How to Defend the Phenomenology of Attitudes

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A widely embraced view in philosophy of mind is that sensations such as pains and itches have a felt quality to them. In other words, it is thought that these states possess phenomenology. It is much more controversial, however, whether certain attitudes such as beliefs, desires, and hopes possess phenomenology. In fact, it is accepted as obvious by some that all attitudes lack phenomenology.² Recently, however, a growing number of philosophers have begun to challenge this claim. Horgan and Tienson (2002), Christopher Shields (2011), and Uriah Kriegel (2015), for example, have defended the view that token beliefs, desires and other attitudes possess phenomenology. More boldly, these philosophers hold that such attitudes possess a *non-sensory* type of phenomenology. Such phenomenology is known in the literature as "cognitive phenomenology." Let's call non-sensory phenomenology (NSAP). And let's call liberals who think NSAP exists, *NSAP liberals*. Call those who deny its existence, *NSAP conservatives*.³

I side with NSAP liberals in this debate. But I also think that the most promising way of defending NSAP has yet to be offered. As I will argue, the most common

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² Nelkin (1989) is one such philosopher. He writes, "There are propositional attitudes, and we are sometimes noninferentially conscious about our attitudinal states. But such consciousness does not feel like anything. A propositional attitude and consciousness about that attitude have no phenomenological properties" (430). See Braddon-Mitchell and Jackson (2007; p. 468) for a similar claim.

³ One might think anyone who embraces the view that non-sensory cognitive phenomenology exists—call this person a *liberal* simpliciter—will be an NSAP liberal. This, however, is not the case. David Pitt (2004, 2011) is an example of a liberal who does not think NSAP exists. Pitt claims that thoughts (narrowly construed) possess non-sensory phenomenology. But Pitt does not think less controversial attitudes such as beliefs and desires possess non-sensory phenomenology. Insofar as thoughts are not attitudes, Pitt embraces liberalism but denies NSAP liberalism.

arguments liberals have offered in defense of this type of phenomenology are arguments that, if sound, only demonstrate that a certain type of non-sensory phenomenology exists; these arguments, that is, do not demonstrate that non-sensory phenomenology is possessed by attitudes. In what follows, I seek to remedy this. I do so by advancing a novel argument to the conclusion that certain desires possess non-sensory phenomenology. My defense of this thesis proceeds in two steps: I argue that: (i) desires are states that play the causal role of desiring, and (ii) in certain cases states that play the causal role of desires possess non-sensory phenomenology. I in turn argue that if the template I offer for defending the phenomenology of desires is flawed, then we should deny the existence of NSAP. I conclude by explaining why liberals and non-liberals alike should care whether certain attitudes actually do possess non-sensory phenomenology. With respect to this latter issue, my contention will be that insofar as NSAP exists, and in particular the NSAP of desires exists, positing this type of phenomenology helps explain how we possess epistemically secure access to our desires and also how desires can provide (normative) reasons for action.

I: Non-Sensory Attitudinal Phenomenology Defined

Before proceeding further, it will help to get a clearer understanding of what is meant by *non-sensory attitudinal phenomenology*. By *non-sensory phenomenology*, I mean phenomenology that is not identical with or reducible to any of the following types of experiences:

(a) perceptual experiences (e.g. olfactory experiences)

- (b) the experiences of bodily sensations (e.g. the experience of hunger pangs)
- (c) the experiences of imagistic imagery of a non-linguistic sort (e.g. the experience of thinking of one's distant friend)
- (d) the experiences of linguistic imagery (e.g. the experience of thinking 'I'm tired' in words)

Non-sensory phenomenology, then, is phenomenology not encompassed by (a)-(d). I understand *non-sensory phenomenology* this way in part because a host of NSAP conservatives are sympathetic with this construal of it.⁴

By attitudinal phenomenology, I mean phenomenology that at the very least is possessed by the attitude in question. To say that a token attitude A possesses phenomenology of type P is to say that A instantiates P. Any liberal who embraces attitudinal phenomenology must at least accept the view that it is the attitudes themselves that instantiate certain phenomenal properties. Consider: if a particular phenomenology were merely associated with an attitude, as opposed to the attitude possessing it, then it would not, strictly speaking, be the attitude that instantiated the phenomenology but the state associated with it that did. Such associated phenomenology, I take it, would not be deserving of the name attitudinal phenomenology.

Now most NSAP liberals hold that the relationship between phenomenology and the attitude that has it, is stronger than one of mere possession. The majority of these

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⁴ Tye and Wright (2011)—from which the above quartet is largely adapted—are two such conservatives. Prinz (2011) is another conservative who embraces this characterization of non-sensory phenomenology. Some liberals might wonder whether conservatives are stacking the deck in their favor by including (c) and (d) as *sensory* experiential properties. I am comfortable doing so, however, because for my purposes not much turns on whether (c) and (d) are sensory experiential properties.

liberals appear to embrace the view that at the very least the phenomenology that certain attitudes (allegedly) possess *suffice* for making those attitudes the type of attitudes they are. Horgan and Tienson (2002) hold this stronger view. Christopher Shields (2011) and Kriegel (2015) appear to think the same. Most of these philosophers also hold that certain attitude types like desire have a characteristic, distinctive phenomenology that is associated with *only* attitudes of that type. To use David Pitt's (2004) term, these theorists think certain attitudes have a *proprietary phenomenology*. This phenomenology, on their view, individuates attitude types and enables us to type-identify attitudes on the basis of their phenomenology. ⁵ As I have construed things, though, one need not hold this stronger view in order to embrace NSAP liberalism.⁶

NSAP liberals have offered a number of arguments in defense of the existence of cognitive phenomenology. At least some of these philosophers believe that the arguments they offer in defense of the existence of the latter also enables them to arrive at the conclusion that non-sensory attitudinal phenomenology exists. But, with respect to two of the more popular defenses of cognitive phenomenology, we will see that this is in fact not the case. Explaining why these arguments do not get the NSAP liberal to the conclusion NSAP exists will also help us see what needs to be done in order to put non-sensory attitudinal phenomenology on firm ground.

⁵ I am sympathetic with the view that certain attitudes possess phenomenology that not only suffices for making the attitude in question the attitude type it is, but also is proprietary in nature. I will not, however, defend these stronger claims here.

⁶ Note that as I have characterized things, it is possible to be an NSAP *conservative* and embrace the view that attitudinal phenomenology exists. One can do so if one thinks the phenomenology certain attitudes (allegedly) possess is a type of experiential property encompassed by (a)-(d).

⁷ Horgan (2011), for instance, thinks that the arguments he offers in defense of cognitive phenomenology justify the claim that NSAP exists.

II: How not to Defend Non-Sensory Attitudinal Phenomenology

The two most common types of arguments NSAP liberals have offered in defense of the existence of cognitive phenomenology—types of arguments they appear to think allows them to arrive at the conclusion that certain attitudes possess cognitive phenomenology—are (a) contrast arguments and (b) partial-zombie arguments. Neither type of argument, even if sound, gets the liberal to the conclusion that NSAP exists. Consider (a) first. So-called contrast arguments involve the presentation of two scenarios that are thought to be identical in terms of sensory phenomenology but nevertheless involve a difference in phenomenal character. Strawson (1994), for example, has us consider a case in which two subjects allegedly have the same auditory experience of certain sounds, but one subject understands the sounds as words and the other does not. It is then claimed that there is a phenomenological difference between them. Insofar as the sensory experiences of the two persons are identical, so the argument goes, the phenomenological difference must be a matter of non-sensory properties.⁸

Conservatives have responded to the above case by contending that the phenomenal difference between the agent with understanding and the agent who lacks it can in fact be accounted for in terms of a difference in sensory phenomenology. But setting aside the issue of whether this conservative move is tenable, what has not been made explicit in the literature is that even if the phenomenology in question is non-sensory in nature, such contrast arguments do not get liberals to the conclusion that the attitudes in question possess phenomenology. To see why, it will be helpful to work with a type of mental state that is more obviously an attitude.

⁸ Siewert (1998; p. 275) defends a similar type of contrast case argument.

⁹ Carruthers (2011), Prinz (2011) and Tye and Wright (2011) offer this response to contrast-style cases.

Christopher Shields (2011) has recently argued that curiosity ¹⁰ is a cognitive attitude that possesses phenomenology. Shields could (although he doesn't) attempt to argue for the existence of the NSAP of curiosity by embracing a contrast argument in which we are asked to consider the contrast between two agents—S and R—both of whom are presented with a question only S is curious about. One could then follow Strawson's lead in contending that there is a phenomenal difference between S and R, where this phenomenal difference is not a matter of a difference in sensory phenomenology. But note here that even if there is a non-sensory phenomenal difference between our two agents, this would not entail that it is the attitude of curiosity that possesses phenomenology. This is the case because one can be a role functionalist about this attitude type.

Role functionalists hold that mental states, including attitudes, are second-order states of having a first-order state that plays the causal role of the attitude in question. The first-order state, according to the role functionalist, need not be (and in many cases will not be) an attitude proper. So while a role functionalist can accept that there is a phenomenal difference between the two cases, the phenomenal difference, it can be contended, is a matter of S tokening a realizer state of that which plays the causal role of curiosity; it is not a difference in phenomenology at the second-order level. S's realizer state, it can then be argued, is not an attitude proper, but rather that which *realizes* or *fills* the causal role of an attitude type. Given this, a role functionalist can embrace the view that curiosity itself (i.e. the second-order property) is not a phenomenal state. Hence, contrast arguments with respect to attitudes like curiosity do not get one to the conclusion

¹⁰ By curiosity, here, I mean the state of being curious.

that it is the attitude itself that instantiates a non-sensory phenomenal property. More work would need to be done to get the liberal to that conclusion.¹¹

Consider (b) next. Partial-zombie arguments involve the claim that there are (metaphysically) possible beings that lack sensory phenomenology and yet still possess a phenomenal life. The possibility of such beings, it is claimed, is supposed to provide us with (at least) a defeasible reason to think that there must be some states—typically attitudes—that possess non-sensory phenomenology. Kriegel (2015) offers an example of such an argument. He has us imagine a creature—Zoe—who lacks sensory experiences, but who nevertheless has certain phenomenological experiences such as those involved in realizing the truth of mathematical facts. Kriegel thinks that since Zoe lacks all sensory phenomenology, the phenomenal experiences she tokens must be non-sensory in nature. Horgan (2011) offers a similar type of argument with respect to different cognitive and conative states—e.g. certain types of beliefs and desires. Horgan takes the conclusion of his discussion of partial-zombies to be that these attitudes instantiate certain non-sensory phenomenal properties.

As with contrast cases, conservatives have ways they can push back against partial-zombie arguments. 12 But even if one thinks these arguments provide liberals with

¹¹ It might be objected that contrast arguments were never intended to get liberals to the conclusion that NSAP exists. But if *understanding* and states like it are in fact cognitive attitudes this objection, I think, is mistaken. Proponents of these arguments such as Strawson (1994) and Siewert (2005) *do* take these arguments to arrive at the conclusion that such states possess non-sensory phenomenology. But even if the types of states referenced in these arguments are not attitudes proper, the important thing to note is that contrast arguments do not suffice for getting the NSAP liberal to the conclusion that NSAP exists. At the very least, then, certain arguments NSAP liberals have offered in defense of the non-sensory phenomenology non-attitudinal cognitive states are thought to possess cannot be adapted for more commonplace attitudes.

¹² A conservative could, for instance, argue that our phenomenal lives mirror Zoe's phenomenal life. The reason we might be tempted to think this is not the case is that we are not cognizant of the ways in which

a defeasible reason to think non-sensory phenomenology exists, one should not think such arguments provide liberals with good reason to think certain attitudes *possess* non-sensory phenomenology. This is because a conservative might hold that the phenomenal states that Zoe allegedly tokens are realizers of second-order states, where these former states are not attitudes proper. We would need an additional argument to get us to the conclusion that the types of states that possess phenomenology in partial-zombie cases are in fact attitudes as opposed to these alternative realizer states. The point I am making here mirrors the point I made above concerning contrast cases. The role functionalist can accept that in partial-zombie cases there is a phenomenal difference of a non-sensory nature, but deny that this phenomenal difference indicates that attitudes *possess* phenomenology. The upshot, then, is that partial-zombie cases at best only get the liberal to the conclusion that we have a defeasible reason to think non-sensory phenomenology exists. Similar points, I think, can be made about other liberal defenses of NSAP.¹³

What has gone wrong here for the NSAP liberal, is that the main arguments they offer in support of this type of phenomenology involve an implicit transition from the contention that (i) non-sensory phenomenology exists to the claim that (ii) non-sensory attitudinal phenomenology exists. But, as I have argued, (i) does not entail (ii). Nor do these types of arguments give us any reason for thinking that insofar as (i) is true, (ii)

our sensory phenomenology actually does constitute the type of phenomenology Kriegel thinks Zoe possesses.

¹³ For example, Shield's (2011) parity-arguments. Briefly put, Shields argues that if one holds that mental states such as sensations are phenomenal states, then one should think that certain attitudes possess non-sensory phenomenology. His strategy is to point out that certain features that less controversial phenomenal states possess are also features that cognitive states possess, and that positing NSAP is the only way to explain this similarity. I lack the space here to address Shield's parity-arguments in detail. I do, however, want to note that I think such arguments do not get one to the conclusion that NSAP exists for similar reasons to the ones adduced above with respect to contrast arguments and partial-zombie arguments. I also worry that regardless of this problem, Shields arguments will be seen as question-begging by conservatives.

must be true as well. They fail to do so because contrast cases and partial-zombie arguments do not provide us with a reason for thinking that role functionalism is false. And this is precisely what the liberal needs to defend, at least with respect to these types of arguments, in order to avoid the role functionalist move I have been discussing. NSAP liberals, then, need a defense of their view that does not merely focus on demonstrating the existence of cognitive phenomenology, but also gets them to the conclusion that such phenomenology is actually possessed by certain attitudes.

At this point it might be pointed out that there is one broad type of argument in the cognitive phenomenology literature that has been used to defend the view that certain cognitive states possess phenomenology—viz. what we might call the *Argument from Epistemic Access* (AEA). In broad form, AEA can be construed as follows:

- (1a) We have a certain type of epistemic access E to certain cognitive states C.
- (2a) We couldn't have E to C if C did not possess phenomenal features F.
- (3a) Therefore, C possesses phenomenal features F.

E, C, and F will be filled-in in different ways by proponents of this line-of-reasoning. For example, Pitt (2004) argues that we have direct, immediate access to our thoughts only if such thoughts possess proprietary, distinctive and individuative phenomenology. ¹⁴ In other words, Pitt holds that we could only have this type of epistemic access to our thoughts if thoughts possess these phenomenal properties. And since we have such

distinctive, and individuative phenomenology.

¹⁴ By distinctive phenomenology, Pitt means phenomenology that entails that token thoughts are phenomenologically different. By *individuative phenomenology*, Pitt means phenomenology that constitutes a thought's representational content. See his (2004; p. 4-5) for a discussion of *proprietary*,

access, it follows that certain thoughts do possess these properties. Goldman (1993) develops a similar argument with respect to less-controversial attitude types.

If the type of argument Pitt and Goldman defend vis-a-vis the attitudes is sound, it would vindicate NSAP liberalism. But, as Bayne and Montague (2011) note, the Argument from Epistemic Access has not found a warm reception. Part of the concern both proponents and opponents of NSAP liberalism have had with this type of argument is that it relies on the controversial contention that a particular type of epistemic access can only be explained by positing that attitudes possess a certain phenomenology. But a number of philosophers think such epistemic access can be explained without positing phenomenology. In order to defend AEA, then, one would need to argue that all these alternative explanations fail. Additionally, one would have to provide support for the view that we do have e.g. direct epistemic access to cognitive states, a contention that also has its fair share of critics. ¹⁵ Given the various ways that conservatives can respond to AEA, a liberal who attempts to defend NSAP in this *indirect* manner is, to say the least, going to have to engage in some significant toil.

My own view is that taking this epistemic turn to defend NSAP is strategically problematic for the reasons just given. More importantly, though, I think offering such an indirect defense of NSAP is unsatisfactory because it avoids directly engaging with the metaphysical issues I take to be at the heart of the debate between NSAP liberals and their opponents. The metaphysical issues in question involve whether we should embrace certain positions in philosophy of mind—namely, views that make it reasonable to think that attitudes, strictly speaking, are phenomenal states. I hold, then, that we should resist

¹⁵ See, for example, Carruthers (2010).

taking an epistemic turn at this point as a way of defending NSAP, and instead adopt a more direct argument in defense of this type of phenomenology. In the next section I offer such a defense. I do so by looking at a view in the literature on the phenomenology of desire I am largely sympathetic with—namely, Ruth Chang's (2008) position.

III: How to Defend the NSAP of Desires

Ruth Chang (2008) has recently contended that certain desires have a characteristic type of phenomenology. Chang describes the phenomenology of desiring as an experienced attraction to the desired object. Acknowledging certain conceptual and linguistic limitations, I think what Chang calls *attraction* can most aptly be characterized as the experience of being *drawn* to the desired object. Other theorists, including NSAP conservatives, acknowledge the existence of such experiences. Tye (2015), for example, contends that there is something it's like to be drawn to an object ¹⁶ and that this experience is intimately connected up with desiring. ¹⁷

I think that attraction is a genuine phenomenon. But I also hold the more controversial view that attraction is a type of non-sensory phenomenology that *certain* desires *possess*. ¹⁸ Given this, I recognize the burden of needing to defend both the claim that (a) attraction is non-sensory in nature as well as the claim that (b) certain desires

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¹⁶ Object here is being used in a neutral way to refer to that which we desire. A number of philosophers of mind think that what we desire is the realization of certain states of affairs. See Smith (1994) for this common view. Recently, however, some have argued that what we desire are in certain cases, concrete particulars. See Montague (2007) among others for a defense of this alternative position. I need not weigh in on this debate here.

¹⁷ Tye writes: "Often when we strongly desire something, we experience a feeling of being 'pulled' or 'tugged." The type of experience Tye references here, I think, is akin to what Chang calls *attraction*. Tye goes onto suggest that this type of experience is reducible to a set of sensory experiences. I will address this typical conservative move below.

¹⁸ I emphasize the word *certain* because I do not think that *all* desires possess phenomenology.

possess phenomenology.¹⁹ Contrast arguments and partial-zombie arguments, as I argued above, might enable us to arrive at the conclusion that (a) is true. But these arguments don't help us arrive at the conclusion that (b) is true. How should NSAP liberals go about defending (b)? I think we can get a good idea of how to answer this question by returning to a discussion of functionalism vis-á-vis NSAP liberalism.

I noted above that a line-of reasoning an NSAP conservative can embrace in defense of their conservativism is the following: (i) role functionalism is true and hence all attitudes are second-order states, and (ii) these second-order states lack phenomenology. But there is an alternative functionalist position that makes it much more plausible to hold that it is the attitudes themselves that possess phenomenology. That position is realizer functionalism. Realizer functionalism is the view that attitudes are not second-order states of having a first-order state that realizes a certain causal role C, but rather the first-order state that realizes C. This position has been championed by D.M. Armstrong (1968) and David Lewis (1980) among others in defense of reductive physicalism—the view that types of mental states are reducible to types of brain states.²⁰

Reductive physicalism aside, if one embraces realizer functionalism then insofar as the state which performs the causal role of the attitude in question possesses phenomenology, it would follow that the attitude itself possesses phenomenology. An adequate defense of realizer functionalism, then would not only block the above NSAP

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¹⁹ Chang does not provide a defense of (a) and (b). This is perhaps because her primary concern is not with the NSAP liberal/conservative debate, but with the debate over whether desires can provide reasons for action. As will be commented on below, Chang holds, *pace* Scanlon (1998), Raz (2002), and Parfit (2004), that certain desires do provide reasons for action.

²⁰ That being said, realizer functionalists have typically not been sympathetic with the view that non-sensory attitudinal phenomenology exists. Neither Armstrong nor Lewis would be sympathetic with this position. And Kim (2011), another realizer functionalist, explicitly denies that attitudes possess phenomenology.

conservative move, but it would also open up the possibility that NSAP exists. While I will defend realizer functionalism at length later, I now want to argue that we have good reason to believe that, in certain cases, states that realize the causal role of desiring are states that possess attraction. In order to defend this contention, I first need to explain what I take to be the causal role of desire.

On the view I am sympathetic with desires are states that tend to be caused by certain mental states (e.g. perceptual experiences, beliefs, and other desires)²¹, and in turn tend to generate action. For example, the desire for a glass of Syrah might be caused by the perceptual experience of a bottle of Syrah. Such a desire would in turn tend to cause, when certain conditions obtain,²² one to act in Syrah-seeking ways. The causal role of desire, then, on my view, is action-based. This action-based account of desire, or something very much like it, is arguably the standard view of desire among philosophers of mind. At least since Hume, it has been the default position on desire.²³

There are, however, objections that have been leveled against this standard view. A critic could, for instance, argue that the above account of the causal role of desire does not distinguish desire from other types of mental states. It fails to do so, according to the objector, because there are other states that generate action besides desire. I lack the space to countenance all the types of states that might be thought to play the causal role I am claiming desires play. But I do want to go some way towards responding to this worry

²¹ Admittedly, it is not easy to make more specific what types of perceptual experiences, beliefs, and other desires typically cause desires, although some would be sympathetic with the view that, e.g., the types of beliefs that tend to cause desires are beliefs about the goodness of states of affairs obtaining.

²² Such conditions would include having the appropriate beliefs and lacking stronger conflicting desires.

²³ Indeed, Timothy Schroeder (2004), in one of the few recent full-length works on the metaphysics of desire, notes that the view that "desiring is purely a matter of being motivated to attain an end is such a commonplace in many quarters of the philosophy of mind that it is not even defended" (10). Schroeder proceeds to label the motivational approach to desire: "The Standard View of Desire" (11).

by considering a popular candidate for a type of mental state that is thought to generate action besides desire—viz. belief, and in particular, belief that one has a particular duty or moral obligation.

G.F. Schueler (1995) among a host of other ethicists, claims that the belief or judgment that one has a particular duty can generate action in the absence of desire. In defense of this claim, Schueler uses the example of being motivated to go to a PTA meeting on a cold winter night because he views it as his duty to attend. Schueler contends that it cannot be a desire that gets him out the door since he does not want to go to the meeting. What gets him out the door in this scenario, is rather, according to Schueler, the judgment that he has a duty to attend. Such examples, however, can plausibly be explained as conflicts of desires with one stronger desire winning out. In Schueler's PTA-meeting case, for example, Schueler can reasonably be thought to want to perform his duty. Wanting to perform his duty, in turn, gets accorded more weight in his decision calculus than wanting to remain inside. On this way of understanding the case, Schueler's desire to fulfill his duty is stronger than his desire to stay in, and it is the former desire that generates action. This explanation seems preferable to Schueler's explanation given that it seems reasonable to think that if he did not *desire* to perform his duty, he wouldn't leave the comforts of his home. Schueler-style cases, then, fail to show that beliefs/judgments that one has a particular duty can perform the same causal role as desire.

As I implied above, there are other objections one can offer to action-based accounts of desire. I have responded to a number of these objections elsewhere. To keep

my project manageable, I am going to take this intuitively plausible view of desire, or something very similar to it, to be correct.

Insofar as the causal role of desire is action-based, what reason do we have to think that states with attraction are caused by certain mental states and in turn generate action? To answer this question, I suggest we turn to a passage from Theodore Dreiser's *Sister Carrie*. In the passage, Dreiser describes his protagonist, Carrie's, numerous desires to own material goods upon visiting a Chicago department store for the first time. Here is Dreiser's memorable description of the event:

Carrie passed along the busy aisles, much affected by the remarkable displays of trinkets, dress goods, stationery, and jewelry. Each separate counter was a show place of dazzling interest and attraction. She could not help feeling the claim of each trinket and valuable upon her personally, and yet she did not stop. There was nothing there... which she did not long to own. The dainty slippers and stockings, the delicately frilled skirts and petticoats, the laces, ribbons, hair-combs, purses, all touched with her individual desire (77).

Dreiser goes on to speak of Carrie "feeling the drag of desire" (77). I take it that what Dreiser imagines Carrie experiencing here is a paradigmatic example of what Chang and I call attraction. Carrie experiences an attraction to the state of affairs in which she owns these items; she is, in some sense, drawn to the objects of her desire and she is well-aware of this experience.

Let us change the story slightly and stipulate that Carrie has enough money to purchase the products in question. What explains why she purchases the items? The best explanation, I submit, is that "feeling the drag of desire" does. In other words, attraction generates action when coupled with the right beliefs. After all, if one is *drawn* to having a certain state of affairs brought about, then *ceteris peribus*, ²⁴ it seems reasonable to think one will act in ways to bring this state of affairs about.

In other words, in the above case, it's reasonable to think that states with attraction are performing the causal role of desire. This is the case because such states are caused by Carrie's perceptual experiences of the items along with, ostensibly, certain beliefs and desires Dreiser's protagonist possesses (e.g. the belief that it would be pleasurable for her to own such items). This attraction in turn moves Carrie to act—more specifically, to purchase the goods in question. It seems, then, that in certain cases states that possess attraction realize the causal role of desire. And if that's the case, then insofar as realizer functionalism is true, certain desires possess phenomenology.

Now a conservative can grant the above line-of-reasoning and still deny the existence of NSAP. They can do so by arguing that the phenomenology of attraction is not a type of cognitive phenomenology. The NSAP liberal, then, needs an additional defense of the claim that attraction is non-sensory in nature. I noted above that contrast arguments and partial-zombie arguments might provide defeasible reasons for thinking that cognitive phenomenology exists. The importance of such arguments, I think, is that they dialectically force the conservative into having to account for the phenomenological difference between, e.g. an agent who experiences attraction and an agent who doesn't by appealing to sensory experience. Prinz (2011) and Tye (2015) attempt to do just this. The former claims that desires might be tokened along with emotional-based experiences like

²⁴ This clause is needed because if the agent does not have the appropriate beliefs or has other conflicting stronger desires then the agent will not act in ways to bring about the content of her desire.

anxiety, apprehension, or anticipation. ²⁵ He's right. They might be. But a reasonable response to Prinz's suggestion is to point out that attraction can be experienced in the absence of such emotion-based experiences. It seems possible, for instance, to experience the drag of desire without anticipating obtaining the object, perhaps because one does not believe the object can be obtained. Furthermore, it seems possible to experience attraction without feeling any type of experience of anxiety, apprehension, or even delight. ²⁶ If attraction can be experienced without experiencing these emotion-based experiences, then, the former cannot be reduced to the latter.

A more plausible suggestion would be that certain desires possess certain sensations such as hunger pangs, sensations that are part of the above quartet of sensory experiences. Alvarez (2008) appears to defend the view that *bodily appetites*—i.e. desires we have in virtue of possessing certain bodily needs—possess sensations such as the experience of being hungry. I argue at length elsewhere that we should not embrace this defense of the phenomenology of desires.²⁷ But even granting that Alvarez's view is

²⁵ Prinz (2011) claims that, "Cognitive desires may be accompanied by emotions. If I want it to be the case that my candidate wins, I will feel nervous anticipation, and the thought of victory will instill delight, while the thought of defeat will usher in waves of despair. On experiencing any of these fluctuating feelings, I may report that I desire a victory. *There is no one feeling of desire*, but rather a family of anticipatory emotions" (190) [Emphasis added]. I take it that Prinz might claim that some of the emotions that compose this family can explain what I am calling attraction.

²⁶ I take it as obvious that we *can* experience the drag of desire without also experiencing dread, anxiety, or apprehension. This also seems possible with respect to delight. Consider an alcoholic who experiences the draw of having a drink but who does not experience anything close to delight at the thought of having a drink. It is of course possible for a conservative to dig in her heels here and contend that there must be some set of sensory experiences the combination of which feels like what I am calling attraction. But such a move seems like a last resort that only one with die-hard conservative sympathies would find plausible.

²⁷ Specifically, I argue that Alvarez's account of desire leads to an awkward, bifurcated view of desires that is best to abandon. On the view of desires I favor, the sensations that Alvarez appears to think partially constitute desires are in fact mere causes of desires. I should mention here that there is a reading of Alvarez in which she is not arguing that desires are partially constituted by sensations, but rather, that these sensations merely accompany them.

correct, her position is compatible with certain desires—viz. desires that are not bodily appetites—possessing attraction. Alvarez's account, then, does not call into doubt the existence of NSAP.

I have offered, in this section, a defense of the NSAP of desires. That defense can be summarized as follows: (i) Desires are the states that realize the causal role of desiring, (ii) The states that realize the causal role of desiring possess non-sensory phenomenology. (iii) Therefore, desires possess non-sensory phenomenology. Such a defense, of course, is only as plausible as the realizer functionalist position that undergirds it. And I have yet to offer reasons why we should think realizer functionalism is true. In the next section, I defend this version of functionalism. I do so by investigating what I take to be the most promising alternative position to this view—viz. role functionalism—and in turn, arguing that the main motivation for embracing role functionalism over realizer functionalism is not a compelling one. As importantly, though, I also argue that if one rejects the realizer functionalist position about attitudes I embrace, one should be an eliminativist about non-sensory attitudinal phenomenology.

IV: Multiple Realizability, Two Versions of Functionalism, & the NSAP of Attitudes

The main reason a number of philosophers opt for role functionalism over realizer functionalism is because the former view, unlike the latter, is thought to be able to account for the multiple realizability of psychological kinds. To say that a psychological kind M is multiply realizable is to say that M can be instantiated in a number of physically diverse organisms. So, for example, the psychological kind *pain* is thought to be multiply realizable insofar as a wide-range of organisms, from humans to octopi to

newts, can be in pain. If one embraces role functionalism, it seems, one can make sense of the multiple realizability of this psychological kind. After all, if being in pain is being in a second-order state of having a first-order state that plays the causal role of pain, then as long as an organism tokens a type of state that plays the causal role of pain, that organism can be thought to be in pain.

If one is a realizer functionalist, on the other hand, one must say, it seems, that the human and the octopus do not token the same psychological kind. This is because what it is to be in pain according to the realizer functionalist, is to be in a first-order state that plays the causal role of the mental state in question. Insofar as humans and octopi are not in the same first-order state, these organisms cannot be thought to both be in pain. And it seems reasonable to think these two types of organisms won't be in the same first-order state given their physiological/neurological differences. Realizer functionalism it seems, cannot make sense of the multiple realizability of pain. But since pain is multiply realizable, so the objection goes, so much the worse for realizer functionalism. It is this objection more than any other that has led a number of philosophers to reject realizer functionalism in favor of role functionalism.²⁸

The first thing to note, however, about the multiple realizability objection vis-ávis the NSAP liberal-conservative debate is that it targets only liberals with reductive physicalist sympathies. The liberal who embraces property dualism, for instance, can

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²⁸ The same objection applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to attitudes as opposed to sensations. Putnam (1967) was the first to defend a version of the multiple realizability objection. It has since become one of the most widely discussed arguments in philosophy of mind. For a survey of the literature on multiple realizability, see Funkhouser (2006) and Bickle (2013).

accept that the realizers of the causal role of desire comprise a heterogeneous lot.²⁹ This set of realizers can include realizers that possess, e.g. attraction, as well as states that lack this type of phenomenology. The property dualist can allow that what realizes the causal role of desire might be a motley mix of states because she is unsympathetic with the mental state-brain state identity thesis that multiple realizability issues pose a challenge to.³⁰

One might object, however, that there is still a problem for the dualist who defends the existence of NSAP in the way I have suggested—namely that she still needs to provide an account of what unifies the psychological kind in question. The dualist, though, has a few options available to her with respect to this question. One option is to contend that phenomenology unifies the kind in question. On this view, what makes the set of realizers desires is that they all possess a particular type of phenomenal character—viz. phenomenal attraction. Such a thesis however, is certainly bold. An alternative response to the unification challenge is that what unifies the set of realizers is causal role. So while on this view, the set of all desires is a heterogeneous lot, what unifies the lot is the fact that all of these states are states that produce action. A dualist can maintain that the causal role of desire is what plays this unifying role without committing herself to

²⁹ Property dualism, while certainly not a popular view, has had its share of recent advocates including David Chalmers (1995), Brie Gertler (2004) and Richard Fumerton (2014).

³⁰ Such a dualist, of course, will have to hold that these immaterial states have causal efficacy.

³¹ A number of philosophers have posed a similar question to reductive physicalists who embrace domain-specific or local reductions of psychological states. See Kornblith and Pereboom (1989). I will have more to say about domain-specific reductions below.

³² Although I imagine some NSAP conservatives who are property dualists might be sympathetic with this position. It might be wondered, however, how phenomenology could play this unifying role if there are dispositional and unconscious desires that lack phenomenology. One plausible response to this question is to embrace the view that such non-phenomenal desires are desires in virtue of their relation to phenomenally conscious desires. This approach to non-phenomenal attitudes is defended by Kriegel (2015) among others.

role functionalism about the attitudes.³³ If such a move is tenable, then the dualist has an alternative, non-phenomenologically based response she can offer to the unification question.

Such a response to the MRO is not available to the reductive physicalist. And I certainly don't want the way I have defended NSAP to be held hostage to the truth of dualism. So how might a reductive physicalist with NSAP sympathies respond to this objection? I suggest they do so in the same way that a number of reductive physicalists who lack NSAP sympathies have responded to this objection—viz. by defending domainspecific reductions of psychological kinds.³⁴ On such a view, psychological states are relativized to sets of organisms, viz. organisms with the appropriate neurological kinds. Lewis's (1980) species-relative reductivist program provides one model for how such reductions can be carried out. Here is an example: perhaps a certain neuronal kind realizes a certain type of desire in humans (e.g. D-excitation), while a different type of neuronal kind realizes desires in octopi (e.g. OD-excitation). If that's the case, then qua Realizer Functionalists, we can posit D-excitation as a desire-that- Φ for humans, and ODexcitation as a desire-that- Φ for octopi. Relativizing mental kinds to sets of species might be problematic insofar as there can perhaps be a heterogeneous lot of intra-species neural states that play the causal role of a single psychological state. But if there is such a problem, as Horgan (1993) and others have thought there is, it can potentially be handled by relativizing the latter to more specific sets of organisms.

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³³ This is the case because such a dualist does not hold that desires are second-order properties of having some first-order property that plays the causal role of desire. Kim (1992), qua reductive physicalist, offers a similar response to the question of what unifies the heterogeneous lot of physical realizers of desire. I will have more to say about Kim's defense of reductive physicalism below.

³⁴ Armstrong (1968; passim), Lewis (1980), Kim (1993), Polger (2002) and a host of others have defended reductive physicalism in such a manner.

The above response to multiple realizability concerns will likely not appease the committed role functionalist. The latter will object that it has the consequence that humans and octopi cannot token the same psychological kind—i.e. desire—since desires for humans are of a different kind than desires for octopi. I think, though, that this consequence role functionalists find so objectionable is not all that problematic when we investigate the matter more carefully. Indeed, insofar as the cognitive/neural architecture of these two species is in fact remarkably different, it seems reasonable to hold that human desire and octopi desire really are two different psychological kinds. The reason, I submit, that we might think this is not the case is because the causal role these states play for both species is the same. But when one takes into account the radically different nature of what is playing the causal role of these states, the above objection loses much of its force. In short, then, I deny that the type of multiple realizability the role functionalist thinks we need to make sense of is a phenomenon that in the case of desire needs to be made sense of; or, more carefully, needs to be made sense of in the way that the role functionalist thinks it does.³⁵ There are then, I think, reasonable responses the physicalist can make to multiple realizability concerns.

I have attempted to undercut the primary reason for being a role functionalist by arguing that multiple realizability concerns do not tip the scale in favor of role functionalism over realizer functionalism. My own view is that role functionalists would prefer to be realizer functionalists if not for multiple realizability issues. The reason is that there are advantages to being a realizer functionalist as opposed to being a role functionalist. One such advantage is that realizer functionalists appear to have a much

³⁵ See Polger (2002) for a similar, more developed response to this worry.

easier time accounting for the causal efficacy of mental states. Kim (2006), McLaughlin (2006) and others have argued that the second-order properties role functionalists posit as mental states have no role to play in causal explanations. So, for instance, it has been argued that one is able to provide an entirely sufficient causal explanation of why an agent grimaces when she stubs her toe by simply positing the realizer state. There is no explanatory need to posit an additional second-order state because there is simply no causal work for this second-order property to do. And it does seem reasonable to think that what is doing the causal work here is not the second-order state of having a property that plays the particular causal role of pain, but rather that which realizes this causal role. Exclusion arguments like these, if sound, would indicate that the role functionalist is committed to radical epiphenomenalism. Insofar as radical epiphenomenalism is false, this would constitute a *reductio* of role functionalism. Although there are responses in the literature role functionalists have made to the above objection, the realizer functionalist appears, at the very least, to be on firmer ground with respect to the causal efficacy of mental states than the role functionalist.

If the primary reason for being a role functionalist is not a compelling reason and there are certain advantages to embracing realizer functionalism over role functionalism, then that provides support for embracing the former over the latter.

Much more, of course, could be said about the debate between role and realizer functionalists than I have said here. But what I want to argue now is that if one rejects the realizer functionalist position I embrace, one should also deny that NSAP exists. I think this is the case because I hold that: (i) the most plausible view of the attitudes is either role or realizer functionalism and (ii) NSAP does not exist if role functionalism is true.

Concerning the first contention, I hold that, conceptually-speaking, attitudes, unlike sensations, are *not* to be understood in terms of their phenomenology. Consider: if it were in fact the case that states that generate action lack phenomenology, it would be reasonable to think of these states as desires.³⁶ This indicates, I think, that *desire* is a functional concept. And given this, I contend that the two best options we have concerning the ontological nature of these states is role or realizer functionalism. In short, I hold that we should let our conceptual understanding of this state guide our understanding of what the nature of this type of state is. Such a view, I submit, is intuitively plausible.

Next, consider that it's plausible to think that if role functionalism for attitudes is the correct view, then NSAP does not exist. This is because there is nothing it's like to instantiate a second-order property of having a first-order property that plays the causal role of, e.g. desire. It is the first-order state, if anything, that feels a certain way.³⁷ According to the Role Functionalist, though, the second-order property just is the attitude. So if Role Functionalism is true, attitudes themselves do not possess phenomenology. And therefore, role functionalists I think, should be eliminativists about NSAP.

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³⁶ I do not, however, think the same can be said about sensations. But I do not need to defend that claim here.

³⁷ If one needs an argument for this contention, consider that if second-order properties did possess phenomenology we would ostensibly have a type of direct access to these properties via their phenomenology. But such direct access seems unavailable to us. We know, if we know at all, that we possess such second-order properties not by grasping the phenomenology of these states, but by inference. That being said, note that if one thinks that second-order properties actually do possess phenomenology, then because these second-order states are attitudes according to the role functionalist, this would undermine NSAP conservativism.

To summarize: given that attitudes are functional concepts, it seems reasonable to think we should either be role or realizer functionalists. Role functionalism leads to the conclusion that NSAP does not exist. Realizer functionalism, as I have argued, does not. Therefore, we have good reason to believe that if NSAP exists it is because some version of realizer functionalism—viz. the version defended here—is true.

Conclusion: The Significance of Defending the NSAP of Desires:

It might be wondered why it matters whether certain attitudes possess phenomenology beyond, perhaps, enabling philosophers of mind to provide a correct account of the nature of these types of states. In this concluding section I want to argue that the existence of NSAP impacts areas beyond philosophy of mind. In particular, I want to argue that the existence of such phenomenology has significance with respect to issues concerning the epistemology of attitudes as well as rational agency.

Concerning the former, I noted above that some liberals have offered epistemic arguments to the conclusion that NSAP exists. I resisted this epistemic turn as a way of defending the existence of this type of phenomenology. I did so because I think such claims are downstream to certain fundamental issues in philosophy of mind. But my thinking this is consistent with the claim that once a liberal has adequately defended the existence of NSAP, that phenomenology can play an explanatory role in one's theory of self-knowledge. And on my view, it does. More specifically, I think the most plausible explanation for how we do have epistemically direct, 38 highly secure knowledge of some of our desires is that we are able to type-identify desires via their attraction. I will not defend this approach to the epistemology of desires here. But insofar as this view is

³⁸ *Direct*, here, means *non-inferential*.

correct, it would explain, in part, why we should care whether desires do possess attraction.

The view that certain attitudes possess non-sensory phenomenology also bears on issues concerning practical agency. As noted above, Chang (2008) argues that certain desires provide (normative) reasons for action *in virtue* of desires possessing attraction. This strikes me as quite plausible. After all, if I am offered the choice between an eggplant soufflé and a cheeseburger, the fact that I am attracted to the former and not the latter would appear to provide me with a *defeasible* reason to opt for the soufflé and not the cheeseburger. Less trivially, perhaps, the fact that I am attracted to living in big cities and am not attracted to living in small towns provides me with a defeasible reason, it seems, to live in say Chicago as opposed to DeKalb.³⁹

Embracing the view that desires possess attraction, provides support for the commonsensical view that wanting Φ can provide us with a normative reason to obtain Φ . Such a conclusion is not to be taken lightly given that a number of rationalists⁴⁰ have recently criticized this standard Humean line. If, however, desires fail to possesses phenomenology, and in particular the phenomenology of attraction, then it seems much more reasonable to hold that this attitude cannot provide reasons for action.⁴¹ The upshot,

³⁹ I stress the defeasible nature of such a reason. It is certainly possible that there are other reasons that make it the case that, all things considered, I should not act on this particular desire.

⁴⁰ Such rationalists include: Scanlon (1998), Raz (2001), and Parfit (2002).

⁴¹ Indeed, a number of rationalists including Scanlon (1998), Raz (2002) and Parfit (2001) embrace non-phenomenological views of desire and then proceed to argue that given what desires are, these states cannot provide reasons for action. For example, we find Scanlon (1998) arguing that desires (or at least the most significant type of desires) are inclinations to have one's attention directed to reasons that count in favor of the desired object. He then goes on to argue that having one's attention directed in such a way does not provide normative reasons to act; it is rather the reasons one directs one's attention to that provide such normative support. But as Chang contends, if certain desires are instead attractions to objects, then regardless of whether one has the inclination to think about the reasons for having such objects, it is not

then, is that whether desires possess phenomenology has a crucial bearing on this Humean-Anti-Humean debate.

I want to close by stressing that while I have focused here almost entirely on the nature of desires, the way I have defended the NSAP of desire also serves, I believe, as a template for how to defend the NSAP of other attitudes. And insofar as these additional attitude types do possess phenomenology, the impact this could have on areas beyond philosophy of mind, I imagine, might be just as significant. Future work, I believe, will demonstrate that this is in fact the case.

difficult to see how being attracted to Φ can provide a reason to acquire Φ . Adopting such an attitude towards an object appears to be a perfectly viable candidate for rationalizing one's action.

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