived from the movement (as it would if she were observing someone else), since she is moved by a desire, the nature of the movement she was making would nevertheless be opaque to her. She would not know when, for instance, to make the movement or when what she was doing was complete except by the coming and going of the desire. It would not be like signalling to a friend (with a perceptibly identical movement), where she would know to lower her arm upon the signal's being received. Here, again, she could only be making an inference, from the cessation of the desire to the nature of what it was she was doing. In short, then, she would not know *what* it was she was doing, whether this raising of her arm was an act of signalling or saluting or stretching certain muscles, whether there was anything else to it apart from the motion. And to this extent, she would not be, through her awareness of her action, determining what it was. Though, then, the action might still be intentional (a limit case) and made intentional by her awareness of it, this awareness would not fully be the awareness an agent has of her actions. It would not

be an awareness that issued from her assessment of what to do, an awareness through which this movement was determined as the thing to be done. And to this extent, the action would not fully be hers. In not having chosen it fully, in not knowing fully what spoke in favour of its being done, she would not know fully what it was. And so she would not see herself, her agency, in it.

This, then, gives us further insight into why such a subject's typical action awareness is, on O'Brien's view, a form of self-awareness. Such awareness, in being an awareness of the action as to be done, an awareness that issues from some assessment on the subject's part, constitutes the action as the very action it is. Such awareness not only makes her movement intentional but makes it an act of the kind she assessed as to be done, a doing of *A* rather than *B*, a signalling, not a saluting. It is such awareness, then, that makes the action an exercise of her agency and allows her to recognise it as such. And so, such awareness is unfailingly of the subject's own actions not just because it, in making the actions of which it is an awareness the actions they are, could not be of actions other than hers (her actions are the only such actions to which she, as the subject whose awareness it is, could stand in this relation). It is because this awareness, at the same time, makes these actions hers in a further sense. It makes them the very actions she's assessed as needing doing and so makes them just those actions she's chosen to do. This awareness thus earns the label 'self-awareness'. It not only has a role in constituting its object but makes it the subject's and makes it known to this subject as hers.

O'Brien's picture of action awareness thus provides us with a model for non-perceptual awareness, for what she denies our bodily awareness can be fit to. An awareness of this form, as we have seen, determines its object in at least two interrelated respects. It not only determines it as being of the very kind that it is but, in so doing, determines it as belonging to the subject in such a way that the subject cannot but recognise it as such. Such an awareness is thus a form of self-awareness, an awareness that is unfailingly and essentially of the subject whose awareness it is.

Now, one of the things we wanted, in considering O'Brien's view, was something from which we could extrapolate to a more determinate picture of the view that perceptualists more generally see themselves as arguing against. But given how little the other perceptualists say about the view that they oppose, can we really say that O'Brien's conception (or something like it) is something that they in fact share? I do not think that we need attribute anything quite so determinate as O'Brien's conception to just anyone who counts as a perceptualist. The extent to which any given perceptualist shares this conception will have to be decided on a case-by-case basis. But even so, to the extent that the relevant thinkers are perceptualists, they deny that bodily awareness in any way determines its object. And if what it would be for bodily awareness to be a form of self-awareness would be for it to be an awareness that was unfailingly and essentially of the subject's body, it seems that perceptualists are committed to denying this in denying the former.³ For, it is unclear how this awareness could be essentially of the subject's body while this body was essentially what it was independent of this awareness. It would be the determining that this awareness did that would secure its connection to this body. So, it makes sense that other perceptualists do in fact, in making their claim, see themselves as denying that bodily awareness is a form of self-awareness.

2.2.2

At this point, we nearly have in view all that we need to evaluate the arguments considered in the previous chapter. But before we begin, we ought to consider a different kind of objection, one, I think, that our discussion of O'Brien's view naturally invites. It will also help to setup the discussion to come.

³As we have noted before, D.M. Armstrong is of the view that self-awareness just is a form of perceptual awareness and that no awareness—not of our beliefs or pains or intentional actions—determines its object. What “self-awareness” for him signifies is the sort of awareness that *happens* to only be of the subject but could in principle be of others in just the same way. But this should not distract us from the fact that Armstrong is committed to perceptualism about the body, even if he would not say that this comes to the same as denying that bodily awareness is a form of self-awareness. Nothing, for the time being, turns on this disagreement.

We can put it as follows. If the case of action awareness is any indication, agency and choice seem to be at the center of the picture of self-awareness so far outlined. How is it possible, then, that anyone could even think that bodily awareness belongs to this category? For, though, of course, we often do determine the position of our limbs *in a sense*, as when we engage in intentional action, it is almost as often the case that we do not. We, for instance, wake up to find ourselves positioned in one way or another, having moved about in sleep, or stumble and find ourselves in a heap on the ground. And still we are aware of the position of our limbs. In such cases, it seems, this position must be prior to our awareness of it. Forces apart from our agency determine it. This position is, then, given to our awareness. We are passive with respect to it. And even when this position does result as a matter of our acting intentionally, the awareness we have still seems to derive from our limbs' being so positioned. The awareness that moves and guides our limbs—O'Brien's action awareness—is distinct from the awareness that locates them. While the one awareness feeds forward, determining their position, the other is simply feedback. It reports on this position. It is this distinction, in fact, that seems to move O'Brien to argue that the latter is perceptual. It is because bodily awareness, like our other perceptual capacities, "[relies] upon a subject attaining knowledge of herself via some input" (O'Brien 2007, p. 202) that O'Brien wants to argue that "we cannot count it as a primary source for self-knowledge in the way that we can count knowledge of oneself attained via one's output" (O'Brien 2007, p. 202). And in speaking of "knowledge of oneself attained via one's output," she of course has in mind the knowledge a subject has of her actions in being the acting subject. So, it seems that a subject's action awareness, if so understood, cannot in fact provide a model for understanding bodily awareness in a different way, as being a form of self-awareness. The positions of a subject's body clearly do not stand to her as her intentional actions do. Her awareness of such positions is always a form of feedback. So, once we understand the nature of self-awareness, especially, the role of a subject's choice in that of which she is aware, we cannot but see—or so the argument goes—that there is nothing further to say. Bodily

awareness plainly does not fit alongside a subject's awareness of her intentional actions. So, it must be perceptual.

But this, I think, is a mistake. To see this, we need to turn again to O'Brien's picture. Undeniably, there are considerable differences between a subject's awareness of her actions and her bodily awareness. But to conclude from the fact of these differences that bodily awareness cannot but be perceptual is too quick. If a subject's action awareness is as O'Brien characterises it, it seems right to understand it as being non-perceptual, and more than that, as being a form of self-awareness. But we should be careful in saying just what about it makes it this and how we ought to generalize from it. O'Brien seems to think that it is the subject's agency that is responsible for this awareness' being what it is. It is because this subject, in having determined *A* as her course of action, determines the nature of her movements that her relation to them is non-perceptual. Her awareness makes these not just movements of her body but a doing of *A*, an action of just the kind she determined as needing to be done. This doing of *A*, then, is not prior to her awareness, something there to be discovered, but is what it is because of this awareness, because she determined that an action of type *A* was what needed doing. And this seems right as far as action awareness goes. The subject's activity, her assessing and deciding what to do, is at the center of her actions' being determined by her awareness and their being hers. But this does not mean that such activity on the subject's part, such determination in this way, is the hallmark of an awareness' being non-perceptual or its being a form of self-awareness. A non-perceptual relation, anyway, as we have to come understand it, is just one in which the object of awareness in some way depends on this awareness in its being what it is.⁴ The object is in some way determined by it. It is not implausible, then, that such determination could take other shapes, depending on the object.

And this, I think, is something we can already see from the case of action awareness. O'Brien, in contrasting this and bodily awareness, seems to operate as though there were

⁴Discussion of what to say about the possibility of bodily awareness' being a form of self-awareness will have to wait until §2.3.2.

only one level at which an awareness's determining activity could be at work—in the case of action awareness, the level at which the action is constituted as a doing of *A*, and in bodily awareness, the level at which a limb is a limb in such-and-such a position.⁵ And this is how she comes to align output with self-awareness and input with perception, allowing her to draw the conclusion she does.

But we ought, I think, to distinguish between *two* levels at which such activity could be at work. Speaking now just about action awareness: in addition to the level we just identified and on which O'Brien focuses, where the subject makes a practical assessment and decides, say, in favour of *A* as what to do—what we could call the *matter* level of determination—there is a higher or more general level at which determination takes place, the level at which the action is determined to be at all of the general kind that it is, i.e., an *intentional* action—what we could call the *form* level of determination.⁶ Now, these two levels, at least in the case of action, are only notionally separable in that something cannot be determined by a subject's awareness at the form level unless it is also so determined at the matter level. A subject's awareness will not have made her movement intentional if it also does not determine it *as something* (a signal, a salute—whatever *A* instantiates) to be done. Nevertheless, we can separate out the two levels if we think of the determinations in this way. With each given case, there will be specific considerations in play that speak in favour of *A* as what to do, e.g., reasons *q*, *r*, and *s*, which lead to the subject's determining her movement as a doing of *A*. This, of course, is determination at the level of matter. But we can also discern the form that structures each such case, i.e., the form *to be done*, which

⁵This is not to say that O'Brien does not *in general* in her account recognise other respects in which the action is determined by the subject's awareness—that, for instance, the action, more generally, is made intentional by the subject's awareness of it—but that when it comes to the difference between perceptual and non-perceptual forms of awareness, she does not operate as though distinguishing between these different levels of determination might make a difference.

⁶This terminology, I recognize, is not ideal, given that many people impute many different things to the form-matter distinction. In invoking it here, what I mean to get at is, first, that there are these distinct levels at which something might be determined by a subject's awareness of it and, second, that higher levels stand to lower levels in a certain way: they give them their shape. This, for example, is what makes a non-intentional doing of *A* completely different from an intentional doing of *A*, however much the same they might look from the outside.

could be further explicated in terms of such concepts as *goodness*, *means*, and *justification*. It is determination at this level that gives the reasons at the more specific level their shape—that makes them reasons of a practical bent—and so makes what is being determined an intentional action in the first instance.

Now, as we just said, in the case of intentional action, because of the way in which the levels of form and matter are conceptually tied, a subject's movement cannot be determined by her awareness at the level of form unless it is also (at least to some extent) so determined at the level of matter. So, it must be the subject's own thinking that determines her movement to be a doing of *A* if it is to determine her movement as intentional. But need things be the same when it comes to the subject's awareness of her body? When O'Brien contrasts this with her action awareness, pointing to her passivity when it comes to the former, O'Brien really points to the fact that the subject's bodily awareness does not determine *how* the limbs of which it is an awareness are positioned in the way that her action awareness determines *what* it is she is doing intentionally. And this is just to say that when it comes to her limbs, her awareness does not play a determining role at the level of matter. But, unless we assume that, in this case, the level of form is tied to the level of matter, as it is in the case of action, this says nothing about this awareness' playing a determining role at the level of form, the level at which the object of awareness is constituted as of the general kind that it is—namely as something *bodily*.

Thus, what O'Brien says about our action awareness' being non-perceptual does not, as it might have seemed, outright foreclose on the possibility of our saying the same about bodily awareness. That there is this tie between levels of determination in the case of action awareness may be something specific to it, specific to what intentional actions are and how they must stand to the acting subject to be what they are. Even, then, if a subject's bodily awareness does not determine *how* her limbs are positioned, it may, nevertheless, determine their *being* such positions—their being, that is, not mere configurations of matter in space but *bodily* positions. And if this were the case, such positions would depend for what they

are on the subject's awareness of them. This awareness, then, would not be perceptual. Much more, of course, will have to be said to fill out this picture for it to be more than a bare possibility. But at this point, we at least have the faint outlines of what an alternative to the perceptual view would have to look like.

2.3

We now have enough in view to begin our assessment of the perceptualist arguments we canvassed in the previous chapter. Given what we have just said, we can, I think, see these arguments as falling roughly into two sorts. The first attempts to give grounds for thinking that bodily awareness does not determine its object at all in that it does not determine what it is as it is through and through. The second attempts to show that the relation in which a subject stands to her body in bodily awareness involves no determination because this is the sort of relation in which she would stand to *anyone's* body were she to have bodily awareness of it. If either of these went through, it would show that a subject's bodily awareness was perceptual. As I will now argue, neither does.

2.3.1

We can begin with arguments of the first sort. Edward Harcourt, we should recall, focuses on certain proprioceptive illusions. Under the appropriate experimental conditions, a subject can be made to feel as though a limb of hers is positioned in a particular way when in fact it is not, and even when made aware of the illusion, she will continue to experience the limb as being so positioned while knowing it is not. And this, according to Harcourt, shows that her awareness is perceptual. Her limb is something of which she is *made* aware, and the mechanisms by which she is made so aware can be interfered with, as happens in these cases of illusion. Such cases thus reveal the gap that can open up between how things are with her limbs and how she experiences them as being. And how things are, we are supposed to conclude, is something determined prior to and independent of her awareness of them,

for it is their being so determined that explains how such a gap could open up in the first place. Her awareness, then, even when she is not under any illusion, is something derived from her limbs. It does not determine these limbs' positions. It is in this sense that her awareness of them is supposed to be perceptual. John Schwenkler's argument goes along similar lines. He, much like Harcourt, exploits our susceptibility to error when it comes to our bodily states, pointing out those cases in which a subject mistakes one part of her body for another. She, for instance, thinks that it is her index finger that is bent when in fact it is her middle finger. Again, such error is supposed to reveal the mind-independence of such bodily states. The subject can be mistaken about which body part she is aware of because these parts and their positions are not determined by her awareness but given to it. There is, then, room for her to suppose, at least momentarily, that her experience is of one part when in fact it is of another. And this, Schwenkler thinks, shows that her awareness is perceptual.

As we should now see, such appeals to our susceptibility to error are not in themselves particularly compelling. For, all that they establish is that there is *a respect* in which the positions of a subject's limbs are given to her awareness. She is made aware of their specific positions in their being so positioned. And this is something that even an opponent of this view, like me, can admit to. What determines *how* a subject's limbs are positioned is never her bodily awareness. When she is in the midst of acting intentionally, it will be her action awareness that determines this position. When she comes to be positioned as she is by accident, it will be something else that is responsible. What Harcourt and Schwenkler's arguments point to is just another aspect of this. Because a subject's bodily awareness does not determine how she is positioned, how she seems to herself to be positioned in this awareness is something that can come apart from how she is in fact positioned. But this is just to admit what we did above, namely, that bodily awareness does not determine its object at the level of matter. And this still leaves open determination at the level of form, the level at which such states are made at all what they are, i.e., bodily states. But since Harcourt and Schwenkler do not recognise these distinct levels, what they say addresses determination

only at the level of matter. A subject's bodily awareness does not determine her leg's being bent or her arm's being raised because such states are in this respect given to this awareness. But this does not mean that such states are thus wholly mind-independent. For, they may still be made bodily states—states of a *leg* or an *arm*—because of this awareness. This is exactly what we will press for, and Harcourt and Schwenkler say nothing to show that things are otherwise.

2.3.2

O'Brien's and Armstrong's respective arguments are arguments of the second sort. Both argue that a subject could in principle be made aware of bodies other than her own through this mode of awareness. Her awareness now is limited to her body only because the receptors through which she is made so aware stop at her skin. If the range of these receptors could just be extended, she could have available to her the positions of others' bodies much in the way she now has her own. And the intelligibility of this is supposed to show that such awareness is perceptual. For, it reveals that a subject's body is just one possible object of her bodily awareness and thus that this body, like the other bodies of which she could be made aware in this way, is something that could go in and out of this awareness' range. It just so happens that her body is always in range. Her body, like these other bodies, then, is a self-standing object, something that does not depend on her awareness of it to be what it essentially is.

Here is one response open to the non-perceptualist that may be tempting to give. The argument above only goes through if we already accept that a subject relates to her body in bodily awareness as she would relate to any other body. For, a subject's being proprioceptively connected to another's body would only count as an *extension* of her present awareness were this additional connection of the same kind as the present one. But this is just what is under dispute. If subjects' bodies did in one way or another depend on bodily awareness for what they were, if, for instance, a subject's body were *made hers* because of

her bodily awareness of it, this scenario could hardly be as described. Such awareness could not be extended to *others'* bodies. In being an awareness that constituted a subject's body as hers, this awareness is one she could have only of her body. So, the scenario as O'Brien and Armstrong describe it is hardly impartial. It assumes that all proprioceptive connections are alike and that what they make for in each and every case is awareness of an independent object. But this is to already structure the way in which a subject relates to her body in being so aware of it. It is to structure this relation as perceptual. So, we could only go along with this description if, from the start, we did not take the opposing view seriously.

But just pointing this out isn't likely to impress many. Even if O'Brien and Armstrong do not argue for this description of the scenario, and even if theirs is not the only description that could be given, theirs, at least on the face of it, seems the most plausible. For, just what does the alternative alluded to above come to? If, on the non-perceptual view, a subject's bodily awareness has a role in making her body hers, does this mean, then, that any body or body part of which she was aware in this way—including parts that are not materially contiguous with what arguably is her body—counts as hers? Is one alternative description of the scenario that, when the range of her receptors is extended to what was just then another's arm, this arm is then made her arm? If this is what the non-perceptual view has to offer, then this hardly speaks in favour of it. A subject's being aware of a given arm—an arm, for instance, on the other side of the room—in this distinctive way does not seem enough to make it her arm. It, after all, remains attached to the other's body and, presumably, is still an arm of which he is aware and has control. And even if we were to add to our subject's connection to this arm—if she were not just aware of its position but, for instance, felt sensation in it and could even move it—this still might not be enough. For, so long as this arm had at one point been another subject's and remained contiguous with his body, it seems that a plausible way to describe the case would be as one in which *this subject's* arm had become possessed. And its being so possessed, of course, would not be the same as its just being the arm of the subject who now has bodily awareness of it

and who now can move it at will. In short, an arm's history and material contiguity seem considerations that strongly figure in how we understand limb ownership. Thus, it is difficult to see how the mere extension of a subject's awareness to a limb could make that limb hers. This alternative description of the scenario, then, is not much of an alternative. It seems one that we ought to try to avoid. It is too revisionary.

There is a second way in which one could respond to the perceptualists. One could try to insist that any awareness of a limb that was not the subject's, however like her bodily awareness, would not in fact be bodily awareness but something else. It would not be bodily awareness in that it did not play the determining role that bodily awareness does in the case of the subject's own limbs. So, the one would be perceptual but the other not. But this, at least just as it is, is an empty alternative. Nothing speaks for it independently of one's already favoring the non-perceptual view. Why count two different forms of awareness when having just the one will do the same explanatory work, especially when both would involve the very same physiological apparatus? Thus, it is hard to fault O'Brien and Armstrong for providing so little in the way of argument when theirs seems the most plausible description of the scenario. And without a real alternative to challenge the scenario as they describe it, there seems little need for further argument on their part. If the scenario that they describe is intelligible, and a subject could be made aware of a limb on the other side of the room in the way that she is aware of her own limbs, it seems that this would be a case of extending her bodily awareness to another's limb, showing that this awareness, even in the ordinary case, is a form of perceptual awareness.

But, fortunately, we need not accept this conclusion. We do have a way of motivating something like the second option. It begins from reflection on the character of bodily awareness in the normal case. Such awareness, we should recognise, is not, for the subject, a detached sort of awareness of her body. When a subject is aware of a limb in this way, she is aware of it as a limb to which she seems to extend, as a limb that seems hers to move. It is not a coincidence that even perceptualists, even in the midst of laying out their considered

view, describe this awareness as an awareness “from the inside.”⁷ Her awareness through this mode seems an awareness she has because these limbs are her limbs. They are presented to her not at any distance but, in being presented to her at all, are presented *as her own*. Thus, the sort of scenario that perceptualists ask us to imagine (where unbeknownst to the subject, the signal fed to her proprioceptors comes not from her own but from another’s body) does not have the same structure as, for instance, a case in which a subject looking in a mirror mistakenly judges that it is her hand that is *f*. In this visual case, the hand the subject is aware of, though she mistakes it as hers, does not present itself to her as being hers in the same way. Presumably, she makes the mistake because the hand she sees looks like hers; she sees the hand, and because of its appearance, identifies it as hers. The judgment about its being her hand is something logically separable from her seeing the hand. It is not built into her experience of the hand that it is hers. Though, to be sure, her judgement is made on the basis of the experience, this aspect of the experience (perhaps the hand’s coloring or the length of the fingers) does not make it, in the first instance, an experience of her hand. It is an experience of seeing a hand of such-and-such size and colour, positioned thus and so. Thus, even though the subject is mistaken about whose hand it is she is seeing, we can still describe the case as one of her seeing a hand, and she, upon discovering her mistake, can still claim that someone’s hand is *f*. The hand she is seeing is no less something she is seeing simply because her identity judgment was mistaken.

The case of bodily awareness that perceptualists ask us to imagine does not operate in the same way. The subject’s thinking that the limbs of which she is aware are hers is not in the same way separable from her experience of these limbs. She is not, as in the visual case, guided by any features that seem to mark these limbs as hers. And nor does her judgement result from her simply never having encountered any limbs but her own through this mode of awareness. When she experiences limbs in this way, her experience is as the one whose limbs these are; she feels herself to be there, extended to these limbs. Thus, when the subject’s

⁷Hanna Pickard, John Schwenkler, and Lucy O’Brien all help themselves to this description (Pickard 2004, pp. 212, 214) (Schwenkler 2013, p. 471) (O’Brien 2007, p. 206).

receptors are linked not to her body but another's, her experience is not perception of the other's limbs but an illusion—an illusion of her being positioned in such-and-such a way when she is not, an illusion of her extending to somewhere that she does not. So, though the experience is no doubt caused by the other's limbs, that is not enough to make it an *awareness of them*. Because in bodily awareness the subject's experience is never just of some limbs but is structured such that what she is presented with seem hers, her experience remains as of herself, even if illusory.⁸ Thus, the subject does not in fact have awareness of the other's body in the way that she typically does of her own, as perceptualists require.

Now, this is a move that O'Brien, at least to some extent, anticipates.⁹ She argues that, given the right sort of background conditions, the case described could be one that allowed the subject to perceive the other's body. It needn't be one of illusion:

This view [that the awareness would be an illusion] seems right as long as one thinks that the phenomenology of bodily awareness is *fixed* as first personal. [But] ...with sufficiently radical changes in our background beliefs and so on, the phenomenology of bodily awareness could change. Given regular and reliable connections to another's body, on being aware via bodily awareness that there is a pain in the leg of this body, I may become unsure which body I am aware of" (O'Brien 2007, p. 206).

And this is what O'Brien's favoured example, that of the 'Internal Baby Monitor' is supposed to illustrate. Her case is not one in which a subject, unfamiliar with such devices, is unknowingly linked up to someone else's body through such a device. Such an experi-

⁸It is worth noting that this response differs from the kind of response that Evans and Cassam (1997) give. They deny that a subject can have bodily awareness of a body other than her on the grounds that a reliable causal link—like the one imagined between the subject and the other's body—is insufficient for knowledge. Thus, for instance, Evans says: "If the subject does not know that *he* has his legs bent (say) on this basis (because he is in the situation described), then he does not know *anything* on this basis. (To judge that *someone* has his legs bent would be a wild shot in the dark" (Evans 1982, p. 221). So, supposing that the subject were told that the link had between his capacity and his body had been severed, this, just in itself, would give him no reason to suppose that he had awareness of someone else's body. He could not retreat to a lesser knowledge claim, as he might in a visual case of mistaken identity. But this response seems inadequate. For, the case at hand could easily be adjusted to one in which the subject is then informed of his circumstances. And then, it seems, that Evans and Cassam would have to say that, their subject, in being cognisant of the causal link, was aware of the other's body.

⁹She is responding to Martin (1995), who while thinking that bodily awareness is perceptual, denies that it can present itself as being of more than one object.

ence might well be illusory. This subject, we might imagine, even after being told about her circumstances, could still not help but feel that it was her body she was experiencing. Importantly, O'Brien's case is one in which use of such a device has been normalized. And such regular and knowing use, she thinks, would lead to a change in the character of the subject's awareness. As O'Brien says, the "perspectival nature" of the awareness, its being from the inside, will be something that the subject can "separate from its being first personal content as long as [she has] the necessary background beliefs" (O'Brien 2007, p. 206). So, on this view, a subject could, with the use of such a device, eventually gain perceptual access to another's body. It would just be a matter of her dissociating her experiences from their first-person character.

But this, I think, is too quick. Though, in general, it seems plausible that the content of one's experiences can reflect changes in one's background beliefs—with the acquisition of new concepts, it seems, one's experiences of things might be enriched—it is not clear that the first-person character of one's bodily awareness is like this. Notice that O'Brien takes this character to be something phenomenological: "...bodily awareness" she says, "does not simply give us information about body parts that are in fact mine—it seems to give us information about them *as body parts that are part of my body*. There is a sense of ownership of our bodies that the phenomenology of bodily awareness secures" (O'Brien 2007, pp. 205-206). It is, she thinks, part of the feel of our experience and so something that such experience could shed. But this isn't obviously so. What O'Brien calls the "perspectival nature" of bodily awareness seems to be what we have tried to capture in saying that in bodily awareness one seems to extend to the limbs of which one is aware. But then what she calls "phenomenological" seems difficult to separate from the "perspectival." The way in which this awareness is perspectival is in the way that it places the subject at the center of it, in the way that its structure presents limbs at least *as though* the subject extended to them. So, what's first-personal about this awareness is not something added to the experience but built into it.

Now, this is not to say that it would be impossible to gain any knowledge through the use of something like O'Brien's 'IBM' device. Plausibly, a subject could come to know the position of another's limbs through the device. But she would not have this knowledge by being aware of the other's limbs in the same way that she is of her own. Her experience would still be an illusory one. But to the extent that an illusion is produced by a certain state of affairs in fact obtaining and to the extent that a subject can (with the appropriate background beliefs) infer from an illusory experience what must in fact obtain, she can acquire knowledge from such an experience. She would infer from what she seems to experience of herself to what must be the case with the other subject. But all of this requires acknowledging the illusory character of her experience. So, again, she would not have awareness of another's limbs in the same way that she typically does her own.¹⁰

So, we ought not be moved by such cross-wiring cases. And, indeed, in a more recent paper, O'Brien comes to acknowledge as much.¹¹ In reflecting on her previous discussion of a subject's action awareness and what to make of the possibility of cross-wiring in such a case, she now thinks that if her argument there goes through—if it does indeed show that such action awareness is non-perceptual and therefore a source of self-knowledge—it is not the cross-wiring case that does the work. Rather, it relies on our already thinking that the content of such awareness is essentially first-personal. The argument would not go through

¹⁰If the argument here at all resembles the argument that John McDowell makes against Parfit in (McDowell 1998), this is no accident. Though there McDowell argues against q-memory's being a capacity in terms of which we should understand ordinary memory as being a special case, I think that much of what McDowell says about memory and the first person applies in a structurally analogous way to bodily awareness. The seeming coherence of bodily awareness of another's body is much like the seeming coherence of remembering another person's past. In both cases, it can just seem a matter of establishing the right kind of connection. With this connection, another's body or past seems to just open to one. But this ignores the first-person structure of each of these forms of experience. It treats this structure as dissociable from what is presented in it.

¹¹The fact that O'Brien now admits that cross-wiring cases cannot show us whether or not a form of awareness is perceptual does not, I think, trivialize the argument above made in response to her earlier argument. The mistake of taking cross-wiring cases as evidence for a form of awareness' being perceptual—or at least taking such cases as cases that need to be overcome—is pervasive. Cassam, for instance, in attempting to argue that in bodily awareness we can be aware of our bodies *as subject* sees such cases as insurmountable (Cassam 1998). He thus concedes that bodily self-ascriptions are not *logically* immune to error through misidentification but only *de facto* immune, and this, given his aim, is a considerable concession. In fact, I think, it is a fatal one.

otherwise, and we would be inclined to read the scenario differently. And this, O'Brien recognises, bears just as much on her discussion of bodily awareness and cross-wiring. As she admits:

...talk of the IBM could not *establish* that the 'not-necessarily first-personal' nature of bodily awareness against a direct argument for the necessity of bodily awareness having first-person content. It can only suggest that given that bodily awareness depends on perceptual input from, and about, an independently identified body space, and that given certain views about the plasticity of the content of perception, there is scope for another body space to be accessible, and for that accessibility to condition the content of bodily awareness. (O'Brien 2012, p. 141)

So, even if O'Brien, at the time of giving her original argument, did not see it in this way, her more recent reflections on this argument suggest that her thinking could be captured as follows. It was because she already saw bodily awareness as awareness via an input that she thought that this awareness could be an awareness of bodies other than the subject's own. Because it is awareness via an input only, any first-person content that it presents is contingent. So, it is because O'Brien could not see how a subject's body could depend on her awareness of it—it does not determine this body's positions or that it is the subject's body—that she could not see how its content could be essentially first-personal and so claimed that this aspect of our awareness is something that could fall away from it. So, the weight of her claim rested on her prior thinking about the receptive nature of bodily awareness, not on the cross-wiring case, as she now admits. What O'Brien takes away from this is that "If we hold that a subject's knowledge of her actions is essentially first personal, in a way that a subject's knowledge of her body through bodily awareness may not be, then we are better off arguing for that claim directly" (O'Brien 2012, p. 124). And about this much I agree. But since the considerations so far about subjects' bodies' being what they are independent of bodily awareness are inconclusive, or so I have argued, this gives us reason enough to consider the alternative—that bodily awareness might be a form of self-awareness and having a body might depend on having such awareness of it.

There is one further set of issues, we should note, that this discussion gives rise to but whose resolution will have to wait.¹² As we saw while discussing the typical awareness a subject has of her intentional actions, one of the features distinctive of it is that it constitutes those actions of which it is an awareness *as the subject's*. This, it seems, is what makes it a form of self-awareness. Now, as we have just seen, the same cannot be said in the case of bodily awareness. What makes a subject's body hers has to be something outside of her awareness. While we have shown that we needn't conclude from this that this awareness is perceptual—furthermore, we have shown that this awareness is one a subject has only of her own body—we have yet to say anything about what does make a subject's body hers and why, even though her bodily awareness has no role in this, it is nonetheless a form of self-awareness.

These are important issues. They show that much remains up in the air. But they also show that what's called for at this point is a positive characterization of the non-perceptual view. Though we've shown in this chapter that the arguments for perceptualism are inconclusive—that they misapprehend the space of possibilities in which they take shape and so do not rule out the opposing view—showing that perceptualism is in fact to be rejected will require that we say more about the alternative. In the next chapter, then, we will develop an account of what a subject's body is such that it could be something that depends on her awareness of it in being what it essentially is. And this will put us in a position to say how this awareness can be essentially first-personal.

¹²See §3.7 and §5.2.

Chapter 3

What It Takes to Have a Body

3.1

It is our overarching aim to show that a subject's bodily awareness of herself is not perceptual but a form of self-awareness—an awareness that is *as such* an awareness the subject has of herself *as herself*. Here is where we stand after the last two chapters. We have seen from the case of a subject's awareness of her intentional actions what it can look like for a subject to have an awareness of herself that is not perceptual. What distinguishes such a form of awareness is that it has a constituting role in that of which it is an awareness. In the case of intentional action: a subject's doing of *A* could not be what it is—an intentional action, a doing of *A*—absent her awareness of her doing just this. Her action is not something already there for her to pick up on, something that *causes* her awareness of it, but something that is what it is through her having this awareness of it. Naturally, seeing this left us with this question: does a subject's bodily awareness play a similar role in that of which it is an awareness?

Perceptualists, of course, answer this with a resounding “No.” And, as we saw, part of this has to do with something obvious: there is a clear way in which a subject's bodily awareness does not constitute its object. A subject's body might come to be in the position that it's in in any number of ways—through a collision with someone else that knocks her to the ground, through her tossing and turning in her sleep, through her own devising—but

however it comes to be positioned this way, she will have the same bodily awareness of it. Her awareness does not determine *how* it is she is positioned. This is something determined outside of her awareness. Perceptualists conclude from this that a subject's body is what it is entirely independently of her bodily awareness and that her awareness, when she has it, is a matter of her being *made* aware of what is already there. So, it, they think, can only be a form of perceptual awareness.

But, as we argued in the last chapter, perceptualists are wrong to draw this conclusion on this basis. There is a possibility that they've overlooked. It is true that a subject's bodily awareness does not constitute how it is she is positioned. But this is not the only way in which her awareness might have a role in constituting that of which it is an awareness. As we saw in the case of intentional action, a subject's awareness there does not just constitute her doing of *A* as a doing of *A*. It also constitutes her doing of *A* as *intentional*. It makes it something that is such as to be known by its subject and, at the same time, makes it so known. Couldn't it be the case, then, that in an analogous way, a subject's bodily awareness constitutes the bodily positions of which she is aware as *bodily* positions? Couldn't a subject's bodily awareness be what makes her body a *body*? If this were the case, this awareness could not be perceptual. A subject's bodily positions would not be what they are independent of her awareness of them. They could not simply cause her awareness of them. This, then, sets the task for the present chapter. We need to show that a subject's bodily awareness in fact plays this constitutive role.

This, I recognize, is a considerable task. It can be hard to see at the outset how bodily awareness could so much as have such a role. A subject's body, after all, is something composed of flesh and bone. It is something that is open to empirical study and explanation. Describing all of its constituent biological structures and functions seems to be all there could be to describing *it*. A body, in short, seems to be a physical object like any other, another bit of the mind-independent world. It does not seem that there could be room for any such dependence on its subject. So, it is no surprise, one might think, that perceptualists have

never considered this possibility. It isn't one that they need trouble themselves with.

But this, as I will argue, is mistaken. A body is *as such a subject's* body. We get that the idea that things are otherwise—that a subject's body is just a physical object like any other—because we can abstract from a body's being a subject's. We can, at least to an extent, think and reason about such a body without needing to think of it as being a subject's. But, as I will argue, we should recognize this for what it is—an abstraction. We get what a subject's body is in full view only when we recognize that such a body is constitutively a subject's, when we recognize that this body's being what it is is not independent of her. I mean this in two respects. First, a subject's body is not some further object to which she stands in some intimate relation. It isn't anything apart from her. Her having a body is not a matter of her standing in relation to some independently circumscribable thing. To speak of *someone's body* is to speak of nothing other than *her*. Second, what a subject has when she has a body is a distinctive set of properties and capacities, and these properties and capacities are not just ones she has in being physical or even in being alive. They are properties and capacities she has *in being a subject*, among them the bodily awareness she has of herself. A subject qualifies as having a body, I will argue, not simply in taking up space or in being a site of complex vital processes, but *in being present* in the space that she takes up. Properly understood, I will argue, having a body is a way of being a subject.

3.2

Perceptualists do not, despite converging on the idea that subjects' bodies are mind-independent, have much to say about such bodies apart from this. They do not venture to say what, more specifically, it is for something to be such a body.¹ But it can be hard to fault them for this.

¹Something, apart from the above, that might explain at least some perceptualists' reticence on this topic is thinking that *body* is in fact an empirical concept and thus one that we should leave to the relevant experts to define. This, for instance, seems to be Frédérique de Vignemont's attitude when she says: "By one's body, I shall assume one's body as defined in biology, and I shall not inquire further in the metaphysical question of what makes a body one's own" (de Vignemont 2012, 224fn). But there is, I think, something confused about taking this attitude towards this concept in particular. There is, of course, much that we can learn from physiologists, and they, in telling us about their area of expertise, may even use the words 'human body' to

After all, the idea that our bodies are no different—or at least, not much different—from other worldly objects has an established history.² It is not surprising, then, to see a perceptualist like M.G.F. Martin state this about the body so flat-footedly and suggest it as a reason for thinking that bodily awareness is perceptual: “When you feel an ache in your left ankle, it is your ankle that feels a certain way, that aches. Now ankles are no less components of the physical world than are rocks, lions, tables, and chairs. [...] bodily sensation is no less concerned with aspects of the physical world—in this case one’s body—than are the experiences associated with the traditional five senses” (Martin 1995, p. 268).³

But in order to move this discussion forward, I take it, we need to have a better sense of what reasons there are for supposing that our bodies are mind-independent in this way. Only then can we see what this view of them really comes to and respond to it. To this end, then, I will enlist some help on perceptualists’ behalf. For, while perceptualists have not had much to say about what our bodies are, there are other philosophers who have. These philosophers’ main interest is in our identity over time and spelling out what we essentially are. It is in this context that they make claims about our bodies, and these claims, I think, provide good material for perceptualist arguments. In what follows, then, I will consider two kinds of cases that get discussed in connection with what we are and what certain

refer to this domain. But this, just in itself, hardly shows that what a human body is is a strictly empirical matter to be left up to physiologists and other such experts. In fact, if we were to consider what physiologists have to say against the background of certain ongoing discussions in the metaphysics of personal identity, I think that we would find that what physiologists are talking about is what such philosophers would call the *human organism*. And when it comes to saying what these (and other types of organisms) are, these philosophers are willing to defer to scientists. As, for instance, Eric Olson, even while writing about what being such organisms comes to, says at one point: “What is an organism? Ultimately it is the business of biologists to answer this question: it is roughly the same project as explaining the nature of life” (Olson 1999, p. 126). *However*, as we will see for ourselves in the discussion to follow, what a human body is and in what relation it stands to the human organism are still matters of considerable contention among these same philosophers. This concept, then, unlike the concept *organism* (at least if we are willing to go along with what’s commonly accepted within the relevant discussion), is *not* one that we can leave to physiologists (or other scientists) to work out. It is not in this sense an empirical concept.

²One need only look to Descartes to see this. He, for instance, says at one point that “...we can clearly and distinctly perceive the mind without the body and the body without the mind [...] the concept of body includes nothing at all which belongs to the mind” (Descartes 1984, p. 158).

³In this particular passage, Martin only mentions bodily sensation explicitly, but, like other perceptualists, he often treats our awareness of bodily position together with bodily sensation. See, for instance (Martin 1993). I take it, then, that there’s no reason for the point he makes here to not extend to our bodily awareness.

philosophers have had to say about them. I will explain how with each of these it can easily look as though a certain view of our bodies—one friendly to perceptualism—is a foregone conclusion. I will then show how in fact with each of them this is not the case. Doing this will remove certain obstacles to our being able to see how there could be room for anything other than perceptualism. This, then, will open the way to seeing how our bodies and our bodily awareness are constitutively tied.

3.3

To what, then, might perceptualists appeal in claiming that our bodies are physical objects like any other, that they do not constitutively depend on our bodily awareness for what they are? One obvious place to find assurance would be in certain cases that get discussed in the metaphysics of our identity—cases in which what we have (or at least seem to have) on our hands are bodies absent bodily awareness. Such cases seem to close off the possibility of our bodies' being anything other than ordinary physical objects. In this section and the next, I want to consider two such cases. I will argue that in neither of them are we compelled to think in this way.

The first case to consider is that of dead bodies. These, one might think, are an obvious example of bodies that exist absent any bodily awareness. Moreover, it can seem as though we have no choice but to think that these bodies are the very same as those that we have while we are alive. Many think this. They are led to it by thinking something like the following. *When anyone dies, she leaves behind a corpse, and there must be some story to tell about her body and that corpse. The only plausible story we can tell here is that someone's body and the corpse she leaves behind are identical and that dead is just one more way for a human body to be.* This would mean that *our* bodies, for a time, exist absent any bodily awareness and so could not depend on such awareness in being what they are. This, then, would make perceptualism true.

We can see such thinking about dead bodies on display when Lynne Rudder Baker writes:

“When I die, assuming normal circumstances, there will be a corpse. And that corpse will no longer constitute me, but it will still be an animal, a member of the species *homo sapiens*. (How could it be anything else?)” (Baker 2000, p. 208). Baker here is brief. But a lot, I take it, can be seen to be condensed in her parenthetical question. We might thus unpack it as follows. When a human body dies, what remains is still the same human body. Being dead is just another phase of this body’s existence. First, it is an embryonic body, then it enters infancy, and this is followed by adolescence, then maturity, and, eventually, senescence and death. This last still leaves us with the same body. For, just what else could the corpse be? It retains much of the same structure, matter, and physical integrity as the living body. All the processes constitutive of life, of course, cease. But this is not as dramatic a change as we might think. On death, one set of processes is simply replaced by another. It must be the same body that undergoes them. For, just what else could we say? We could say that the corpse is not the body, that the body ceases to exist at death. But the corpse is obviously *something*. So, if it isn’t the same as the body, then it seems that it would have to be something new, something that came into being with the passing of the body. But since the corpse shares so much with the living body, why would we think that? If a dead human body is not a human body, what, then, could it be? It is such thinking that leads Baker to claim: “A human body may be identified as a human body independently of whether it is Smith’s or any other person’s body. [...] a human body remains a human body whether alive or dead” (Baker 2000, p. 95). So, in looking to account for the relation between a subject’s living body and the corpse this subject leaves behind, Baker is led to think that they must be one and the same and, thus, that a human body is not as such a subject’s body but a separately identifiable thing to which she happens to stand in relation.

While Baker and those others who share her view are right about there being a need for *some* account—the corpse a subject leaves behind cannot be *unrelated* to her living body—theirs is not the only account to be had.⁴ We needn’t accept that a subject’s corpse

⁴This view is widespread, though not all like Baker think that a subject relates to the thing that is her body by constitution. See, for instance, (McMahan 1995), (Thomson 2008), (Ayers 1991, p. 224), (Carter

is identical to her living body to make sense of their being related. Their non-identity is not as Baker's parenthetical question would make it out to be.

We can see this in further considering the differences between the living and the dead. The line of argument above downplays these differences. There are serious discontinuities between, for instance, a deer struck and killed on the side of the road and the deer as it was just moments before. Baker, we can imagine, would emphasize that the dead deer, at least for a short time, retains much of the structure, matter, and physical integrity of the living deer. But none of the basic processes by which the living deer maintained these continues. In fact, with the onset of death, a whole other set of physico-chemical processes begin—those that we identify with decomposition. And this is not *just* to replace one set of processes with another. The kind of processes these are, the kind of explanation we can give of these processes—these change in such a way that what was there before cannot be the very same thing as what is there now.⁵

Consider: while it made sense to say of the living deer that it was digesting or perspiring or fighting an infection, it does not make sense to say anything of this kind of the dead deer. We could say, of course, that it was decomposing, but this is not something that the dead deer *does*. Decomposition is something that *happens* to the dead deer. It is not, that is, an *activity* of the dead deer, something for which we need the dead deer, as a whole, in view to make intelligible. It is not, for instance, like digestion. We cannot explain digestion in full without mention of the animal. We can explain much of what digestion consists in—the breakdown of plant matter by acid and enzymes, the uptake of glucose to the bloodstream—without such mention. But such processes, in isolation, do not amount to digestion. It is only when we see that these processes together nourish an animal, that they are connected to such things as feeding and growth, that we really get digestion in view.

This is not the case with the dead deer's decomposition. To get it in view, it suffices to consider tissues, or even individual cells, and their susceptibility to breakdown, as anaerobic

1984), and (Snowdon 2014).

⁵Others have defended something like this view. See (Olson 2004) and (Rosenberg 1983).

bacteria feed and multiply. If we invoke the dead deer as a whole, it would only be to mark that, in this case, the decomposition is of *this* particular physical body, that it is *this* that is losing what structure and physical integrity it still has. But, in general, decomposition is a process that is intelligible independent of consideration of a whole organism. It is the same process, whether it is just entrails decomposing or the whole dead deer decomposing. We needn't invoke the latter to understand the former. All that need be available to our thought is that there is organic matter breaking down. So, it is in this sense that the dead deer, unlike the living one, does nothing. It is no longer a locus of activity, of a certain kind of explanation.

But why should this matter to whether the dead deer and the living deer are one and the same? What does something's being subject to a certain form of explanation have to do with what it is? Living bodies, even as Baker recognizes, are bodies of a distinctive kind. She calls them bodies "of a special self-sustaining and self-organizing sort" (Baker 2000, 93fn). But their being bodies of this sort is tied to their being subject to the kind of explanation we characterized above. It is because the sorts of processes that go on in a living body have to be understood in relation to one another and in relation to it as a whole that this body counts as being distinctively self-sustaining and self-organizing. When one asks of such a body why *these* glands secrete *this* fluid or why *this* particular hormone is being released now, the explanation, even if given in biochemical terms, still rests on the basic thought that everything that goes on in this body, unless pathological, contributes in some way to the continuation of one or more of the other processes going on in it that together constitute its life. It is because these processes are so related, then, that such a body is of a distinctive kind, that the changes ongoing in it are not just ones happening to it but ones whose source is it. So, its being distinctive in this way cannot be separated from the kind of explanation to which it is subject. But all such explanation, as I've argued, ceases with death. A dead body undergoes changes, but these do not require appeal to it as a whole to be understood. If, then, we take seriously the thought that living bodies are distinctive in being self-sustaining,

self-organizing things—and, so, in being subject to a certain kind of explanation—we should recognize that this bears on their existence through and through. Once they cease being a locus of such explanation, they cease to be.

What, then, should we say about a subject's body and the corpse this subject leaves behind? Those who think that the two are identical are driven to this view in thinking that their non-identity would compel us to say that the corpse was something *completely new*, something that, as Jeff McMahan puts it, “pops into existence upon the death of the organism” (McMahan 1995, p. 99). And this would indeed be objectionable. But we needn't in fact say any such thing. If, as we've argued, a subject's body is the locus of a certain kind of activity—the kind of activity constitutive of the life of living things—then the corpse this subject leaves behind is not anything new, at least not anything objectionably new. It is something distinct from the subject's body. But it is also, in an important sense, what remains of this subject's body once all such activity ceases and there is no locus to speak of. It, that is, is vestigial—the body's matter in the absence of the self-organizing activity that helped to constitute it as such a body.

Where, then, does this discussion leave us? It does not, to be sure, rule out our bodies' being physical objects like any other. Even so, we've made progress. So long as we thought that the bodies we have and the corpses we'll leave behind had to be identical, it would be difficult to see how our bodies could be anything other than such objects. But if, as I've argued, the two are not identical, considerably less stands in the way of our seeing that things are in fact otherwise.

3.4

This leads us to the other case that might lead one to think that subjects' bodies are physical objects like any other. Even if one accepts that a subject's body is not identical to the corpse she leaves behind, one might still think that something's being such a body has nothing to do with its being any *subject's* and that one can still have a body without being a subject. One

might be led this way in considering some of the trauma that befalls human beings. Someone who, for instance, suffers severe and irreparable brain damage might remain alive for a long time afterwards but be left without any psychological capacities whatsoever (as is the case with someone in a persistent vegetative state). Such an individual, in being deprived of all but the most primitive brain functions, would hardly qualify as a subject any longer. She would certainly not have any bodily awareness of herself. But she would still have a body. This seems a plain fact. All that would be left of her, one could say, was this body, carrying on in the ways that it could. One might then think that, in order to preserve this plain fact, one has to hold that such bodies are constitutively independent of their being any subject's and so do not depend on our bodily awareness of them.

We can see something like this at work in Eric Olson's thinking.⁶ He takes seriously the thought that living things are essentially just that, *living* things. As he writes, "...an animal, or for that matter any organism, persists just in case its capacity to direct those vital functions that keep it biologically alive is not disrupted" (Olson 1999, p. 135). When it comes to us human beings, then, he thinks, this means that we can survive considerable injury and loss of function. In fact, all that our survival depends on, according to him, is our brainstem.

Human beings, then, on Olson's view, needn't retain any of their psychological capacities to go on existing. Someone who has lapsed into a persistent vegetative state will never regain consciousness. She, in effect, is no longer a psychological subject. But because such an individual in this condition would at least have an intact brainstem, she would, by Olson's lights, still be alive. She could not, of course, feed herself. But she would still be

⁶I say that we can see only *something like this* in Olson's thinking because, while he does think that human beings are essentially living things and thus that their psychological capacities are something they can do without, he does not think that anything about human *bodies* need follow from this. This is because he does not think that there is much sense to be made of the idea of such bodies, at least if they are to be understood as being anything distinct from human beings. He would prefer, then, that we stick to talk about human beings. We will get to this aspect of his view in the section that follows. For now, what matters is this: one could share Olson's view of human beings without sharing his view of bodies. One is not compelled in thinking that human beings are essentially living things to think that no sense can be made of their also having bodies.

able to engage in some of the most basic self-directed activities constitutive of human life. She could still, for example, breathe, digest, and fight off infection all on her own. So, if fitted with a feeding tube, she could, in an admittedly bare sense, *keep herself* alive. Such an individual, then, could, as Olson says, “survive the permanent loss of all [her] mental capacities and continue to exist [...] could cease to be a person, in this sense of the term, without thereby ceasing to exist” (Olson 1999, p. 24). Now, Olson himself here stops short of saying anything specifically about human bodies. But one could easily pick up where he leaves off. An individual in this condition would be someone who had a body while no longer being a subject. This, again, seems a plain fact. It would seem to stand to reason, then, that subjects’ bodies are not *as such* subjects’ bodies and certainly not dependent on their subjects’ awareness of them. They are what they are quite independently of all this.

Now, we should, rest assured, want to preserve this plain fact. There seems very little that speaks in favor of thinking that someone would *lose* her body, were she to suffer the kind of trauma that would leave her in a persistent vegetative state. Such trauma, arguably, would not destroy her body. Much of the basic self-directed activity that maintains it as such a body would continue on. The metaphysical line thus seems rightly drawn at death and not before.

But it can be hard to see how it is possible for me to maintain this, when what I want to say is that having a body is constitutively tied to our bodily awareness. After all, what we’re faced with in this kind of case is someone that lacks all the capacities that make subjects subjects. So, why should we think that having a body has anything to do with having bodily awareness? It would be better to say, one might think, that what we have in such a case is someone’s body and that its having the kind of basic self-organizing, self-sustaining capacities that it does is what makes it such a body. These seem to be the capacities that are minimally required for it to count as such. So, this must be what something’s being a body comes to. It is something like this, one might think, that has to underwrite the plain fact from above.

But we needn't accept this explanation of this kind of case. There is still room to think that bodies and bodily awareness are constitutively tied. We can begin to see how if we consider something about this case that the above explanation overlooks. What we have in this kind of case is a human being who has lost her psychological capacities, and insofar as this is the case, she is considerably diminished as a human being. Things are not as they should be with her. Recognizing this in particular opens another way of explaining the plain fact from above that needs to be explained. We can still say that this human being has a body, not because she exemplifies all that it is to have a body, but because she qualifies as having a body in an *impaired* way. Now, how does understanding such an individual's circumstances in this way help to make room for my maintaining that there is a constitutive connection between having a body and having bodily awareness? It does so by providing an explanation for how an individual can count as having a body while nonetheless lacking some of what is constitutive of having one.

Consider, more generally, what goes into judging that some or other individual is impaired in a certain respect. Veterinarians, field biologists, and other such experts make such judgements all the time. They judge of a given individual that its lungs are underdeveloped, that it is missing a toe, that its eyesight is poor. In making such judgements, they rely on a standard. But what furnishes this standard? Presumably, it is the *kind* to which the relevant individual belongs that does the furnishing. It determines what parts and properties its members ought to have—for example, in the case of cattle, four stomach compartments, cloven hooves, color vision with such-and-such a degree of acuity, etc.—and, in so doing, allows one to understand and judge an individual accordingly.

Importantly, this means that kind membership does not just determine what parts and properties an individual ought to have but, also, what parts and properties a given individual does have. In order for one to judge, for instance, that an individual's lungs are underdeveloped, this individual must, as a matter of fact, have lungs. But in a case in which things have gone terribly wrong developmentally, there may not be much for one to go on

physiologically. Structure, placement, and functionality—or, more likely, lack thereof—may not be enough to fix what it is one is looking at. Just going on these alone, one might not be able to say whether the part in question is a lung or, say, a swim bladder. But individual physiology is not all that one has to go on. Because the individual is a cow, say, and not a cowfish, one can rule out all sorts of things, including the part's being a swim bladder. So, kind membership has a role in determining what parts an individual does or does not have. A part may count as a lung, even if it is hardly recognizable as such, because the individual whose part it is belongs to a kind whose members have lungs. The part, then, would count as a lung—even if it will never inflate or pass oxygen on to the bloodstream—because of its owner's relation to the kind in question. It, in short, could be a lung without ever getting to perform any of the functions that define lungs and make them what they are.⁷

Turning, then, to human beings, we can, in confronting the kind of case we've been imagining, say this. A human being who has lost all upper-brain functionality and, with it, her psychological capacities, is undeniably diminished as a member of her kind.⁸ Her existence is not as it ought to be. So, as plain a fact as it is that a human being in this condition still has a body, it is not one that can reliably tell us much about what having a body comes to. Such an individual might still have a body only because at least some of what constitutes her body as such a body still exists—for example, the structures of muscle and bone that make up her limbs—and because *human beings have bodies*.⁹ Her having a body

⁷Much in my thinking here I owe to Michael Thompson's *Life and Action*. See, in particular, (Thompson 2008, pp. 58-62).

⁸To be clear, such an individual is no less a human being than any of us is and so deserves to be treated with the same kind of basic respect and consideration as any other human being. I do not mean for what I say here to have any consequences for how we treat human beings with cognitive or physical disabilities. I think that such individuals should be treated in accordance with what they are, viz., *human beings*.

⁹Above, I use the case of an individual in a persistent vegetative state to illustrate how, on my view, it is possible to hold that our bodies are constitutively subjects' bodies while acknowledging that there can be cases in which an individual plainly has a body without being a subject. I could, however, just as easily have drawn on a different kind of case, such as anencephaly (a condition that prevents much of a fetus' skull and brain from ever developing), where the individual *was never a subject* and will never become one. Such an individual still has a body. It does not matter that she will never have any awareness of it. She still counts as having a body in belonging to the kind *human being*. It is because she belongs to the kind that the structure of muscle, skin, and bone that is her body can be understood as such, even while lacking any subjectivity. The explanation in this case does not differ from the one given above. Even though someone who ends up in a persistent vegetative state is someone who, unlike the individual with anencephaly, *once*

is in part underwritten by her being a human being. We cannot assume, then, that what we get from her case is the full picture of what constitutes a body. Though a case like hers can help in showing what might minimally be involved in someone's having a body, showing what is minimally involved is not the same in this case as showing what is constitutively involved, as showing what having a body amounts to. For this, we have to consider human beings more widely.

I recognize that often when philosophers talk about what it is for something to be of a given kind they are just talking about what something must have in all cases if it is to be at all of that kind. When, for instance, Kripke considers what it is for something to be gold, he is interested only in those properties that something *must* have in order to be gold. These properties, whatever they are, are gold's necessary properties. All the others it has are only "external" (Kripke 1972, p. 120) or "superficial properties" (Kripke 1972, p. 124).

I don't think, however, that we need limit our talk in this way. While it may make sense when trying to distinguish instances of one natural kind from another—say, gold from fool's gold—to focus only on those properties that the one necessarily has, such properties, I take it, are not the only ones we might be interested in when trying to understand what it is for something to be of a given kind. There are, that is, properties that, while not present in all things of a given kind, are not, when they are in fact present, accidental to things of this kind. These are properties like those I mentioned above—*four-legged* in cows, *omnivorous* in bears. They are properties through which things of a given kind *come into view as things of this kind*. They are thus, I think, more than just characteristic properties. They are constitutive. They reveal in a real sense something about what it is to be of that kind. It's this sort of thing that I mean to get into view when it comes to our bodies.

Where, then, does this discussion leave us as far as the bigger picture is concerned? We've seen now that this second kind of case does not force the conclusion that our bodies are physical objects like any other. It is true that a human being who has no psychological

was a subject, this fact about her is not operative in the explanation of why she counts as having a body.

capacities whatsoever still counts as having a body. But this needn't be because there's no more to a body than a living structure of muscle and bone like the one that this human being still has. Such a human being, after all, is considerably impaired as a human being. She might have what one minimally has to have in order to have a body. But this does not mean that what she has is *all* there is to having a body. What we've done at this point, then, is made room—however slight—for a different kind of view. What we need to do now is widen what space we've made and say more about what this view comes to and what speaks for it.

3.5

We have, until now, gone along with a certain way of articulating what perceptualism is committed to when it comes to our bodies, and so, of what it is I mean to take issue with. Perceptualists, we've said, are committed to thinking that our bodies are physical objects like any other and that our bodily awareness is thus a way we have of coming to grips with another bit of the mind-independent world. This way of articulating things is, I think, fine up to a certain point. It captures in general terms what it is I think is up for dispute here and does so in a way that perceptualists themselves would recognize. But, as I will explain now, I do not think that this way we've been articulating things will withstand careful metaphysical scrutiny. So, before we can move on with the discussion, we will need to do some work to reframe it.

Just what is it in what we've been saying that will not withstand careful metaphysical scrutiny? We can begin to see by considering the following question: what exactly is the body that each of us has supposed to be? We have, throughout, proceeded as though there were a clear answer to this question, even if it went unspecified. But I don't think that it's obvious that there is such an answer. What, after all, could a body be such that it was something that each of us *had*? We would have less trouble with this question if we thought, for instance, that we were immaterial souls. Then one's body would be that thing to which

one stood in particularly intimate relation—that thing whose arms one could move at will, out of whose eyes one saw, and so on. This is what the ‘having’ of having a body would come to—a certain way of relating to something distinct from us. But most of us, perceptualists included, do not think that our bodies are something to which we merely stand in relation. We think that our bodies are *in some sense* a part of us.¹⁰ But I think that it can be hard to see what this could mean. Each of us certainly has parts—a brain, knees, toes—but a body, surely, is not one among these parts. If anything, a body would be what these parts compose. But, then, is there anything that we would count as a part of us that we would also not want to count as a part of our bodies? This line of thinking pushes us away from the idea that our bodies are anything we have.

One might think that the way to go from here is to say that our bodies are what we in fact are. All of our everyday talk—our talk of our bodies as *ours*, as something that each of us *has*—is mistaken. There is no distinguishing between us and our bodies. But I don’t think that this can be right either. This is because there is a better candidate for what each of us is out there, namely, a human being. It is human beings who seem to have the brains and knees and toes that we think we have. It is, moreover, human beings who can most plausibly be said to think, read books, take walks, and do all the other things that we take ourselves to be able to do. So, once we count human beings as being among the things there are out there, there seems to be little reason to suppose that what we are are bodies and not human beings.¹¹

But where, then, does this leave our bodies? If they’re neither what we are nor a part of what we are, what could they possibly be? What have we been talking about all this time? It can start to look as though there is something defective about the very idea of a human

¹⁰Perceptualists are not concerned with whether in bodily awareness what we are aware of is in fact ourselves. They seem happy to grant that we are. They are concerned, rather, with the *character* of our bodily awareness. Consider, for instance, what M.G.F. Martin says: “Now if we are not Cartesians, there is little inclination to distinguish between this object [one’s body] and oneself. But to grant this is not yet to grant that the object in question is presented as oneself [...] It is this further claim that we should reject” (Martin 1995, p. 285).

¹¹I mean for this statement to be neutral between the view that we are persons constituted by human animals and the view that in fact we are such animals. See footnote 5 above.

body and that there is nowhere for our bodies to fit. But this would only be the case if what we were committed to was looking for some *further object* that our bodies had to be. What do I mean by this? I mean that we should not expect to be able to identify something other than ourselves to which our talk of our bodies could refer. Talk about someone's body is talk about nothing other than *her*. But this, to be clear, is not to say that what someone is is her body. The words 'someone's body' do not pick her out by picking out the thing that she is. They, rather, give us a different way of talking about her *in a certain respect*.

The easiest way to see what I mean is to consider a somewhat parallel case—the case of our minds and what talk of our minds comes to. We often speak of the mind that someone has, of her having a sharp or unparalleled or methodical mind. Now, in doing so, we do not, I take it, mean that there is some object to which she stands in some relation, something that is itself sharp or unparalleled or methodical. She, of course, has a brain, something without which she could not be any of these things. Still, it is *she* of whom we mean to speak. As Ryle, for instance, says, “To talk of a person's mind [...] is to talk of the person's abilities, liabilities, and inclinations to do and undergo certain sorts of things, and of the doing and undergoing of these things in the ordinary world” (Ryle 2002, p. 199). The sense in which someone has a mind is not the sense in which she might have an organ or some other constituent part. She has a mind inasmuch as she has certain capacities—reason, memory, volition, feeling, and so on. Talk of our bodies, I think, should be understood in a similar way. It is talk of ourselves under a certain aspect. And we can talk about ourselves in this way not because there is some *thing* that each of us has but because we have certain properties and capacities. This, in the most general terms, is what I think having a body comes to.¹²

¹²There are other philosophers who have made similar claims, and I take some cues from them. See, for instance, (Hacker 2012), (Olson 1999), (Olson 2006), (Rosenberg 1983), and (van Inwagen 1980). These others, I take it, see themselves as making a deflationary point. Consider Jay Rosenberg's saying that the bodies that we can be said to 'have' are “not things or entities in their own right” but “merely nominal objects, that is, illusions of linguistic appearance” (Rosenberg 1983, p. 58). I think that what Rosenberg says here is not inconsistent with what I am saying. Expressions like 'someone's body' do not refer. While we can use them to talk about ourselves and other human beings, they do not, strictly speaking, pick out any object. There is no thing designated by the words 'someone's body' that any of us could have or be.

This points us towards a way of rethinking what's at issue with perceptualism. There is no object called 'a body' of which each of us is aware in bodily awareness. Such an object, then, cannot be what concerns perceptualists. What we are in fact aware of are fingers, knees, toes, and the like—certain parts of a human being. It is these parts and their relation to bodily awareness that are at issue. But what, then, of our bodies? Do they drop out of the discussion entirely? I don't think that they should. For, even though the parts of which someone is aware in bodily awareness do not compose anything that we could call 'her body', it seems that they have a role to play in allowing her to qualify for talk of having one. It is in her having these parts, among others, that she can be said to have a body. What we should ask, then is this. What is it about someone's having these parts that allows her to count as having a body? What properties and capacities does she have in having them that allow her to count as such?

The perceptualist position rethought in these terms thus concerns having a body and the role of certain of our parts in this. Having a body, according to the perceptualist, does not constitutively depend on having bodily awareness of certain of our parts. Someone can have these parts, and so, have a body, without having any such awareness of them. (This, for instance, is exactly what we see in the case of someone in a persistent vegetative state.) These parts, while parts of her, do not depend on her awareness. They are constituents of the mind-independent world, and her having them suffices for having a body. This, then, is the view that I will contend with from here on out.

All of this is fine. But Rosenberg's putting things as he does here can make it sound as though this were the end of the story, that having seen the "illusion" for what it is, there is nothing further to be said. We've recognized a quirk of how we speak in certain contexts, and that's that. But I don't think that this is how we should see the situation. While expressions like 'someone's body' may not refer, this does not mean that they fail to track anything significant. Obviously, in the case of our minds, there is quite a lot to be said and thought through, even though our minds are not things. We should see the point being made, then, as opening an inquiry rather than closing one. It is a starting point for considering what is captured by our talk of having bodies, for thinking about just what about us makes us qualify for such talk.

3.6

Two sections ago, I was able to make some room for my view. Faced with a case of someone who could still be said to have a body while lacking any awareness of herself whatsoever—the case of someone in a persistent vegetative state—I argued as follows. We cannot conclude from this kind of case (or others like it) that what having a body comes to is just what we see here. While someone in this condition certainly still has a body, her condition is one of considerable impairment. She might have what is minimally involved in having a body. But we should not assume that this is the same as what is constitutively involved. Cases of impairment are to be understood on the background of more standard cases. These, then, are the cases we should turn to.

This makes some room for my view, but the room that is made is not much. In fact, this room, it can seem, is bound to be swallowed up almost as soon as it is opened. For, perceptualists, I think, have a reply close at hand. In this section, I will spell out this reply on their behalf, which will reveal more fully what their view of having a body really comes to. Then I will show what goes amiss with it. This will allow us to see finally how someone's having a body does in fact depend on the capacities she has as a subject.

How, then, does the perceptualist reply go? Even in a more standard case, they can insist, where someone does have bodily awareness of herself, her having a body nonetheless consists in her having the kinds of parts that she does—a head, knees, toes, and so on as well as all of the internal systems that connect, coordinate, and support these parts' functioning—independently of this awareness. They can insist, in short, that what is minimally involved in having a body is the same as what is constitutively involved. So long as this subject's parts remain attached to her and remain caught up in the self-organizing activity that constitutes her life, she has a body, and this is all that having a body ever comes to. To have a body is to have a physiology, to have the parts and capacities that make one a living being. This is reflected in our talk about our bodies. When we say that someone's body is failing her, for instance, or that it isn't cooperating with her today, we are talking about her health,

her physiological functioning. The features of hers that this talk brings to our attention are entirely physical ones.¹³

Now, someone in a persistent vegetative state is, no doubt, impaired as a human being. But this, as perceptualists will say, is a case of *psychological* impairment. The brain damage she's suffered has caused the loss of the capacities that made her a subject. But her basic physiological functions continue more or less as they always have. Moreover, the parts of which she was once aware in bodily awareness seem just fine. Her arms, her legs, and so on are just as they were prior to her being in this state. They are still the same structures of muscle, skin, and bone. The cells of which they are composed are still engaged in the same metabolic activity. Were she still able to form intentions involving these parts of hers, were she still able to will such intentions to come about, these parts would still work, would still move at her will and so on. There seems, in short, to be nothing wrong with *them*. They do not seem affected by her condition. This points, then, to her body's being intact. All that goes into her having a body, that is, all the parts and processes that amount to her having one, survive. So, being in a persistent vegetative state, perceptualists will say, does not impair her in a bodily way but only psychologically.

What are we to say to this? Perceptualists, I think, simply miss all that there is to having a body. They focus on some of what is involved in having one but fail to see the rest. What's missing, I think, is something that we should find familiar. It is something that figures in lots of philosophers' discussions of our bodies and, in this way, shows itself to be central to our understanding of them. It just tends to get tangled up in questionable metaphysics. But such metaphysics are something from which we can extricate it.

To see what I mean, let me point to one example of this. In his 'Where Am I?', Daniel Dennett presents us with a fantastical tale in which he, having gotten himself involved in a

¹³I don't think that this is in fact true. I grant that *most* of our talk of our bodies does tend to abstract from our psychological features and that this could give one the impression that *all* body talk is talk of our physical or physiological features. See, for instance, (Olson 2017) and (Rosenberg 1983, p. 73). We can easily enough, however, come up with counterexamples, like, "She'd had such an expressive body" said of a dancer. (Hacker 2012) also provides some examples involving sensation. So, I don't think that we can even grant the perceptualist this point.

secret government project, ends up a brain in a vat. He is still, however, linked to what used to be the rest of him via an array of sophisticated radio transmitters so that he can perform the dangerous task he was assigned. Now, I think that where Dennett wants to take us with this scenario is misguided. We are meant, for example, to think that Dennett still has a body, that this is made the case by his still being remotely connected to what used to be the rest of him. I don't think that this can be right.¹⁴ But this way of looking at the scenario is, I think, at least at some level compelling. What is of interest to us is *why*. Consider, then, what Dennett says when he first confronts the strangeness of his new-found circumstances:

... I thought to myself: "Well, here I am, sitting on a folding chair, staring through a piece of plate glass at my own brain...But wait," I said to myself, "should I have thought, 'Here I am, suspended in a bubbling fluid, being stared at by my own eyes'?" I tried to think this latter thought. I tried to project into the tank, offering it hopefully to my brain, but I failed to carry off the exercise with any conviction. [...] Most puzzling and confusing. Being a philosopher of firm physicalist conviction, I believed unswervingly that the tokening of my thoughts was occurring somewhere in my brain: yet when I thought "Here I am," where the thought occurred to me was here, outside the vat, where I, Dennett, was standing staring at my brain (Dennett 1978, p. 312).

When reading this in an unreflective mode, I think, it is tempting to say that Dennett still has a body. Even though he is entirely detached from what was once the rest of him—it can be in Tulsa, while he is in Houston—it is still his body. Now, if we take seriously what I've previously said, this can't be true. But I want us to consider why, nonetheless, it can be tempting to think this way. What is it about this scenario that makes us want to say that this empty shell is still Dennett's body? To the extent that we are at least willing to entertain this idea, I think, it is because Dennett *still locates himself where this shell is*. He sees out of its eyes, moves its limbs, and so on. It is where he *experiences* himself as being,

¹⁴As will become evident later on in this section, I do think that having agency over certain parts and having proprioceptive awareness of them is central to what having a body involves. However, these, on my view, are *not* criteria for picking out which object it is we should call 'one's body'. As, I think, for example (Olson 1999, pp. 142-153) has shown, trying to understand expressions like 'my body' in this way is hopeless. Going along with such criteria will not in fact get at what we mean in speaking of our bodies.

even if he knows this can't be so. This is what does the work here such that we can be drawn into thinking that Dennett still has a body. It does not seem to matter that he in fact is in one place and this shell another. It does not seem to matter that he and this shell no longer form a single living unit. The psychological connection between them seems enough.

Now, we can't, of course, just embrace this conclusion as is. This is a picture on which a subject is one thing and her body another. But we needn't do anything of the sort to see that there is still something to it. It is not enough for something to have a physiology for it to have a body. Something that is alive but unaware of where it itself is does not count as such. Sea sponges, oak trees, paramecia—these are all living things and take up space in the distinctive manner in which living things do. They draw particles in from their surroundings into the self-organizing activity that constitutes their lives. They thereby make what was other than them a part of them. They, in this way, *have an environment* from which they are distinct in a way that non-living things are not. But this does not mean that they have bodies. Having a body is not just a matter of being alive. It is not even a matter of being alive and being a subject (as one might think is the case with Dennett's brain in the above scenario). Rather, it is a matter of being present as a subject in a certain way—of being *present in the space that one takes up*.¹⁵ (This, I take it, is what Dennett nearly captures.)

What, then, does this come to? One's capacities for perception and action are quite obviously ways in which one is so present. One's perceiving what's around one helps to experientially orient one where one in fact is. It places one there in one's surroundings. One's being able to act, in turn, directs one outwards. One's being able to move parts of oneself at will means that one can intervene in the things around one, shaping them to fit one's aims, one's desires. One, in this way, gets a foothold in the world. But having these capacities, I want to say, does not just in itself suffice for being present in the relevant sense. One's having bodily awareness of oneself matters equally in this. In presenting one with one's

¹⁵I do not have much to say on where exactly we ought to draw the line between subjects and non-subjects, but I am happy for the threshold to be set rather low. Even so, I recognize that it is likely the case that at least a few animals will not count as having bodies on my view. Their capacities are just too primitive for them to qualify as subjects and, so, of the sort to have bodies. This, I think, I can just accept.

parts as *one's*, it places one *in* these very parts. It makes them that from which one orients oneself outwards. It makes one's taking up the space one does the having of a perspective on what's around one. It is in having all of these capacities, then, that one is present in this space. This is what one's having a body comes to.

What, then, do we say to the perceptualist who insists that someone's losing her bodily awareness is a form of psychological impairment only and that the parts of which this subject was once aware are just as they were before? This loss is a psychological loss. But having a body, as I have tried to show, is not separate from having a mind. Having a body, to be sure, involves having parts. (These parts, it's worth emphasizing again, do not compose anything called 'someone's body'.) But it is also a matter of having certain capacities—being able to move some of these parts at will and experience through bodily awareness these parts' condition. What someone has when she has a body, then, is certain parts—limbs, sense organs, and the other structures that connect, coordinate, and support these parts' functioning—but her having these parts is not constitutively independent of her having these capacities. *Having* here is having certain kinds of parts *in* having certain capacities. Someone's limbs, for instance, only count as limbs because they are such as to be moved at will and because she is such as to experience what they undergo just in their undergoing it. Losing her bodily awareness, then, would *not* leave these parts as they were. They would be impaired as limbs.

So, while we do often enough use the word 'body' when it is something physical or physiological about someone that interests us, we are mistaken if we think that that is all there is to bodies. To get someone's body into view is not just to get something with a physiology into view or to get it into view physiologically. It is, as I've said, to get *someone* into view inasmuch as she has certain kinds of parts and, so, certain psychological capacities. There is, then, in fact considerable overlap between having a body and having a mind. Feeling and agency are, at least in our case, at the core of both of them. This, I want to suggest, is because being bodily is a part of the way in which we are minded, even if it is not all that

our mindedness consists in.

There is, of course, much more to be said about a subject's bodily awareness in particular and the role that it plays in her having a body. Given what we have set out to do, it is crucial that we settle the following. What is so important about bodily awareness in particular that it should be considered as one of the capacities essential to having a body? What would a subject lose if she lost it? Why would it not be enough for a subject to be able to perceive and act for her to have a body? This is what we will do in the chapter that follows.

3.7

What we've said about our bodies in this chapter allows us to speak to something that we were not in a position to when it initially came up. This, then, is something we should turn to now before moving on.

Back in Chapter 2, one of the obstacles we confronted was this: it seems perfectly possible that someday one might find oneself proprioceptively connected (via radio transmitters, say) to someone else's body and that one would thereby be provided with proprioceptive awareness of this body much in the same way that one is now one's own. If this were even in principle possible—at least described as such—this would mean that our bodily awareness is perceptual, since it would show that one could, through one's proprioceptive capacity, stand in the same relation to other bodies that one does one's own. This capacity would be one for revealing the spatial disposition of bodies *generally*. One happens to only be aware of one's own body because this is as far as one's proprioceptors reach. But this reach is something that could be extended.

Now, this obstacle was one we dealt with. While the possibility of being proprioceptively connected to another is in a sense an intelligible one, we argued, it is not to be understood as perceptualists describe. They describe it as a case in which one's awareness *extends* to someone else's body, making one's relation to it through this capacity much the same as one's relation to one's own. But this is not right. As we argued, because of the way in which

one's proprioceptive awareness is structured, it presents that of which it is an awareness *as a part of one*, and this is not something that could change—even if one routinely found oneself proprioceptively connected to another's body and knew that this was what was happening to one. A case in which one is proprioceptively connected to someone else's body is properly described as a case of proprioceptive *illusion*, since what one is presented with in it will seem to one to be oneself, even if one knows that it is not. Being so connected, then, is an intelligible possibility, but it is not a way of extending the reach of one's awareness. So, there being this possibility, we argued, hardly establishes that our awareness is perceptual.

But, as we acknowledged at the time, arguing as we did raised certain issues that we'd need to address at some point. One of these came to this. Something apart from a subject's proprioceptive awareness must be what determines which body is hers, for it's only then that there can be any distinction between veridical and illusory proprioceptive experiences. And without this, there is no arguing as we did above. A subject's being proprioceptively aware of a body cannot be what makes it hers. In this respect, this awareness is rather unlike the forms of self-awareness with which we are already familiar. What is it that instead determines which body is a subject's, and why should things be this way in this case? It can seem that this is just a position we are forced into, given our commitments. It isn't at all obvious that it hangs together.

At the time, we left it at this. But having said what we have in this chapter, we can certainly respond now. The above question, as we should see, is in a way ill-conceived. Because a body is not a further thing, not something that a subject has, there is, strictly speaking, no account to be given about makes such a body a subject's. Speaking about a subject's body is just a way of speaking about her. Where her body begins and ends, then, is just where *she* begins and ends. There are no separate criteria for picking it out. So, what determines whether a proprioceptive connection will yield veridical experiences is whether the subject in question is connected to herself—to this here human being. There is, then, nothing mysterious about why a subject's awareness can't itself determine whether

what she's connected to through it is hers. It is because having a body is not a matter of having any further thing. What belongs to a subject's body just derives from what belongs to her, and this will be determined by factors outside of her proprioceptive awareness.¹⁶ Our saying what we did, then, back in Chapter 2—about the bounds of a subject's body's being determined by something other than her proprioceptive awareness, about the possibility of proprioceptive illusion—is not just something we were forced into by the kind of cross-wiring case perceptualists brought before us. Seeing what it is that having a body comes to, as we have in this chapter, gives us independent reasons for taking this stance.¹⁷

¹⁶Suppose, for instance, that what being a human being comes to is being a certain kind of animal. Whether something counts as a part of a given human being (and so as a part of her body) will, then, I take it, have something to do with whether it is caught up in the ongoing vital activity that makes up her life. What she is or is not proprioceptive aware of will be besides the point.

¹⁷This, we should note, does not settle everything that came up at the end of Chapter 2. There still a question about what to say about the fact that something outside a subject's proprioceptive awareness of herself determines whether what she is aware of is hers. This, as we acknowledged back in Chapter 2, seems to threaten the status of this awareness as a form of self-awareness. This is because it seems a part of something's being a form of self-awareness—at least if we look to something like our typical awareness of our intentional actions—that it make that of which the subject is aware *hers*. We will only be in a position to take this up properly when we get to Chapter 5, so further discussion will have to wait.

Chapter 4

Deafferentation and the Unity of a Subject's Perspective

4.1

What is it about bodily awareness specifically that makes it essential to a subject's having a body? In the preceding chapter, we came to see that having a body was a matter of a subject's having a certain set of interconnected powers which includes not just her bodily awareness but her powers to perceive and act. And having accepted this much, it is not hard to see why the latter powers ought to belong to this set. To have a body just is to lead a distinctive kind of existence, one that is outwardly directed in just the ways for which perception and action allow. It is to be, at the very least, able to register one's surroundings and, on this basis, intervene in them in a way that goes beyond mere blind tendency. It is to be, in being so capable, *present* in one's surroundings and not just *there* taking up space. Perceiving and acting are thus indissociable from this kind of existence. It is less obvious, however, what contribution bodily awareness makes. Why should a subject require just this kind of awareness of herself in order to lead this kind of existence? What is so distinctive about it such that it deserves a place amid our essential bodily powers?

One approach to answering this would be to try to draw a straight line between a subject's having bodily awareness and her being able to engage in bodily action, to claim that the one is necessary for the other. This is the approach that, for instance, Brian O'Shaughnessy takes to relating these two powers:

Consider a situation in which a man's right arm does not in this primitive way immediately seem to its owner to be postured in *any* particular way, indeed does not even seem to be *there*. Then irrespective of whether he vividly sees that arm, and knows with certainty exactly how it is spatially disposed, such a man is *not in a position* to basically or immediately or no-how move it (O'Shaughnessy 1989, p. 39).

And what O'Shaughnessy says here can seem to fit our experience. For, bodily awareness gives a subject her limbs in such a way that they feel to her to be *hers*. It can seem, then, that it is in their being so given that they are hers with which to act. Just seeing her limbs, by contrast, does not seem to suffice. Seeing things puts them out in the world, puts them out among the things on which this subject might act. Her seeing her limbs, then, does not seem to connect these limbs to her agency in the right way. Only bodily awareness, we might think, can do this—give them to her so that they are there for her to exercise her agency *through* and not simply *on*.

But the relation between these powers, arguably, cannot be as straightforward as this. The kind of proprioceptive loss O'Shaughnessy imagines is something that in fact happens to people. But, as it turns out, it does not affect them as he thought it would. Though it happens rarely, viral infections can cause autoimmune reactions that attack the peripheral nervous system in a highly selective manner, destroying the afferent nerve pathways that underpin our proprioceptive capacity. This leaves affected subjects permanently *deafferented*. In this condition, subjects no longer have proprioceptive awareness of or much feeling in the parts of their bodies affected by the neuropathy. (This means that subjects in this condition also lose their sense of touch.) But because the condition does not affect the efferent nerves—those that carry motor signals from the brain—it is still possible for subjects to recover the ability to act with those parts that they can no longer proprioceptively feel. There are a few well-documented cases of deafferented subjects. Ian Waterman's is one of them—probably the most well-known and extensively studied—and it illustrates this vividly.

Waterman, in early adulthood, lost all proprioceptive capacity from his collar-line on

down. In the immediate aftermath, he was bedridden and unable to do almost anything for himself. Though he could move his limbs, these movements were uncontrolled. They were not actions so much as they were attempts at action. But, over time and with monumental effort and determination on his part, Waterman was able to regain an astonishing degree of motor capacity—enough to be able to get out of bed, walk, dress himself, and perform all the other tasks required to lead a more or less independent life—despite his proprioceptive deficit. His strategy has involved compensating for this deficit with his eyes. So long as he can see the parts of his body with which he intends to act, he can move them in a controlled, if somewhat stilted manner, maintaining their position or directing their movement as needed. (His movements, otherwise, tend to be inaccurate, since he has to rely on memory and initiate movement based on where he *thinks* the relevant limb is presently located. The limb, furthermore, may not be exactly where he last left it. Without the benefit of visual feedback, his limbs tend to drift from their positions.) His movements thus constitute basic bodily actions in much the way our own do. They are deliberate movements—reachings, raisings, wavings, graspings—he can make without doing anything else. Waterman’s case shows, then, that basic action with a limb in the absence of proprioceptive awareness of it is possible. A subject can compensate for this absence with visual awareness of the limb.¹

In the face of this case, then, O’Shaughnessy’s approach can appear not only to be wrong but completely outsized. Bodily awareness, as distinctive a form of awareness as it seems to us to be, cannot have so important a role in the life of a bodily subject, if vision can just step in in its absence. This, anyway, seems to be the position of philosophers who have recently drawn on Waterman’s case.² The case shows us that, whatever bodily awareness’ role, it will have to be much diminished from anything like the role O’Shaughnessy envisions for it. It certainly cannot be essential to bodily agency.

But this, I think, is a mistake. Granted, Waterman’s case shows that we cannot take

¹See (Cole 1991), (Cole 2016), and (Cole and Paillard 1998) for more details about Waterman’s condition and how he’s adapted to living with it.

²Below, I consider (Wong 2015) at greater length. See also (Bermúdez 1995).

O'Shaughnessy's approach. Bodily awareness of a limb is not necessary for basic action with it. But this does not mean that it is dispensable. Bodily awareness, because of how it presents our bodies to us, does have a distinctive role in our bodily agency. It is central to the unity we have as practical agents, and this cannot be substituted with some other form of awareness. Recognizing this, as I will argue, requires recognizing how a subject's perception and action are ordinarily related. Perception, for a subject, is ordinarily practical. She can, for instance, just in looking at what's around her, immediately recognize what it is open to her to do. Her perception's revealing her practical possibilities to her in this way, I will argue, owes in part to her proprioceptive awareness of herself. This awareness structures her perception. It is what makes her perceptual apprehension of her surroundings at the same time a practical apprehension of her concrete possibilities in these surroundings.³

Cases of deafferentation help to bring this out. A deafferented subject's perception is disconnected from these practical possibilities. She cannot just look out at what's around her and know what she is able to do vis à vis them. She has to instead look down at herself and consider the spatial relations in which certain parts of her stand to what's around her. This is her way of apprehending these possibilities. But even this, I will argue, is not practical in the same way. Here, the subject has to superimpose the practical on what she sees. So, even though her vision allows her to apprehend her practical possibilities, there is still for her a dissociation between what she sees and what she is aware of as practically open to her.

³As we will see below, I do not mean to say that, without bodily awareness, a subject's perceptual apprehension of her surroundings is completely devoid of the practical. But there will be a particular aspect of the practical missing from what she apprehends. It may help to see what I mean to draw a contrast. The idea that perception opens a subject to what is practically possible for her is not a new one. James J. Gibson, for instance, writes of perceived objects as, in virtue of certain of their perceived properties, *affording* particular kinds of behavior, e.g., sitting, grasping, wielding, eating, and walking. See (Gibson 1977). When talking about bodily awareness' contribution to perception, I have a narrower range of possibilities in mind. I mean to be speaking only about a subject's here-and-now possibilities for bodily movement, given how she is at present positioned and given the location of the object on which she intends in some way to act. Gibsonian affordances are, in a way, more general. A rock that I see, for instance, might afford sitting just in being *somewhere* in my vicinity. But, if I am more than a few steps away from it, my seeing it will not reveal much in the way of practical possibilities in the sense that I mean. It will not, that is, reveal what particular bodily movements I will need to make in order to sit on the rock. So, while a subject without bodily awareness might still see a rock in her vicinity as affording sitting—and so apprehend what is practically open to her *in a sense*—her seeing the rock, I will argue, will not be *fully* practical in that her seeing it cannot reveal to her what she needs to do in order to sit on it.

What cases of deafferentation show us, then, is that proprioceptive awareness is distinctive as a form of awareness. It is not just an awareness that gives us the position of our bodies but one that in doing so unifies our practical and perceptual orientations in the world. In having this awareness of ourselves, our being perceptually oriented is our being practically oriented. This is why our proprioceptive awareness is essential to our being bodily subjects.

4.2

Bringing out the philosophical significance of an empirical case presents certain challenges. Because it involves contending with the complexities of an actual state of affairs, it can be difficult to separate out what matters from what does not. This certainly holds for Ian Waterman's case and what ought to follow from it. Granted, there is little left to dispute as far as what it means for O'Shaughnessy's claims. O'Shaughnessy, in no uncertain terms, commits himself to bodily awareness' necessity for acting with a limb: "What seems to be needed is a *feeling-based immediate awareness* of both limb and its position. In their absence, action is impossible" (O'Shaughnessy 2008, p. 138). And Waterman's case shows the commitment to be unfounded.

But having accepted this, the challenge is then to say where the case leaves bodily awareness. If bodily awareness of a limb is not necessary for acting with it, what distinctive contribution does this awareness make to a subject's bodily action? It would be difficult to deny that bodily awareness does make some such contribution. For, Waterman's bodily movements, while certainly actions, are strikingly different from our own in a number of respects. Being in control of a given limb requires that he have visual contact with it. An arm, if out of view, tends to wander and can surprise him. Being in control in this way also requires considerable concentration on his part. Without proprioceptive feedback from his limbs, he can no longer move them in the characteristic unthinking manner in which he once did. He has to think explicitly about which muscles he needs to tense and which to relax in order to carry out whatever motion he intends. Thus, one would be hard-pressed to deny

that Waterman, after his illness, relates differently to his limbs in acting from how he once did and that his proprioceptive deficit is at the center of this. But the challenge, in the face of this, is to say what exactly this difference comes to and what this means for the role of bodily awareness in bodily agency.

Hong Yu Wong is one philosopher who, in arguing against O’Shaughnessy, has recently drawn on Waterman’s case. Wong recognizes how profoundly Waterman’s condition affects him, even comparing him to Descartes’ famous pilot in a ship: “IW is like a pilot in his body vessel. Whilst his body remains the unique and immediate respondent of his motor commands [...] his means of control is only through conscious visual control. His way of acting with his body is thus quite unlike ours” (Wong 2015, p. 806). Wong even elaborates on this by saying that, for Waterman, acting with his body is “like remote control” (Wong 2015, p. 806).⁴

These characterizations are evocative and in that respect helpful. Waterman’s relation to his body does seem pilot-like. But what we need to understand is what exactly this relation’s being pilot-like comes to. How does one’s lacking proprioceptive awareness change how one acts? Wong, in elaborating on how he thinks of Waterman’s situation, says this: “Though IW can act with his body in a teleologically basic way, the character of his control over his body is remote. In contrast, fluid everyday action for afferented agents doesn’t require that we target the bodily effector and consciously attend to it. In this sense, for us, acting with our bodies is not like remote control whilst it is for IW” (Wong 2015, p. 806). Now, what Wong identifies here is certainly a part of what makes deafferented action different. A subject in this condition has to visually target the part of his body with which he intends to act and then consciously direct its movement while keeping visual contact with it. He cannot just focus on whatever it is he’s acting on. He has to divert considerable attention

⁴I take it that what Wong means by this is *not* that Waterman controls his limbs by using something like a “mental joystick” which directs the movement of his limbs. Rather, what this characterization is supposed to highlight is the *remoteness* Waterman must feel from his own limbs when moving them. Waterman’s control of his limbs is still direct. He does not move his limbs by doing anything else. So, perhaps, it would be better to say that Waterman’s control of his limbs is like how one might imagine telekinesis being—except, of course, for the fact that Waterman’s limbs are attached to him.

to his limbs and to thinking about what it is he needs them now to do. Acting for him thus requires far more focus than it does for us. He cannot, as Wong puts it, act with the “fluidity and unthinkingness” (Wong 2015, p. 807) that we characteristically do.

But it seems that this can only be part of the story. While a deafferented subject can no longer act in our easy, unthinking manner—in losing proprioceptive awareness, such a subject also loses access to the motor habits he’d built up over a lifetime—there seems to be more to his acting’s striking us as being “like remote control” than just this. It seems more centrally to have to do with his having only visual awareness of his limbs as he acts with them, with his being unable to feel them “from the inside.” This, I think, is what makes Wong’s comparison to Descartes’ pilot so apt. But, this, unfortunately, is not something that Wong explores.⁵ What I will do, then, is pursue what he does not. I will spell out what it is about a subject’s having only visual awareness of his limbs that makes his manner of acting with them seem *remote*. This will position us to see proprioceptive awareness’ role in bodily action.

4.3

It seems intuitive that a subject would, if she lost proprioceptive awareness of a limb, be, in a way, cut off from it. But what explains this? It is not, after all, as though such a subject could not become aware of this limb’s position. She could look down at herself and, easily enough, see it. What goes missing for her is not knowledge but something else. As O’Shaughnessy, in thinking of such a case, so suggestively puts it: “...somehow it seems remote or cut off, as if there were some other form of space in which the finger was not to be found, or as if there were some internal way of gaining access to the finger which is barred to

⁵Wong further develops his account of the difference between afferented and deafferented action in (Wong 2018). Here, he is far more attentive to the difference that being able to experience one’s body “from the inside” makes to one’s sense of one’s practical possibilities. He explicitly connects one’s having proprioceptive awareness to one’s capacity to engage in *motor imagery* and thereby apprehend what is practically possible for one. This, then, fills in more of the story about why deafferented action is so different from afferented action. But this still cannot be the whole of the story. As I argue above, the remoteness of deafferented action crucially involves the disconnect between one’s perceptions of what’s around one and what is practically possible for one. Lacking proprioceptive awareness, one’s perceptual and practical spaces are disjoint.

her. She would like to sidle her way down her arm and into her hand; but there is no path leading from her to her hand, nor could there be” (O’Shaughnessy 2008, p. 138).

We can, I think, begin to account for what goes missing for such a subject by considering a key spatial difference between her awareness from the canonical senses and her bodily awareness. This difference is one that a number of philosophers, including O’Shaughnessy, have picked up on in one way or another but that José Luis Bermúdez explicitly connects with bodily awareness’ distinctive character for its subject.⁶ As he says, “Since bodily awareness is a form of spatial awareness, we must be aware of our bodies relative to a particular frame of reference. [...] much of what is distinctive about the phenomenology of bodily awareness is directly derived from the distinctiveness of that frame of reference. Our experience of bodily space is fundamentally different from our experience of non-bodily space” (Bermúdez 2011, p. 175). When a subject is sense perceptually aware of something, she is, in being so aware, aware of it as it stands in spatial relation to her—as being to her left or right, above or below her, in front of or behind her. She, in this way, is at the center of all her perceptions, even if she does not figure in any of them as their object. Her perceptions are, in other words, egocentrically organized. This organization is, moreover, bodily in that the directional distinctions available within it depend on the subject’s articulation into moveable parts. Each has its relevance only insofar as it matters to how the subject would have to move in order to reach, intercept, evade, or otherwise interact with an object so located. If, for instance, what a subject hears seems to her to be coming from behind her, she will have to take certain steps, i.e., turn around, if what she wants to do is face it. It is her bodily organization and her thus having to take such steps that give sense to what she hears as being specifically *behind* her.

This, by contrast, is not at all how things are for a subject in bodily awareness. She is, through it, aware of her limbs, but she does not experience them as located in spatial relation *to her*. As Bermúdez explains: “...the frame of reference for bodily awareness is of

⁶See also (Gallagher 2003) and (Martin 1995).

a fundamentally different type. We do not experience our bodies on an egocentric frame of reference. There is no privileged point in the body that counts as *me*, serving as the point of origin relative to which the distance and bearing of, say, bodily sensations are fixed” (Bermúdez 2011, p. 176). There is, that is, no particular location *from which* a subject, in bodily awareness, is aware of her limbs. They are not something on which she has a perspective. Instead, she experiences them as they are positioned in relation to one another, e.g., left leg bent at the knee, arms stretched out overhead, head cocked slightly to the right. Nothing is felt as being located any farther from anything else. For, nothing is felt as being at any distance from her. She, so to speak, pervades the experience. Where she is aware of something—a fingertip, an elbow, a toe—is a place to which she feels herself to extend. Anything of which she is aware in this mode is something that feels to her to be a part of her.

This, then, gets us some of the way towards understanding in what sense a subject without proprioceptive awareness of a limb is cut off from it. Even though this limb is still attached to her and so remains a part of her, it, without her bodily awareness extending to it, is something that she can only have a perspective on and, so, is more like something that she only stands in spatial relation to rather than something that is in fact a part of her. This, I think, explains much of what O’Shaughnessy means when he says that it is as if “there were some other form of space” in which the limb could no longer be found, as if there were “no path leading from her to her hand.” But we should not stop here. For, the difference that bodily awareness makes, put in these terms, can seem to be merely phenomenological, a difference merely in the feel of things for the subject. And the difference that bodily awareness in fact makes goes beyond this. It is not just that a limb cut off from bodily awareness is no longer something that the subject can feel in a certain way. It is that she, in a way that we have yet to see, has her perspective on things altered. So far, we have talked about bodily awareness as an awareness a subject has of her limbs from no perspective. Now, we have to see in what way this awareness affects the standpoint from which she, in the first

instance, has a perspective.

4.4

There is a familiar enough sense in which perception and action are for a subject connected. What the subject perceives will have direct relevance to her as far as what she can do. If she, for instance, sees a glass in her vicinity, then she will, just in seeing it, be aware of certain practical possibilities available to her. This glass is something that she might reach for, tip over, smash, or bring to her mouth. Furthermore, because what she perceives she perceives in egocentric relation to her, she typically also knows, just in perceiving what she does, what she would have to do in order to follow through with various of these practical possibilities. If the glass is to her left, and she sees it as so, she knows that she would have to move her arm in such-and-such a way to do whatever it is she intends to do with it.

This connection is particularly tight. It is hard to see how a subject could be perceiving what's around her and *not* recognize at least some of the ways this bears on her practically and concretely. If a subject saw a glass as being to her left and had no clue about what it could mean for her practically—no clue about what turning towards it or reaching for it would involve on her part—then something has gone awry. The significance of something's being to her left has been lost on her. A subject *should* know, just in perceiving what she does, what it is open to her to do concretely. This is part of what it is for a subject to perceive something in egocentric relation to her. She cannot see something as being to her left and then draw an utter blank in asking herself, “But what does its being so positioned mean for me practically?” Just seeing it there should be enough for her to be able to act on it.⁷ As John Perry says, remarking on this connection, “When a ball comes at me, I duck; when a milkshake is put in front of me, I advance” (Perry 1986, p. 151). In this way,

⁷Obviously, this will not come to the same thing with all of the objects on which we can possibly act. There are, for example, many things on which we can act—hot coals, radioactive material, poison ivy—but that we would not want to with our hands (or any other parts of ourselves for that matter). The prudent course of action with such things would be to use the appropriate tools. In the event that the right tools are not available, it may be that what one sees as being open to one are simply whatever movements one could make to *avoid* the hazardous materials in one's vicinity.

perception bears directly on a subject's practical possibilities. It reveals to her the ways open to her to move.

This is not how things are for a subject proprioceptively impaired in the way that Ian Waterman is. Though such a subject, of course, relies on sense perception to act, it is not enough for her to perceive the object on which she intends to act for her to know how she is to move. She has to perceive not just this object but also the limb with which she intends to act. Only then does she know enough to know what she has to do. Now, what such a subject does can, in certain ways, look to be not that different from what we, still in possession of our bodily awareness, do when we act. It can look as though her seeing the position of her limb out-and-out replaces what we do with bodily awareness. But this is not the case. Her vision can, of course, give her the position of her limb. What it cannot do is extend her standpoint to this limb. And this, as we will see, fundamentally changes her relation to the limb in acting with it. This is what makes acting with it like remote control.

The spatial organization of sense perception is, as we've noted, centered around the perceiving subject's body. The distinction between left and right, for instance, figures in how a subject perceives things as located in part because of how she is able to move her head in relation to the rest of her body. Things seen as to her left or to her right are seen that way because of how her head is turned when she sees them. In this respect, then, what a subject in Waterman's condition sees should not be different from what we see. Because she can still proprioceptively feel the position of her head and neck, she can, when her head is turned, feel it as so turned and thus see things as to her left or right. Such directional determinations still organize her perceptions. So, when it comes to action, her seeing something in egocentric relation to her can, at least, be a start to her acting. If what she wants to do, for instance, is reach for a glass she sees over to her left, her seeing it *there* is, as it would be for any of us, how her action begins. But unlike us, she does not, just in seeing the glass, know what she has to do in order to act on it. There is a gap in her knowledge. She knows that the glass is to her left, but this is only part of what she needs

to know to be able to reach for it. Knowing this is of no use to her until she fills the gap, until she knows the position of the hand with which she intends to do this reaching.

Now, it can seem that what the subject does, in looking for and visually locating her hand, is fill this gap. It can seem that, in this way, her vision just does what her proprioceptive awareness no longer can. But this is not in fact what her vision does. The glass' being to her left is not what is relevant to her when it comes to thinking about moving her hand. Though her seeing it there is what gets her thinking about reaching for it at all, she does not put this information to use in thinking about her movement. The spatial information that matters to her in directing her hand towards the glass is her hand's position *relative to the glass*—her hand's being just to the right of it or out in front of it. It is in seeing *their* spatial relation that she can see where her hand needs to go. Her seeing the glass as it stands in egocentric relation to her is not central to planning her movement. In general, such egocentric relations in perception no longer have the same relevance for her in acting. This means, then, that when it comes to the position of her hand, her vision does not take the role her proprioceptive awareness once had. Her vision instead replaces everything. Her seeing her hand's position relative to the glass stands in for all of it—for her seeing the glass as located in egocentric relation to her *and* for her proprioceptively feeling the position of her hand.

This means that our subject's relation to her hand as she moves it takes on an entirely different form from what it once did. The spatial reasoning by which she gets her hand to where it needs to be is no longer centered around her (as she feels herself to be).⁸ Her hand, granted, remains a part of her, but because her only way of locating it is through vision, the way she has of thinking about it, when it comes to where it is and where she wants it to be, is not that much different from the thinking she might engage in in arranging *any* two objects. Suppose, again, for instance, that what she wants to do is reach for a glass. What

⁸When speaking of 'spatial reasoning' here, I mean only the kind of implicit reasoning that is ordinarily at work when we act. I do not mean to imply that we need, for instance, engage in any explicit deliberation prior to acting.

will matter to her is the glass' location relative to the hand with which she intends to reach it. Thinking about what she is to do is a matter of thinking about how to get this hand on a path to the glass. Does it need to go leftwards from where it is now or up? But suppose that, instead, it is not she who is reaching for the glass but someone else helping her (since it is on a high shelf out of her reach). She can see the glass from where she is standing, but her friend cannot. This friend just follows her directions. Our subject, in this case, has to consider her friend's hand and its location relative to the glass. Her thinking is about this hand and what path it should take to get to the glass. Should she tell her friend, "More to the left," or "Lower," given where her friend's hand is now?

While these two cases differ in a number of respects, there is considerable similarity between them when it comes to the kind of thinking in which our subject engages. In each case, her thinking concerns a hand and a glass and the spatial relation in which she sees them as standing. In each case, her thinking centers on the hand and is about drawing a path from this hand to the glass. Furthermore, in each case, her egocentric perceptual relations do not enter into her considerations. Her seeing the glass as being to *her* left or above *her* does not matter to tracing the path that the hand takes. For, the location from which she sees the glass as being, say, to her left is distinct from the location on which her spatial reasoning centers—even when what is centered on is *her* hand—and so does not matter to tracing this path. Though, then, in the one case, the hand is her hand, its being hers is not reflected in her spatial reasoning. The form of her reasoning in both cases is much the same.⁹

We can see now that the egocentric relations that specify how our subject stands to what she sees have (almost) no part in how she directs her limbs. Even, then, while it is by seeing them that she directs their movement, the role that seeing characteristically has in action

⁹Cole and Paillard's discussion of another deafferented subject, G.L., appears to support my claim that the form of deafferented subjects' spatial reasoning is different from ours when it comes to, say, directing the movement of a hand towards an object. Under normal conditions, G.L. can point at objects with the same accuracy as control subjects because she can visually guide her hand. If, however, she is asked to point at a luminous target in an otherwise darkened room—and, so, forced to use her egocentric frame of reference—her performance "is greatly impaired, whereas that of control subjects is no" (Cole and Paillard 1998, p. 253).

disappears from the scene. How she sees what's around her as standing in egocentric relation to her does not bear directly on what she is to do. Her looking around her, of course, still reveals the general lay of the land. But her seeing this stops short of her knowing how she is to move in order to act on *this* or *that* object. Thus, her just seeing things as they stand in egocentric relation to her no longer has the kind of practical significance it once did. It cannot direct her movement.

4.5

But what difference does a subject's having bodily awareness of her limbs make in this? Why should her having such awareness of herself mean that her egocentrically structured perceptions of things bear directly on how she is to move? What form, in other words, does a subject's spatial reasoning in action typically take if not the one outlined above? It is clear that in order for such perceptions to bear on her possibilities for movement, the spatial framework that organizes these perceptions must connect with the framework that organizes her bodily experience. The egocentric coordinates by which she pinpoints the objects she perceives need to have significance for her limbs as she feels them in bodily awareness.

As we've already seen, proprioceptive awareness is not egocentrically organized. It does not present a subject's limbs as located in relation to *her*. Though there is, of course, a sense in which a subject does proprioceptively feel her limbs in relation to her—her legs folded beneath her, her arms stretched out above her—*beneath* and *above* here cannot mean what they would were she locating something sense perceptually. These directional determinations are fixed not relative to her but to parts of her. Thus, *beneath* means something like *beneath the rest of her* and *above* something like *above her head*. But all these parts—those on which her attention is fixed and those that she feels them in relation to—feel in this awareness to be parts of hers. So, whatever overlap there is between the space a subject represents visually and the space that she in proprioceptive awareness feels herself to occupy, the coordinates from the one mode of representation cannot be identical to those in the other. She, as the

subject, figures very differently in the organization of each.

So how should we account for a subject's perceptions of her surroundings bearing directly on her possibilities for movement? While we've said that her perception, in being egocentrically structured, locates objects in relation to her, we have not specified what exactly is supposed to be captured by *her* here. It is easy to assume that what's captured depends on the sense modality—that *her* centers around her eyes, if what she's doing is seeing, around her hand if that's what she's exploring with—since the part of her from which the perception originates will depend on the modality. This, for instance, is how Bermúdez talks about it:

In the case of vision or exteroceptive touch [...] there is a perceptual field bounded so as to determine a particular point as its origin. If, for example, the visual field is described as the solid angle of light picked up by the visual system, then the origin of the visual field can be taken to be the apex of that solid angle. Similarly [...] the frame of reference for exploratory touch is a point in the center of the palm of the relevant hand (Bermúdez 1998, p. 152).

This “origin” of which he speaks is what he later goes on to identify with “privileged part of the body that counts as me for the purpose of discussing spatial relations” (Bermúdez 1998, p. 153) represented in the given modality.

But things have to be more complicated than this. For, a subject's perceiving something as, say, in front of her depends not just on the part from which her perception originates but on this part's position in relation to the rest of her. The glass a subject sees might be dead-center in her visual field. But she will not see it as being in front of her unless most of her body is already oriented towards it. So, though light streams into a subject's eyes, making them, in a way, the point of origin of her visual experience, the perspective from which she experiences things visually does not center around just her eyes. She does not locate what she sees just in relation to them. What she sees she locates in relation to the whole of her.¹⁰ Though, then, her seeing something as to her left does not involve her knees

¹⁰Christopher Peacocke makes something like this point in discussing one's experience of Buckingham Palace as seen with one's head turned towards it but the rest of one turned off to the side. In such a case one would experience the palace as, say, to one's left, even if the view one had of it were the exactly same as that which one would have when looking at it from straight on. See (Peacocke 1992, p. 106).

or toes, her seeing it as so located nevertheless involves these parts. It involves them in that they are parts she experiences *as parts of her* and that what she sees she sees in relation to her *as she feels herself to be*.

If this is the case, then the way in which the egocentricity of her perceptions bears on her possibilities for action is straightforward. Her seeing something as being to her left does not just pinpoint what she sees in relation to her eyes or head but in relation to her as she feels herself to extend, including to the hand with which she would reach towards the object were that what she wanted to do. In having bodily awareness that extends from her head to her hand (among other things), she can, just in seeing the object, put it in spatial relation to her hand. So, her seeing the object in relation to her is her locating it in relation to (among other things) her hand. Her seeing it, in this way, directly bears on her possibilities for movement, showing her how she would have to move her hand in order to reach or avoid or otherwise act on this object. Having so located it, then, she can just move.

This is not how things are for the impaired subject. Though she can, of course, still perceptually locate something as being to her left, its being so located does not have the same practical significance for her. In so locating what she perceives, she puts it in relation to her as she feels herself to be, and this will only include her head and neck, since it is only to these parts that her bodily awareness still extends and these parts from which she can still perceive. She cannot, without looking for or otherwise perceptually locating her hand, know how she would have to move in order to reach for an object she sees. Just seeing it does not suffice because seeing it in her condition does not put it in relation to her hand. She has to pinpoint the location of her hand and thereby put it in relation to what she sees in a separate perceptual act.

But just how different is this from locating one's hand proprioceptively? To put something one sees in relation to one's hand, one needs to locate one's hand in some way or other. What does it matter, one might wonder, if one does it by vision or proprioception? Doesn't it just come to the same—i.e., pinpointing the location of one's hand? Whichever way one does it,

doesn't one engage in *some kind of separate act*?

A subject's proprioceptively pinpointing her hand, to be sure, is not the same as her seeing the glass for which she wants to reach. She can do the one without doing the other. Her proprioceptive pinpointing is, in this sense, separate from her seeing. But in another sense it is not. As we've already seen, a subject's seeing an object in relation to her is her locating it in relation to her *as she feels herself to be*. This is made possible by her proprioceptive awareness. Her proprioceptive awareness gives her the standpoint from which she sees objects as located in relation to her.¹¹ So, if she is proprioceptively aware of her hand, her hand becomes a part of the *her* in relation to which she sees such objects. In this way, her proprioceptive awareness shapes her perceptual states. It gives them the egocentric structure that they have. What we should say, then, is that a subject's proprioceptive awareness is in part constitutive of her perceptual states. While her perceptual experience goes far beyond what she experiences of her body through proprioceptive awareness, her perceptual experience, inasmuch as it locates objects in relation to her, depends on her proprioceptive awareness to do so. It is in this sense that her proprioceptive pinpointing is not separate.

A subject's seeing an object in relation to her, then, is her seeing it from her *bodily* standpoint. Her seeing it in this way is thus her knowing how she can move in relation to it. So, it is her seeing's being shaped by her proprioceptive awareness that makes it practical.

We can now see in what sense a deafferented subject's actions might seem like actions performed *remotely* or *at a distance*. It is not just that her limbs are no longer parts of her to which she feels herself to extend. It is because, furthermore, that without such awareness of her limbs, her perceptions of the objects around her no longer have the same practical

¹¹This is not to say that a subject's proprioceptive awareness is all-together responsible for her sense perception's being egocentrically structured. It seems that even someone who had no proprioceptive awareness whatsoever would still, for instance, see objects in her vicinity as being nearer or farther *from her*. What the *her* came to for such a subject would, no doubt, be different—limited, perhaps, to a geometrical point. But it would not be absent. Her seeing, it seems plausible to say, would still be a seeing from somewhere and experienced as such. I discuss this case in more detail and what it means for my view in the final section of this chapter.

significance for her. Though she can still see something as, say, to her left, her seeing it as so located does not just in itself mean anything to her for how she would have to move in order to reach for or otherwise act on it. Her seeing the object, while it orients what she can feel of herself in relation to it, does not orient the whole of her. Her limbs remain blind to her relation to what she sees and so to their possibilities for movement. Visually locating her limbs allows her to apprehend these possibilities and guide her limbs through them. But because she does not feel these limbs, they, even under her gaze, do not share her orientation in relation to the objects around her. Her orientation is in part determined by where she feels herself to be, and this, because of her deafferentation, might remain fixed, even while she is moving one of her limbs. Her focus, as she moves the limb, then, is not on how *she* is positioned in relation to the object to be acted on but on the limb and its position. Her felt position recedes into the background, since it is that of the limb that matters to her present practical possibilities.

In this way, where she feels herself to be, and hence where she orients herself from in relation to the things around her, is separate from the space in which she acts. Her position in relation to these things does not reveal to her her possibilities for movement. These possibilities, because she can still move her limbs basically, still lie with these limbs, even though the space from which she orients herself does not extend to them. Her capacity to act is disjoint from her standpoint such that what bears on her from this standpoint does not have any significance for her limbs. Her space, the space from which she orients herself, is thus made distinct from the space of her practical considerations and possibilities. She needs to, in a separate perceptual act, visually apprehend her limbs and their relation to the object on which she would act. She can then project what is possible for these limbs onto them. It is in this sense, then, that her acting with these limbs is action performed at a distance. She is divided as a practical subject. She cannot reach herself practically just from her standpoint.

4.6

At this point, hopefully, it is clear just in what way a subject who has lost her proprioceptive capacity in the way that Ian Waterman did would be impaired and from this what contribution a subject's bodily awareness makes to her bodily existence. A subject who lacks bodily awareness of the limbs with which she acts lacks the unity of a bodily subject. The space in which she feels herself to be, the standpoint from which she orients herself in relation to what she perceives, is made distinct from the space of her practical considerations and possibilities. The latter is something that she has to take in separately, since perceiving things as they stand in relation to her no longer reveals with any determinacy what it is open to her to do. Without her bodily awareness of her limbs, in short, the standpoint from which she orients herself does not extend to her limbs. Her power to act with them, while still something she can exercise, is disjoint from this standpoint so that what bears on her from this standpoint does not have any significance for her limbs. The standpoint, in this respect, is no longer practical.

But even having recognized this, one might still wonder whether having bodily awareness is essential to a subject's having a body in the way that other powers of hers—her powers to perceive and act, say—seem to be. As a case of deafferentation like Waterman's shows, after all, these other powers do not strictly depend on bodily awareness for their exercise. What we have shown is that, in its near total absence, a subject lacks a kind of unity she once had. Her being perceptually oriented in her surroundings is no longer one and the same as her being practically oriented in them. But why should we suppose that this sort of unity is required for a subject to have a body? Having such unity, no doubt, makes things easier for a subject. But this is different from its being essential. Why shouldn't it be enough for a subject to perceive from one part of herself and act with others?

Here is a further way in which we might sharpen this point. We have seen how, in the case of human beings, one's losing one's proprioceptive awareness means that one can no longer read off of one's surroundings one's here-and-now possibilities for action, that one can

no longer connect what one perceives to what movements one can make vis-à-vis what one perceives. But does this show that bodily awareness is essential to having a body *as such*? The absence of such awareness in a human being certainly amounts to a form of impairment. A human being, lacking such awareness, cannot realize her bodily subjectivity in full. But is this something that is supposed to generalize to *all possible* bodily subjects? What has been said to establish this? Suppose that there were intelligent beings much like us—beings who had the powers to perceive and act—but who had no bodily awareness. If there could be such beings, if this was just how life had evolved for them, the absence of bodily awareness in their case could hardly be a form of impairment—no more, it seems, than the absence of wings could be for us. What are we to say about such a case? Is it so obvious that these beings would not count as having bodies just because they did not have bodily awareness of themselves?

Back in Chapter 3, we connected the idea of a subject's having a body to her being present in the space that she takes up. We said that it is a subject's experientially locating herself where she in fact is that makes all the difference. Having a body is not just a matter of being a subject while also happening to have the unity of a living being. One's capacities as a subject have to extend outward—out to one's skin and beyond. One has to exhibit a further kind of unity. We have in this chapter, I take it, shown how it is bodily awareness that provides this needed unity. While a subject still has the power to move her limbs without having proprioceptive awareness of them, they are not, without such awareness, a part of the standpoint from which she perceives her surroundings and can immediately act. She might, for instance, be able to see something that, judging from the distance, is within her reach. But without looking to her hand to see where it is, she does not know what she would have to do in order to reach for it. She would have to engage in a separate perceptual act, to look for her hand, to figure this out. Her hand, then, in being absent from her bodily awareness, is not fully incorporated into the unity that she is supposed to be. She is disconnected from what is right now practically possible for her with this hand. It is in this sense that she is

not present in it, even though it remains a part of her, a part of the space that she takes up.

Now, in some ways, I think, this reminder about where we started and how it connects up to the developments in this chapter should be enough of an answer in the face of the present line of questioning. If what a subject's having a body comes to is her being present in the space that she takes up, and if what we've spelled out so far—about what being so present comes to and what bodily awareness' role is in this—amounts to anything, there should not be much left to question about bodily awareness' contribution here. But there can still be, I recognize, something compelling about the idea that perception and action should by themselves suffice, that bodily awareness is in some sense something extra. One way to see this is through another way in which we have talked about what having a body comes to. We have said that having a body is a matter of having a *perspective*, where what this means is that one is responsive to one's surroundings in a certain way—not just in the way that, say, plants are, with their various parts responding differentially to conditions in the soil or air, but *as a whole* because one is *conscious of* these surroundings. One is a subject, and the capacities one has as a subject orient the whole of one outwards. Now, if this is what being a bodily subject comes to, it can seem that bodily awareness is dispensable in this and that beings who lacked such awareness could still count as bodily subjects. Having bodily awareness would, of course, make a difference to one. It would shape the perspective that one had. But one can only have a perspective to begin with if one has the kind of powers that orient one outwards, if, that is, one can perceive and act. It is these powers, then, that seem to be essential to having a body. One has a perspective so long as one has these powers. One's perspective, to be sure, will be different from ours (that of human beings) if these are one's only powers—where one perceives from will be divided from where one acts. But nonetheless, it seems, one's perspective will still be the perspective of a bodily subject.

This line of thinking is mistaken. Where it goes wrong is in how it understands what's required for a subject to have a perspective. It does not take into account the kind of awareness that a subject has to have of herself. It speaks about the shape that one's awareness

gives one's perspective as though it were optional, when it is such shape that allows one to determine how things stand with whatever it is one's perspective is a perspective *on*.

It might help to see what I mean here by considering a somewhat different sort of case first. The sort of perspective that we've been concerned with is not the only sort of perspective that we human beings typically have. We also have, for instance, what one might call an *epistemic* perspective—the perspective formed by the body of beliefs we have and from which we each attempt to determine in any given case what else is in fact true. Now, having the typical sort of awareness we have of what we already believe is essential to having such a perspective. This is because forming new beliefs in most cases depends on it. One could not figure out for oneself what was true or obvious or just plausible if one did not know in the usual way what one already believed. If, somehow, one found oneself in the position of not knowing this, it would not do, say, for one to be authoritatively told about what one in fact believes. If faced with having to decide whether *P*, one could, perhaps, with this information, infer what one ought to believe regarding *P* given what one's been told one believes. But this would hardly be the same as arriving at a belief about *P* in the usual way. Crucially, one could not, having gone through this process, say whether *P*. One would not have a perspective on it. At best, one would have a perspective on what someone with one's beliefs ought to believe concerning *P*. Because one was not in touch with one's beliefs in the usual way—because one had only been told about them but could not see for oneself why one had these beliefs—this would not translate into a perspective on *P*. One needs to have one's beliefs consciously to have such a perspective. This is part of what it is to be a subject with beliefs. For the purpose of illustrating this point, we started out with the thought that one would, if one were in this condition, still count as such a subject. But given how disconnected one would have to be from what were supposed to be one's epistemic commitments, it is not obvious that one should.

Now, admittedly, things are not quite the same when it comes to bodily awareness and having a perspective. One is still capable of having a perspective *of a sort* on one's surround-

ings without bodily awareness. One can apprehend, for instance, the different distances at which different objects lie from one. One can even figure out, by looking down at oneself, what is practically possible for one, given how one stands in relation to what one sees. But this, arguably, is not the perspective of a *bodily subject*. Looking out onto one's surroundings, one is not, without bodily awareness, immediately cognisant of what they mean for one practically here and now. One does not know how exactly one is positioned, so one does not know in full what one's relation is to what one sees. There is a certain determinacy missing from one's experience. This, of course, extends to one's experiences when engaging with the things around one. One may not always know, based on what one sees and on what one is doing, what in fact is happening. Imagine, for instance, trying to lift something from the ground, like a suitcase, without bodily awareness of oneself. One has to rely on visual cues—seeing the suitcase move towards one at the speed one would expect it to—to know that one's attempt has been a success. If one does not see what one expects to—if the suitcase seems to remain in place as one pulls at it—it will not be obvious to one what is happening from what one sees. It could be that the suitcase is much heavier than one expected and that one is pulling at it in vain. But it could also be that one pulled at it much too hard and that one and the suitcase are now about to fall over from the force of one's efforts.¹² One does not always know, then, how things stand with the things around one or whether one's efforts have effected the intended changes. In this way, one's perspective is limited without bodily awareness. It may still count as a perspective on one's surroundings, but it is not a bodily one: how things stand with one materially—with one's limbs and all the rest—does not inform how one apprehends everything else.

A being, then, who, by nature, had no bodily awareness of herself would not have a body.

¹²I am drawing to a large extent here on Ian Waterman's report of his own experiences. He, in explaining how he can judge an object's weight without being able to feel any of its heft, talks about using visual cues when trying to lift things. What he says suggests that there can be some ambiguity in what he's seeing means for him: "Perhaps I know that the movement I get is not quick enough for what I'm putting in. To pick up a suitcase I first look down to check my feet, grasp it, and start to pull up [...] Then, if it doesn't come up there must be something wrong. I check that I'm not falling over, and if I'm not it must be because the suitcase is too heavy" (Cole 1991, p. 133).

While, in being able to perceive and act, she would have a perspective of sorts on what was around her, this would not be the perspective of a bodily subject. A bodily perspective is one that orients the whole of the subject, such that she can experience and respond as *one*. Bodily awareness is the capacity that provides a subject with this unity. This is bodily awareness' essential contribution to a subject's bodily being.

Chapter 5

Constitution and Self-Awareness

5.1

In the foregoing chapters, we saw that there is in fact a way in which a subject's bodily awareness plays a constitutive role in her having a body. A subject's having a body is a matter of her being present in the space that she takes up. Her head, her knees, her toes—these parts of hers are not just parts caught up in the self-organizing activity that makes up her life. They are parts to which her subjectivity extends, and this is what makes these the parts that they are and, in turn, what makes her a bodily subject. And her bodily awareness, we saw, has an important role in this. It shapes her basic perspective on the things around her. In presenting her with the position of her parts in the distinctive way that it does, the perspective from which she experiences the world extends to these parts. They become a part of that from which she has her perspective, that from which the world is opened up to her as a perceiving and acting subject. It is in her awareness' playing this orienting role, then, that it is has its constitutive role. A subject's perspective extending as it does is a key part of what it is for her to be present in the space that she takes up.

We first argued that there was room for bodily awareness to play this constitutive role back in Chapter 2. At that early stage, all that we were trying to do was show that there was this room. Perceptualist doctrine had it that a subject's bodily position was something given to her in bodily awareness, that that of which she was aware was entirely prior to

and independent of her having any such awareness. This would mean that it could only be perceptual. Part of what this doctrine rested on was the observation that such awareness operates independently of how a subject's body comes to be positioned as it is. While it is more often the case than not that a subject determines for herself where and how, say, her arms are now positioned, her capacity for determining their present position is separate from her awareness of their position. She needn't have determined their position in order for her to have this awareness of them. It does not matter whether she just *finds* her arms flung out from her, having just woken up, or whether she deliberately positioned them in this way. She is aware of them all the same. And this seems to show that what she's aware of is independent of her being aware of it, meaning that her awareness is perceptual. It is such thinking that, for instance, leads Richard Moran to write the following:

...bodily awareness, however immediate or independent of particular sensations, remains an instance of *speculative knowledge*. What is known here is still 'derived from the object known', and the 'direction of fit' is still that of fitting the judgement to the independent facts. Even if immediate, and not grounded in observational evidence, the claim that one's knee is bent is still something corrected by the fact of one's straightened leg (Moran 2004, p. 48).

Now, our strategy was to accept the observation but deny that the perceptualist conclusion follows from it. We argued that, even though a subject's bodily awareness does not determine how she is positioned, it does not follow from this that what she is aware of is entirely independent of her awareness. In the other kinds of cases where philosophers have argued that a subject's awareness of herself counts as a form of self-awareness, the constitutive role that this awareness has is exhibited at two levels. In the case of her awareness of her beliefs, for example, her awareness determines not just what it is that she believes but that what she has is in fact a *belief*. Couldn't it, then, be the case that, in an analogous way, a subject's bodily awareness constitutes what she is aware of as *bodily*? This was a possibility that perceptualists had said nothing about. It was a possibility that, in all likelihood, they had not recognized as such. This, then, is what we pursued.

We have now, if the foregoing chapters have amounted to anything, seen this possibility borne out. It is no longer a bare possibility but one whose details are well enough wrought—well enough, anyway, to invite further scrutiny. We have seen how it is that a subject's bodily awareness is constitutively tied to her having a body and, so, how it is that what she is aware of depends on her awareness for what it is. But is the fact of this dependence, now that we can see what it comes to, enough to show us that our bodily awareness is not perceptual? Is it enough to show us that it is a form of self-awareness? One might, thinking back on the kinds of awareness on which bodily awareness was supposed to be modeled, wonder if it is. Constitution does, of course, have a role to play in these other cases. It is because of a subject's awareness of her doing *A*, say—on an account like O'Brien's—that her action counts as a doing of *A* and counts as *hers*. But, as we have acknowledged from the start, bodily awareness does not stand in the same way to what it is an awareness of. So, even if we have shown that such awareness has a constitutive role in a subject's having a body, one might wonder if this particular constitutive role will do.

In this chapter, we will consider two specific ways in which one might question the adequacy of the account we have developed. Each stems from a respect in which bodily awareness does not determine its object. The first brings into question bodily awareness' being a form of self-awareness. The fact that what a subject is aware of in bodily awareness is *herself* is something fixed independently of this awareness. This seems to leave a gap between her having this awareness and her having it of her. No such gap exists in the cases on which bodily awareness is supposed to be modeled. So, one might wonder whether our account in fact does the work it was required to do. The second raises a concern about the case we have made against bodily awareness' being perceptual. While it may have been established that this awareness does play a constitutive role in what it is an awareness of, one might wonder whether this suffices for showing that it is not perceptual. A subject's actual bodily position, after all, is not determined by her awareness but something else outside of it. There may in fact, one might think, be a better model along the lines of which to

understand this awareness—seeing color, as understood on a dispositionalist account. This is an interesting case of perceived properties’ being constituted by those who perceive it.

The account we have developed is, as I will argue, robust. In each of these cases, the account already has the resources to contend with the relevant worry. For the most part, as we will see, it is just a matter of seeing how these come together.

5.2

One way to press this issue about the view that we have come to is to consider its relation to constitutivism more broadly. Constitutivism is the view on which we have come to rely in making our claim about bodily awareness’ being a form of self-awareness. It is the view that what is distinctive about some of the ways in which a subject has of being aware of herself is that her awareness in these cases is constitutive of that of which she is aware. It is this constituting role that is supposed to explain why the relevant awareness is *as such* an awareness the subject has of herself and only herself. Given how perceptualists have made their case for their position—insisting that a subject’s body is of a piece with the rest of mind-independent world and her bodily awareness just another way for her to come to grips with it—constitutivism has seemed an obvious fit. Showing that a subject’s having bodily awareness is in fact constitutive of her having a body, it seemed, would show that this awareness was a form of self-awareness. But now that we have shown that such awareness does play a constituting role in a subject’s having a body, one might wonder whether in fact we have succeeded in fitting it to the constitutivist model. One might wonder this, not because one has any special sympathy for perceptualism, but because of how other constitutive accounts tend to look.¹

We’ve already seen one such case of this with O’Brien’s account of our awareness of our intentional actions. It is her view that a subject’s awareness of what she is doing, when she

¹I have in mind accounts like (Moran 2001) and, of course, (O’Brien 2007). While there is also Shoemaker’s early constitutivist discussion of our introspective awareness of our beliefs, pains, and other psychological states, which casts a wider net, I take it that these more recent accounts, which give prominence to our rational agency, are the ones that most will connect with constitutivism.

acts intentionally, is “not an awareness that is occasioned by or distinct from [her] acting, but is rather part of [her] acting in the way [she has]” (O’Brien 2007, p. 187). Acting intentionally, she thinks, is a matter of someone’s “actively control[ing]” (O’Brien 2007, p. 187) what she does, where this means “act[ing] directly as a result of her assessment of the possibilities available, understood as possibilities” (O’Brien 2007, p. 188). Someone cannot, then, act intentionally without having the awareness of her action that comes with having arrived at what to do through such rational assessment. Her awareness makes her action what it is—not just in the sense that it is made intentional through this awareness but in that it is made *hers*. As O’Brien puts it: “If my experience of my action as agent is to experience the action as the direct conclusion of the process by means of which I determine how to act, there seems to be no place at which the possibility that it was someone else’s action determined in that way could get a grip” (O’Brien 2012, p. 142). This is central to the account. It is because the action is made hers in this way that her awareness counts as a form of self-awareness. When the subject is aware of an action in this way, the action of which she is aware cannot but be hers. It is this connection, then, between a subject’s awareness of her actions and these actions’ being hers that secures the distinctive character of this awareness. It is an awareness of her actions as *hers* because it constitutes them as such.

Now, the variety of constitutivism around which O’Brien’s account takes shape is not, I take it, special to her. Richard Moran, for instance, provides us with another case of this with his account of our knowledge of our beliefs. He places considerable emphasis on the connection between our having beliefs and our having the capacity to make up our minds about what it is we believe. It is our having this kind of rational agency with respect to our beliefs, and with it, the capacity to just say what it is we believe, that makes for the distinctive relation in which each of us stands to the beliefs that are ours.² Again, in this case, then, what we have is an account that ties something’s being ours to the rational and

²Moran’s account builds across multiple chapters of *Authority and Estrangement*, but Chapter 4 is where much of his view comes together. §8 of this chapter is especially relevant and is where Moran’s constitutivism comes out in full force.

conscious activity through which it is constituted.

So, one might, with such particular constitutivist accounts in mind, wonder whether the account of bodily awareness that we've developed over the course of this discussion can deliver. A subject's bodily awareness does not, even while being constitutive of her having a body, make that of which she is aware hers. Where she begins and ends is something determined independently of this awareness. This, as we just saw, stands in stark contrast with other constitutivist accounts. In these, there being such a connection between that of which the subject is aware and its being hers is crucial to the relevant awareness' being a form of self-awareness. So, if there being this sort of connection is crucial not just in these particular cases but in any constitutivist account, our account, it seems, cannot but fall short.

This, I take it, is something that O'Brien assumes is the case. It is why her argument for bodily awareness' being perceptual takes the shape that it does. She thinks that what we see in the case of our action awareness is the paradigm to which all cases of self-awareness should conform. And because our bodily awareness cannot be made to conform, we should count it among the senses. Now, we have already considered O'Brien's key argument at some length before. But we should turn to it again, if only briefly, as a way of further pressing the worry at hand.

O'Brien argues that we can, at least in principle, extend our bodily awareness to bodies other than our own. She does so by having us imagine a case of "crosswiring"—a case in which a subject routinely finds herself in circumstances where she is proprioceptively connected not to her own limbs but someone else's. The significance of the possibility is supposed to be this: a gap can be introduced between someone's having proprioceptive experiences and these experiences' being and seeming to her to be experiences of her. Even, then, if a subject only ever has experiences of herself through this capacity, this capacity is not as such one to deliver experiences of her, the subject.

Now, we have already, at least in a preliminary way, pointed to how we should contend

with this. We will turn to this solution again, momentarily. But, right now, I want to direct us back to the constitutivist worry we've been building up to. The gap just discussed seems one that can be introduced precisely because a subject's experiencing something proprioceptively does not make it her own. Whether or not a limb counts as hers depends not on her awareness but on its being attached to the rest of her and caught up in the vital activity that is her life. Whatever else we can say, then, about a subject's awareness' being constitutive—about its constituting her as something bodily—it seems that it will miss the mark. It cannot guarantee that what a subject will be aware of is herself. So, it cannot be material with which to shape a constitutivist account. Even, then, if there is a way to respond to O'Brien and show that the gap introduced is not what she takes it to be (as we in fact have), it seems that the constitutive relation at the heart of our account cannot be what does the work. It stands conspicuously idle.

This, as we will come to see, is not in fact the case. Our account *is* a constitutivist account, and the work that the relevant constitutive relation does is at the core of its counting as such. Seeing how this can be, of course, requires going beyond the model that constitutivist accounts like O'Brien's and Moran's provide and recognizing that they are instances of a more general type. But we don't need to do much, I think, in order to identify this general type. It is right there in these accounts for us to pick out. A constitutivist account is one that distinguishes a subject's capacity for awareness as a capacity that is as such for awareness of her by showing (i) that it is a capacity that gives her awareness of her and only her and (ii) that it does so because of the constitutive role that this awareness plays in its object's being what it is. We have seen how in an account like O'Brien's all the requisite pieces come neatly together to meet these requirements. The conscious and rational agency through which a subject's action is made intentional and made the action it is is also that through which it is made hers. Any action of which she is aware in this way, then, could not but be hers. But nothing about the neatness of this instance of constitutivism just in itself excludes there being other ways in which these requirements can be met. There will, of

course, have to be something that explains the difference between these cases. The difference cannot be without principle. But this, as we will see, is well within our reach.

Now is the time to look again to the solution we made a start with back in Chapter 2. There we said that we needn't accept O'Brien's "crosswiring" scenario as one in which a subject's awareness *extends* to another's body. If we really consider what is involved, we will see that this is not a case of a subject's gaining perceptual access to someone else's body but, rather, her succumbing to an illusion in which what is in fact someone else's body feels to her to be her own. O'Brien tries to counter this. She acknowledges that at first things would be as we describe. It would seem to the subject as though it were her own limbs she was experiencing. But this, O'Brien thinks, with enough regularity would fall away. The first-person character of this awareness is merely phenomenological and, thus, separable from the awareness itself. We in turn suggested a different way of looking at things. A subject's experience of her limbs in bodily awareness *as hers* is not a part of the *content* of the experience, as O'Brien thinks it is, but something *built in* to the structure of such experiences. It is not something that could come or go, depending on the subject's background beliefs about her situation. A subject, then, who found herself routinely in O'Brien's "crosswiring" condition would still falsely experience the other's limbs as hers. It would not become a way for her to perceive them.

This suggestion, I take it, has been borne out by the discussion of bodily awareness in Chapter 4. There we explained how bodily awareness' distinctive character derives from the way in which it presents the subject with her parts. These parts are not presented as standing in spatial relation to her but as parts to which she herself extends. This, importantly, is not just a phenomenological difference but one tied to the special role that a subject's bodily awareness has: providing her with the standpoint from which she has her perceptual and practical perspective on the things around her.

All of this gets us much closer to being able to say that bodily awareness is *as such* an awareness that a subject has of herself. We can see now how the structure and role of this

awareness make it such as to be one that presents her with herself. But, at this point, it remains unclear why things need to be this way—why, for instance, this awareness needs to be tied to this role and, so, tied to her. This is where the constitutive relation in which a subject's body stands to her bodily awareness comes in. If, as we have argued, having a body is a matter of a subject's being experientially present in the space that she takes up, and if her bodily awareness in playing the role that it does is what makes her so present, then having bodily awareness is part and parcel of having a body. This in turn means, I take it, that bodily awareness should be understood in terms of its having this constitutive role. It is an awareness through which a subject is present in the space that she takes up and, so, has a body. If this is the case, then a subject cannot relate to another's limbs through this capacity except as a kind of mistake. She can be causally connected to this other's limbs and, so, experience things as though it were, say, her legs that were crossed, but because this capacity is one that is supposed to give her the standpoint from which she has *her* perspective, all that it can do in this case is misfire. This is all to say, then, that bodily awareness is *as such* an awareness that a subject has of herself. She cannot through it have awareness of anyone else. Of course, this means something different here than it does when said in the context, say, of a subject's awareness of her intentional actions. Bodily awareness allows for a kind of error that is not possible in cases of self-awareness that run through a subject's rational agency. But I don't see why this should be an issue when the account that we've provided meets the requirements we set out with. Having a body is a matter of one's having a certain kind of consciousness of oneself, and this, as we've shown, is what one's bodily awareness provides for. So, bodily awareness is *as such* an awareness had of the subject herself, and it is made so because of how having such awareness and having a body stand to each other.

Our account does, then, qualify as a constitutivist account, even if it does not fit the familiar model. But what explains the split between this case and the others? Why should there be more than one kind of constitutivist account?

One thing to recognize is that bodily awareness is likely not alone in needing to be accounted for in the way that we have attempted here. Consider, for example, a subject's capacity to remember episodes from her own life. Now, there are those philosophers who have treated this capacity as though it were something like a perceptual capacity for finding out about the past more generally.³ It just happens to be the case that all actual exercises of the capacity are ones that pertain to the rememberer's *own* past and not someone else's. But, as in the case of bodily awareness, it does not seem as though we need to give into this characterization.⁴ Were one to find with one's actual memories someone else's implanted alongside them, it does not seem that one's access to these would be just the same as one's access to one's own. Just as in the bodily case, one could (assuming that one had the right background beliefs about one's peculiar circumstances) learn to acquire knowledge. But, arguably, one could only do so by *inference*. One might say to oneself, "I seem to remember doing such-and-such, but this doesn't cohere with what I know to have happened to me. So, it must be that thus-and-so did such-and-such..." Now, we cannot, of course, give a full defense of this treatment of memory here. But one can at least begin to see how such a defense would go. It would explain memory states in terms of their being available to the consciousness of the one who figures in them, of the one whose perspective they take up. Such states, it would contend, are not just recordings of past events that happen to be from a perspective. They are not just *there* for anyone with a suitable causal link, including the person whose memories they in fact are, to access and draw from. Such states are constitutively tied to the awareness, the remembering, of the subject who figures in them. They are states that she is such as to be aware of in being the states they are.

Now, there will, no doubt, be important differences between these two cases. But what would make memory and bodily awareness capacities that belonged to the same category—supposing that the above sketch bears out—would be that the states to which they were

³I am referring to those philosophers, like Derek Parfit, who hold that memory is a subset of a more general phenomenon, *quasi-memory* (Parfit 1986). He introduces this claim in Chapter 11.

⁴See (Evans 1982, pp. 235-248) and (McDowell 1998).

constitutively tied would be ones that belonged to their subject on independent grounds. A memory can only be a particular subject's if what it captures in fact happened to her. This is not something determined through her remembering but, rather, the other way around. She can remember the relevant episode only because it happened to her. She in fact has a memory of it because of her awareness—because she *does* recall it—but she is only in a position to do so because she was present during what transpired. Something similar, as we saw, is true in the case of bodily awareness. It is only because certain parts are a subject's that she can have bodily awareness of them and they can be parts of her body. If these parts were not where she was, if they were not in fact a part of the space that she takes up, they could not, through bodily awareness, form a part of the standpoint from which she has her perspective and so count as something of which she was aware through this capacity. So, this is why these forms of self-awareness have their own shape, even while fitting the general constitutivist framework. The states of the subject that they concern are states of hers on independent grounds. This changes how the relevant constitutive relations can connect the relevant form of awareness to the subject. This is what we traced in our account of bodily awareness, and this, I take it, is what we would find in the case of memory and any other cases that exhibit this same structure.

We should be able to see now where a constitutivist such as O'Brien goes wrong in her thinking about capacities like bodily awareness. She sees that certain features about what a subject is aware of in these cases are determined independently of the relevant awareness. She then assumes that there could be no constitutive story to tell here. Relating to oneself as subject, she thinks, is something that comes about through one's rational agency. It is only in such cases—deciding what to believe, arriving at what to do, etc.—that one's awareness could be only of oneself. This is because one's awareness in these cases constitutes that of which one is aware as one's own. It is this that sets one's awareness in such cases apart, that makes one's awareness an awareness of oneself as subject. But this, I hope to have shown, is a mistake. The pattern of constitutive relations that O'Brien sees as paradigmatic

is what we should expect when it comes to our awareness of those states and goings-on that we rationally determine. But there is no reason to think that this is the standard that our awareness of ourselves should always be held to. While we are, of course, rational beings whose psychological lives are shaped by the rational, self-conscious activity in which we engage, such activity hardly makes up the whole of our existence. There is much that is a part of us and a part of our being the kind of subjects we are that cannot be wrought through our rational activity. Recognizing this, we should not be surprised if the awareness that we have of these aspects of ourselves is in its own way constitutive of them and, so, also way of relating to ourselves as subject.

5.3

A different way in which one might challenge the adequacy of the account we've developed is to question how much it does to distinguish bodily awareness from familiar forms of sense perception. Assuming that what we have said until now holds up, our bodily awareness does have a constitutive role to play in our having bodies. Part of what it is for someone to have a body is for her to have this distinctive awareness of her limbs and other moveable parts. But need it follow from this that bodily awareness is not perceptual? As we have acknowledged, one's awareness does not determine the position of one's limbs. One's limbs coming to be positioned as they are is something determined outside of this awareness. There seems, then, to be an ineliminably *given* element in any instance of such awareness—something that obtains independently of one's awareness and that one's awareness simply picks up on. If this is the case, what's to stop someone from counting such awareness as perceptual? It, to be sure, would be a curious case—since it does have its special constitutive role—but the shape that it takes still seems to be recognizably that of a form of perception. Something's being a certain way—a limb in this case—*causes* one to be aware of it as that way.

One way to sharpen this concern is by way of what has seemed to many an actual case in which something perceived constitutively depends on perceiving subjects for what it

is—namely, color. Now, there are, of course, those philosophers who think that color can be accounted for entirely independently of us. They think that something’s being yellow, say, simply amounts to its having certain microphysical properties—properties by which it reflects, scatters, or emits light in a certain way.⁵ But there are many others who think that such an account cannot but come up short and that colors have to be understood dispositionally. We have not said what it is for something to be yellow, they think, unless we have said something about our visual apparatus and how yellow things are just those that will in certain conditions *produce certain experiences in us*. I have in mind the kind of view that John McDowell endorses when he says that

...there is an irreducible subjectivity in the content of the *idea* of something’s being yellow (McDowell 2011, p. 228)

...contingent uniformity in chromatic visual sensation enters into the very constitution of [color] properties themselves. There is nothing to those properties, those ways things can be, except being such as to look the appropriate way to subjects like us, subjects who come within the scope of a concept of normality in color vision only because there is that match in the chromatic looks that things present to them (McDowell 2011, p. 238).

What McDowell says here needs some unpacking. The uniformity to which he refers is the uniformity in visual experiences we happen to find across the great majority of human beings. Things needn’t have been this way. Even if most of us did have, as McDowell puts it, “chromatic” visual sensations—visual sensations that were not just in greyscale—this in itself would not be enough to secure the conditions under which things could be said to be red or yellow. It is because, over and above this, a great many of us have more or less comparable chromatic visual sensations in more or less comparable conditions that there are colors. Uniformity in our visual experiences is what allows there to be such a thing as normal color vision, and it is because there is normal color vision that there are in fact colors, and not just reflectances and so on, in the world. Now, whatever it is that one actually thinks of color—I mean to take no position either way—one should be able to see that, if color were

⁵See, for instance, (Hilbert 1987) and (Matthen 1988).

dispositional in the way that McDowell describes, color properties would in a clear sense be properties that constitutively depended on us and our seeing them. There would be no such properties were we and our capacities not such as we are.

Supposing that this were how things are with color, this obviously would not preclude us from saying that our experiences of color are perceptual experiences. Even though there being such a thing as yellow would in a certain sense depend on us and our experiences, this would not change the fact that when I see something yellow its being yellow is what causes me to see it as such. This still, without question, would be a perceptual event. The broad constitutive dependence involved in something's being yellow would still leave enough room for the kind of independence that makes for perceptual relatedness. A particular thing's being yellow would have this status independent of my seeing it that way, and this would be enough for my experience of its yellowness to be a perceptual one. Color, then, if understood in this way, provides a model for something that is perceived *and* constitutively dependent on perceivers for being what it is.

Now, here is one way in which we might try to pre-empt the coming objection. We might point out that there isn't that much in common between this case and bodily awareness as we have come to understand it. After all, the kinds of relations of dependence involved in each seem to be considerably different. With bodily awareness, the constitutive dependence concerns a particular subject and the particular parts of hers that make her a bodily being. What matters is that *she* have awareness of these parts. With color vision, there is no such one-to-one dependence. What matters is that there is (or at least was at some point) a group whose visual experiences meet the requirements that make for normal color vision. It's with this in place that there is such a thing as something's being red or yellow. It does not matter how any given individual experiences these properties. These properties are set by there being (or having been) perceivers with normal color vision. So, what we have in the case of color, we might argue, is a much looser set of constitutive relations and that, if this is what allows for particular experiences of color to be perceptual ones, this case cannot

show us much about the case that concerns us.

But things are in fact more complicated than this. It is true that no one else's awareness can play the constitutive role that a subject's bodily awareness does in her own case. But, as we've argued previously, such awareness is not the only condition that has a role to play in underwriting a subject's bodily being (Chapter 3, §4). Such a subject can lack bodily awareness of herself and still have a body, and in such a case, it will be her membership in the kind *human being* that does the work. The kind of dependence we see here is not, then, unlike what we see in the case of color vision. When someone who is colorblind fails to distinguish between, say, a red and a green object because of her condition, this does not change anything about what it is for something to be red or green. This is something fixed by others' capacity to make the distinction. So, it can seem as though the kind of loose constitutive dependence that obtains in the case of color vision is also what we get in the case of bodily awareness. While there is, of course, the one-to-one relation in which a subject stands to herself in the case of bodily awareness, it seems that it is her membership in the kind *human being*—and so the bodily awareness that human beings have of themselves more generally—that does the serious work of constituting her as something bodily. Her in fact having such awareness of herself at any given moment *accords* with her being bodily. But it does not seem to be what *makes* her bodily.

If this were in fact the way to characterize the dependence relations we see in bodily awareness, this would make trouble for our account. But, fortunately, it is not. We can begin to see this if we consider again a case in which a subject lacks bodily awareness of some or most of herself and compare this to a case in which a subject fails to see something red as being red. These two cases are not as structurally similar as the above makes them out to be. A subject who is, say, unaware of her hand's location is, of course, experiencing some kind of breakdown in her capacity for bodily awareness. But, as we have been at pains to show throughout, this is not all there is to such a case. This breakdown in the subject's awareness is also a breakdown in her having a body. It is true, as was acknowledged above,

that this does not deprive her of her body—and that this owes to her being a human being—but this also does not mean that her awareness, when she did have it, was idle. It is a part of a subject's having a body that some of her bodily states be had consciously. This includes the position of her limbs and other moveable parts. So, when a subject lacks awareness of the position of her hand, it is not just that something has gone wrong with her awareness. Equally, something has gone wrong with her hand. Compare this to a case of a subject's failing to see something red as red. The only way to make sense of this is in terms of her and her perception. Something has gone wrong with her visual apparatus, say, or she has misjudged the lighting conditions. Whatever the case may be, there's no faulting the thing she misperceives. It is something red, and that's all there is to it. There's no way for something to have gone wrong in its redness. The failure has to be hers.

This shows the difference between these two cases. With color, the constitutive dependence involved is really quite loose. There being colors depends on there being (or having been) perceivers who are uniformly disposed to having certain kinds of chromatic visual sensations in certain kinds of circumstances. Color, in this way, depends on us for what it is—it can't be understood except in connection with us and our experiences—but it is, at the same time, an objective property of worldly objects. Having been fixed as such by the existence of perceivers like us, it would not disappear from the world, even if at some point in the future, human beings lost the capacity to see color. This helps to explain why our experiences of color are perceptual experiences. Even with the ineliminably subjective component to color's being what it is, the fact that a given object is a given color is still something that obtains independently of anyone's experiencing it as this color. So, when someone sees it as it is, its being this way is what causes her to experience it as such. And should someone misperceive it, nothing about it changes. Its color is fixed.

With bodily awareness, the constitutive dependence is considerably tighter. While it is a subject's being a human being that underwrites her having a body, the *manner* of her bodily being is something directly determined by her bodily awareness of herself. Someone

who lacks bodily awareness still has a body. She still has the parts we'd expect her to. She may even be able to move them at will. But she lacks the consciousness of them that joins them fully to her subjectivity, and this means that, though she has a body, she has one in only a diminished way. Her awareness thus affects that of which it is an awareness. Having it means having the unity of a bodily subject.

What we find, then, in the case of bodily awareness, is not something on the far side of her subjectivity fully formed and awaiting the illumination of her awareness. There are, we can grant, *aspects* that are given to this awareness, including, for example, the actual configuration of her various parts. But this is not the same as there being a prior and independent fact of the matter there for the subject to gain awareness of—something that is a certain way and so can cause awareness of its being that way. Because what a subject is aware of in bodily awareness are parts of her, and because her having this awareness is a part of her having such parts, how things are with such parts—their manner of being—is in part determined by her awareness of them. This awareness is not one that comes at them from the outside. This, I think, is enough to differentiate it from the case of color. In that case, even with the constitutive dependence involved, there is a clear separation between that of which a subject is aware and her awareness of it. In the case of bodily awareness, as I hope to have shown, there is no such separation.

So, what does this mean for the worry that we started this with, the worry that bodily awareness is perceptual? This awareness, we have argued, stands apart from even the peculiarly dependent case of color and our seeing it. But does this show that bodily awareness is not perceptual? I think that it does. One way to see this is to recognize that the case of color is already a kind of limit case. It is a case of awareness in which there is in a certain sense no avoiding the subjective. Colors are fixed as what they are because we happen to be so constituted as to experience them. But the case still counts as one of perception, I take it, because of the separation discussed above—the separation between awareness and object in particular instances of awareness. This is the tipping point. If one were to protest,

pointing to what is given to this awareness, it could only be, I think, because one was still holding up something like O'Brien's account of action awareness as a model—because one was still beholden to the idea that, for an awareness to be non-perceptual, everything must be determined by it without remainder. But this, as I hope to have shown by now, is not something that constitutivism as such demands. It is enough that an awareness, because of its constitutive role, change that of which it is an awareness—that it make what is had now something consciously had—and this, as we've argued throughout, is exactly what a subject's bodily awareness does.

5.4

We have resisted the idea that self-awareness and rational agency need go hand-in-hand, that something's being a form of self-awareness means that it determines that of which it is an awareness through and through. This, we argued, is something that we should expect to see with *some* states of which we are self-aware because they, by their nature, are such as to be rationally determined. It makes sense that our awareness of them would play a central part in the rational activity that makes these states what they are. But, as we have been at pains to show, there are other states of ours of which we are self-aware. This includes the position of our limbs. Much about limb position is determined outside of our awareness. How we are disposed is not as such something up to reason. But, as we have argued, our awareness of how we are disposed, our bodily awareness, is nonetheless a form of self-awareness. It is the awareness that joins our limbs to our consciousness and makes us bodily subjects.

But, even with all of this laid out, one might still wonder where exactly this leaves our bodily awareness. There are, after all, many sorts of states of ours that are not as such rationally determined but are, one might suspect, ones of which we are aware *as subject*. Do these all belong together—bodily awareness alongside, say, our awareness of our pains and other bodily sensations, our awareness of our perceptual states, and so on? Do they form a *second* category of states of which we are self-aware alongside the category that those states

determined by our rational agency seem to form?

Something like this seems to be what, for instance, Matthew Boyle has in mind when he speaks of our having “receptive self-knowledge” (Boyle 2011, p. 238) in addition to our knowledge of our rationally determined states. The basic idea is that some of what we are in a position to know about ourselves as ourselves is explained not by our making it so but by our *undergoing* it. Pain, perception, hunger, and so on are ways in which we are affected, and there is in each of these cases, Boyle thinks, an account to be given about how the knowledge we have of these states is constitutive of our being in them. These states are ones in which we are *knowingly* affected. Now, Boyle does not mention our bodily positions when he draws the distinction between these two kinds of states. But we should, I think, see that they pose a problem for this distinction. Bodily positions, as we have emphasized, are not as such rationally determined states. There will be many occasions on which a subject will be positioned as she is through something other than her knowing agency. This is nothing out of the ordinary. But this does not mean, then, that bodily positions are as such states that a subject undergoes, states that are merely visited on a subject. Bodily positions are not in this way like states of pain or hunger. More often than not, a subject’s bodily positions are determined by her rational agency. She is positioned as she is because she is in the midst of acting intentionally; her being so positioned is a part of her carrying this action out. So, bodily positions, and with them, bodily awareness, resist categorization in this way.

Now, there are ways in which one might try to fit bodily positions back into this framework. One such way would be to deny that *bodily position* is a unitary category. There are those bodily positions that are determined by a subject’s rational agency and those that are visited on her. They, because of their differing origins, belong to different types. There is, then, no need to give bodily states their own category. Sometimes, a subject’s being in a certain bodily position will be a matter of her being knowingly affected. Sometimes, her positioning will issue from her rational agency (even if from the outside it looks much the same) and she will know it as such. There is no further way in which a subject can be known

to herself.

Now, I do not want to deny that bodily positions that figure in intentional actions are importantly different from those that do not. But I do not think that starting from this will help us understand anything about bodily awareness. This is because bodily awareness is not concerned with this difference. This difference does not show up in it. Bodily awareness is concerned with bodily positions *in general*. Such positions *do* belong to a unitary category. Bodily positions that a subject rationally determines for herself belong to one subdivision, positions determined by other means another. But bodily awareness does not distinguish between them. A subject has other capacities for this. Let me explain. What a subject knows about herself in acting intentionally is what she is doing. She knows that she is, say, waving her arm, drawing attention to herself, signalling for help, etc. This is the kind of knowledge that G.E.M. Anscombe calls *practical knowledge* (Anscombe 1963, p. 87). A subject's bodily awareness, while integral to her acting, is separate from this. Through it, she knows, say, where exactly it is her arm is now and, so, how much farther she can extend it this way or that, and this, of course, facilitates her arm-waving. But her knowing its position is still separate in that she can have this knowledge independently of having any practical knowledge. She needn't know *how* it is her arm got to be positioned as it is or *why* it is that way to know that it is so positioned and that this allows for movement in this or that direction. She will, of course, in this case, also know that her arm isn't positioned as it is by happenstance, but this will be because she is moving it intentionally and so knows this through practical knowledge.

Something similar can be said in the case of a bodily position that a subject does not determine for herself. It is true that a subject's position, should it result from a fall or collision or other upset of her agency, will be an effect visited on her. She will also, I take it, know that this is so. But it will not be through her bodily awareness. It will be because she, say, felt her foot catch on the uneven pavement as she was walking and then felt herself falling forward all of a sudden. By the time she lands, she'll have gathered that she tripped.

But this won't be something that shows itself in her bodily awareness. Through it, she will be aware, say, of her arms' being flung out from herself or the way in which her neck is now overextended. But she will not be aware of this as something visited on her. All that she is aware of in bodily awareness is her present position, not the forces or agency by means of which she came to be this way.

But why should we think of a subject's bodily awareness as being in this way independent? Why not think of it as concerned with how the subject ends up positioned as she is? Insisting on dividing this awareness up in this way, I think, misunderstands its character. As we have come to see through our discussion, this awareness is an *orienting* awareness. It gives a subject her standpoint from which she can direct herself outwards. It is not concerned with how it is a subject has ended up where she is but with where she is here and now and what this means for her perceptually and practically. The way to understand this awareness, then, is in terms of its putting her in position to exercise her outwardly directed powers. It does not matter how she got where she is. She, being finite and material, is subject to the vicissitudes of her surroundings and of her own flesh and bone. Sometimes, she will carry off what she intends, straight-off. Sometimes, there will be upset, interruption, breakdown. This is all to be expected. What her bodily awareness does, in giving her the position of her limbs, is keep her oriented throughout so that she can carry on with the exercise of her others powers, receptive and spontaneous. This is why it belongs to a category all its own.

Concluding Remarks

At the outset of this dissertation, I pointed to a particular picture of ourselves that informs much of current philosophical thinking about the mind. On this picture, the psychological is something that remains, as it were, in the head. So, while, on it, we, in addition to being subjects, are at the same time bodily beings, what this effectively means is that we have parts—arms, legs, and all the rest—that, in being composed of muscle, skin, and bone, can be represented in and moved by thought but do not properly partake in it. I further said that this picture of ourselves was a fundamentally unstable one, that the psychological and the bodily conceived as such in it threaten to pull apart from each other and that this is something that has even led some philosophers to give up on this picture all together. (Jettisoning one of its elements, they calculate, is worth the stability they thereby gain.) The problem, I suggested, was not these philosophers' trying to hold these elements together but how they were thinking about them—in particular, how they were thinking about our bodies. If we could just understand our bodies as partaking in the psychological, I said, we could have a picture of ourselves on which our being subjects and our having bodies were not constantly about to come apart from each other. It was thus my aim in the dissertation to show how our bodies in fact partake in the psychological.

In giving the foregoing account of bodily awareness, this is what I hope to have done. I have argued that this awareness is not a form of perceptual awareness—that it is not a way we have of coming to grips with a prior and independent reality—but an awareness that plays a role in constituting its object. This is not to say that this awareness determines its object through and through. A subject's limbs' being positioned as they are and their being

hers are features determined outside of this awareness. But her awareness, I have argued, is what makes these limbs *limbs*, what makes the positions of which she is aware *bodily* positions. This is because having a body is not just a matter of having a physiology. It is, I have argued, a matter of a subject's *being present in the space that she takes up*, and this is something for which her bodily awareness provides. It, in presenting her with her arms, legs, and so on non-egocentrically, allows these parts of hers to form the standpoint from which she has her perspective on her surroundings. It orients the whole of her such that what she perceives she perceives from this bodily standpoint. This in turn allows her to apprehend what is practically possible for her—what she can do with her body here and now—just from what she perceives. This awareness allows her to experience and move *as one*. It is in this sense, then, that her bodily awareness makes for her being experientially present and so for her having a body. A subject's having a body is not separate from her having this awareness of it.

Now, this, I recognize, does not settle everything as far as the picture of ourselves we should go along with. Someone who, for instance, was particularly committed to a reductive and naturalistic conception of mind—whose first commitment, say, was to our psychological states being realized in the brain—would, I imagine, balk at what I have proposed. I would have to provide an all together different set of arguments that showed that we should not let what we know about the physiological underpinnings of our psychological activity dictate how we make psychological attributions—that, in short, it is *human beings*, not their parts, that think. But for those philosophers whose first aspiration is unity, to our reconciling our being subjects with our having bodies, I hope to have at least made a start.

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