

THAT OBJECT OF OBSCURE DESIRE

Seeing is not a form of knowing. (H. A. Prichard, "The Sense-Datum Fallacy", pp. 208, 213)

That the sun has set is no object which emits rays which arrive in my eyes. (Frege, "Der Gedanke", p. 61)

The object of the desire is the sense datum. It is not so much the object, but the desire—its enduring capacity to charm—that is obscure here. Thompson Clarke offers a diagnosis of that charm. On the way to it he illuminates a number of other things—most notably knowledge, and, more generally, the occasion-sensitivity of thought. But his diagnosis of the allure of sense data misfires. Not that I know a better one (unless, like the common cold, different aetiologies for different victims). But there are lessons in the misfire.

0. Prologue: Prichard's words are a motto for what follows. But not as he meant them. What Prichard had in mind was this. First, what one sees is mind-dependent. Colours and shapes, or colours with shapes, are his suggestion. Second, what is mind-dependent is not the sort of thing one can know things about. To know is, *per se*, to take in how things are *independent* of how they seem to you. So, as to which ways mind-dependent things are (just in being as experienced) there is nothing to know. There *are* no (response-independent) ways for such things to be. There are no generalities under which for them to fall (again, independent of one's responses to them). On the second point Prichard aligns himself with Frege. I align myself with both.

The first point is utterly fantastic. Here Prichard departs from Frege, who writes,

Vorstellungen cannot be seen or touched, nor smelled, nor tasted, nor heard. (1918: 67)

Vorstellungen, on Frege's notion of them, just are mind-dependent things, among which those which Prichard has in mind (if such exist). We *have* them; we do not perceive them. Perceiving—seeing, hearing, etc.—is a relation to, a form, or family of forms, of awareness of, that environment which we all cohabit, and which, for Frege, is unlocked for us by our capacity for thought, specifically for judgement. That seeing is *per se* a relation to the environment is a point Frege was clear on at a time when few others were—certainly not Prichard. Nor does Clarke's account of the road to sense data take reckon fully with this. I side with Frege here.

So, though I take over Prichard's words, I do not take over the thought he uses them to express. What I have in mind is this. To know *that* such-and-such is to stand towards what one knows in a way which exposes one to risk in a way (as Frege notes) intrinsic to having an environment to judge of. Something *of which* to know things is *eo ipso* something which opens one up to such risk. This does not mean that to know is to *run* a risk. On the contrary, to know is to have *proof* (not necessarily *a* proof). It is thus for risk to be ruled out. But part of

the point of knowing is that there is risk to *be* ruled out. To take something to be thus and so is to assume liability to risk. If you put the cat out yourself, there may be no risk that it has not been let out. Still, that the cat has been let out is the sort of thing about which one may be wrong. Another way to put this: what one knows is, in the nature of the case, what admits of ringers. So, too, for what one sees. Ringers, though, matter very differently in each case.

There is a related ontological point which Frege also saw clearly. That the cat has been let out is *about* the environment, but it is not *in* it, not part of it in the way that the cat itself, or its incessant scratching at the door, are. *If* causation is a local affair, then that the cat has been let out, not having a location, cannot cause things, as the cat can. It cannot, e.g., emit rays which form retinal images. That the cat has been let out *cannot* stand in the same relations to us which things interacting *in* our (spatio-temporal) environment can. To be stuck in a tailback on the A1, all that is required is that there *be* a suitably located tailback, and that one be suitably located in relation to it. To be startled by the horn of the impatient driver behind you, all that is needed is a suitably engendered and located startling honk. Hearing the driver hurling expletives at all and sundry is no doubt a more complex matter. But still, not one which implicates us with relata *not* in the environment, or not in a way that makes ringers matter as they do to seeing *that* expletives are being hurled. Seeing the hurler's mouth move, by contrast with seeing *that* it is moving, follows hearing here.

If there could be a ringer for you for being stuck in a tailback on the A1, such possibilities have *no* bearing on whether you are in fact stuck in a tailback on the A1. If there could be a ringer for you for the sudden honking of the impatient driver behind you, such, again, has no bearing on whether, in fact, it was that honking which startled you. Hearing the flow of expletives, or seeing the driver bang his head against the steering wheel, again follow suit.

Seeing and knowing are both success verbs. If you know that it is raining, then it is raining. If you see rain, there is rain. Both speak of forms of taking in how things are. In one form, though, one takes in things being some particular way there is for things to be; the instancing of some generality. In the other one simply takes in as much of things being as they are as sight allows. Such is not yet taking in *that* things fall under any particular generality. From this follow the differences just discussed. I use Prichard's words, not as he did, but rather so as to capture this difference.

To see is to be afforded awareness of, and to take in *some* of, how things (specifically, how things around us) are. This much is *not* an open question. Which leaves open, so far as it goes, whether we ever see opaque objects, or even *see* at all. So, as Frege notes, there is no *open* question as to whether we see *Vorstellungen* in his sense—things which do not belong to our environment. What there *might* be, for all said so far, are open questions as to what might be experienced visually. Such sets bounds to the ambitions of any cogent enquiry into what it is we see. Clarke *may* not quite see the matter this way.

Prichard, among many, does not. He thinks there *is* a cogent investigation which leads us out of this world to locate those things which are (strictly speaking) seen. He writes:

It goes without saying that anyone who has not been, so to say, sophisticated by philosophical questioning, if he is asked what he sees or touches, answers in effect, 'chairs and tables, boats going downstream', and so forth ... This answer also expresses what is implied in the everyday attitude of mind of those who are philosophers. ...

It need hardly be said that this view, much as we would all like to be able to vindicate it, will not stand examination. (1950a: 52-53)

In his day Prichard stood here with the majority. What Clarke calls ‘The Sense Data Inquiry’ is an investigation of just the above sort—a sort I have just suggested we can really make no sense of. That it comes so naturally to suppose otherwise calls for explanation. Clarke’s is beautiful and elegant. But he does not spell out the details. His parallel diagnoses of two other phenomena work; his unworked out diagnosis of the allure of sense data will prove not to.

1. The Present Question: Of Clarke’s three published articles, the two pots-dissertation were, one on knowledge (1972) and one on seeing (1965). Each of these assigns a major role to a phenomenon which I call occasion-sensitivity. In his thesis Clarke refers to it as a ‘non-rule-like-dimension’. But there is a striking difference in the role of occasion-sensitivity in the two articles.

Before considering the difference it is best to say what occasion-sensitivity is. It begins with ways for things, or a thing, to be. For such a way to be occasion-sensitive is for it to admit of understandings. For example, being such as to be sitting on a sofa, or such as to be watching *The Avenging Angel*, is a way for a thing to be. For such a way to admit of understandings is for there to be various things which *might* count, and again might not, as a case of something being the way in question: what it is for a thing to be that way, so far as this goes, leaves it open to count (some) instances of a thing being as it is either as a case of a thing being that way, or as not. For example, so much reclining, or fidgeting, or doing yoga poses, might, or again might not, be counted as *sitting* on the sofa, consistent with what sitting on a sofa is as such. That much repartée with Sid, or dozing off, might or might not count as *watching* the Buñuel film. So many interruptions might or might not count as showing it.

The term ‘occasion-sensitivity’ is meant to capture the idea that where a way for a thing (or things) to be thus makes room for understandings, there can be occasions on which it would be *correct* to count a particular case in one way (e.g., as a case of sitting on the sofa) rather than the other, and also occasions when the opposite would be the correct thing to do. For example, if Sid has been banned from sitting on the sofa, and is now positioned there, the fact that his slump is at best a poor example of sitting may well fail to get him off the hook. But if his mother frets about his posture, it may be disingenuous to assure her that now he is *sitting* on the couch. Some words speak of ways for things, or a thing, to be, or a family of them—as ‘saw ___’ speaks of (someone, or something) seeing something. They are occasion-sensitive if what they speak of is.

“The Legacy of Scepticism” (1972, henceforth *Legacy*) is a proof that at least some of our concepts *must* be occasion-sensitive, and, accordingly, that we must be occasion-sensitive thinkers. (Clarke’s term for this last would be ‘thinkers of non-standard type’, ‘standard type’ being his term for concepts which, occasion-insensitively, apply to things or not.) In particular, one could not think about knowledge coherently except in an occasion-sensitive way. Without occasion-sensitivity, the concept of knowledge would simply lack coherent conditions on application. Nothing would count as knowing, or failing to know, anything. The concept would collapse. Without occasion-sensitivity, it would not be the case that we know nothing. *Nothing* would be the case as to what we know or not. Philosophical scepticism would not be vindicated. It would be as incoherent as anything else one could say about knowledge.

Clarke's argument is an ingenious adaptation of an idea *also* found in Prichard (this time discussing knowledge and professing only to be transmitting Cook Wilson's view):

[W]e can only be uncertain of one thing because we are certain of something else, and therefore to maintain as the sceptic does that we are uncertain of everything is impossible. (1950b: 86)

Prichard depicts the collapse of the concept, were this maxim unenforceable, as follows:

Of Descartes' reasons for doubting the truth of various thoughts, obviously the most important is the thought that God, or some demon, might have made our intelligence defective. But if Descartes really had this thought in the process of doubting, as he said he did, it is difficult to see why he did not at once stop the process at that point. For once we have that thought we shall think that any thought we subsequently attain, whether it be about our own existence or anything else, may be defective and so not possibly knowledge. (1950b: 79)

Such gives the right feel of the kind of collapse Clarke unearths. His case is that the collapse is avoidable *only* if knowledge is occasion-sensitive. I think his case cogent, but will not argue this here.

In "Seeing Surfaces and Seeing Physical Objects" (1965, henceforth *Surfaces*) occasion-sensitivity plays a very different role. Here it is a device for preserving features we would all acknowledge seeing to have. Perhaps it is mandatory for preserving them. It is, anyway, arguably present. But if we were to suppose seeing not to have those features, the concept of seeing would not collapse. Talk of seeing would not thereby be rendered *incoherent*. If what Clarke calls 'the surface inquiry' really yielded correct results, it would turn out that all we ever see, in the case of opaque solids, are their (facing) surfaces. That would be a surprise. But at least (if the rot stops there) there might still be determinate facts as to the things we have seen and the things we have not. So whereas the sceptical inquiry (the parallel to the surface inquiry in the case of knowledge) is proof that our thinking *must* be occasion-sensitive (at least sometimes), with respect to the surface inquiry occasion sensitivity is only a device on offer for avoiding unwanted results.

Both in *Legacy* and in *Surfaces* occasion-sensitivity functions to defuse a certain line of thought. In *Surfaces*, if that line is not defused, we must reject a raft of things we would have supposed true. We would have made a surprise discovery, not thanks to science, or closer attention to what was actually before our eyes on various occasions, but rather through philosophical reflection—what just *might* be philosophical sleight of hand. Someone might say, 'The detective entered the room, and seeing a tomato on the sideboard realised at once that he was in the home of a philosopher.' We would all regard that as (possibly) true. If the surface inquiry is correct it is not. What the detective saw was not actually the *tomato*. But then life does hold surprises. If the sceptical enquiry really worked (and if it leads where Clarke and I think it does), then the result is not a surprise discovery that we do not know all the things we thought we did, but rather the still more disconcerting discovery that there is nothing to say about knowledge at all. The evils occasion-sensitivity spares us thus differ in the two cases.

The surface inquiry, or any other, *would* reduce seeing to an incoherent notion if it led, not to the result that all we see are surfaces, but rather, still further, to the result that what we see is not part of the environment at all. For, since seeing *is* awareness of one's environment—of what, in being as it is may be a case of things being such-and-such way—the result would thus be that there is really no such thing as seeing. If we were then to have anything to talk about in speaking of people seeing things, seeing would *have* to be occasion-sensitive. But, as the name suggests, this is not where the surface inquiry leads.

Why this disparity in ambition between *Legacy* and *Surfaces*? Several answers are possible. One is that, in *Surfaces*, for simplicity's sake, Clarke considered only part of an inquiry: the inquiry in *Surfaces* could be extended to lead us out of the environment and force us to retreat to something non-environmental as the proper objects of seeing; it is just that, for sake of exposition Clarke omitted so extending the inquiry. Another is that, while the surface inquiry cannot be extended so as thus to force us out of the environment, some other parallel inquiry can be produced, and would do this, unless it were defused in a way we can somehow read off from Clarke's defusing of the surface inquiry. Such, I think, is how Clarke views the matter. In either of these cases, there is a valid case that seeing *must* be an occasion-sensitive notion on pain of collapse. Knowing and seeing would then be parallel in this respect. Or there is a third possibility: that no such way of forcing us to retreat from the environment exists; that, though seeing may *be* occasion-sensitive, there is no way in which, through ignoring this, rings for what we see (or for our seeing it) come to threaten the notion with *collapse*. If seeing thus differs from knowing, such might reflect those deeper differences, already hinted at, in what it is that each relates us to.

2. The Sense Datum: The last section suggested two roles the surface enquiry might play in saddling us with sense data. First, it might be an initial proper part of some enquiry which, in full, so saddles us. Second, it might model, mode clearly since more simply, the form of some distinct enquiry which so saddles us. First, then, can the surface inquiry be so extended? The answer: perhaps it can be extended; whether the extension leads to sense data depends on just what a sense datum is meant to be.

Clarke's surface inquiry leaves us with the conclusion that, in the case of opaque solids, what we see is at most their facing surfaces. To extend the argument would be to apply the same considerations over again to reach the conclusion that what we see is, at most, not even that. We get to surfaces on roughly these lines. Consider someone looking at a tomato. Now ask yourself the question how much of the tomato behind the facing surface he sees—whether, e.g., he sees the tomato's insides or backside. The answer to such questions is, inevitably, 'No'. If he does not see those parts of the tomato, then the conclusion is meant to be that the most he sees of the tomato is what remains: the facing surface.

To push this line further we might ask just how thick a surface would be. (Mark Kalderon tells me that Leonardo da Vinci, among others, pushed it in this way. So inspired, I call the enquiry thus extended *the da Vinci enquiry*.) Suppose we think of the surface of the tomato as part of the tomato in a sense in which this means that the surface is made up of molecules. So it has some thickness. Now, ignoring what is *physically* possible, let us ask just how thick the seen surface is. For any (opaque) positive thickness, one can in imagination (still ignoring physical possibility) divide the surface into two opaque rings, inner and outer, each of half that thickness. Asked whether one sees the inner ring, one would need to answer 'No'. So the seen surface can have no thickness. So it cannot be made of molecules. In a sense,

then, it is really no part of the tomato at all.

The original surface enquiry relies on an idea on these lines: what one sees of the tomato is the tomato minus those identifiable parts one does not see (notably, the insides and the back side). One could also think of the operative principle this way: what one sees when he looks at the tomato is just what he would see if those parts he does not see were not there—that is, if he were looking at a certain sort of ringer. He would see just the same whether he were facing the tomato or such a ringer. Thus involving ringers brings the da Vinci enquiry into closer parallel with the sceptical enquiry into knowledge. Now we might try amending the da Vinci enquiry. Suppose that, instead of that tomato, there had been some ringer on the sideboard—perhaps a wax tomato, or just another tomato. Ringers are, by definition, indistinguishable (by, or on, sight) from the real thing—not just by some viewer, but full stop. There *is* nothing visible by which to distinguish them. So our viewer would see no such thing. So (the idea would go) he sees nothing, in viewing that tomato, that he would not also see in viewing the ringer. Since the ringer and the tomato share no parts, he sees, as things stand, no part of the tomato.

Now, though, the enquiry takes a quite different form. It is now an *argument*, and not that something else Clarke wants his enquiries to be—not a way of just working oneself into a position where, apparently, one can *see* the wanted conclusion to obtain. Now there is a crucial move from the (true) thought that the viewer sees nothing by which to distinguish the tomato from the ringer to the thought that he sees nothing, in viewing the tomato, that he would not see in viewing the ringer. All the rest follows. But why buy that move? One cannot just *see*—in Clarke's terms, have visibly before one's eyes—that *this* is so. Here things really do depend on just what sort of concept seeing (objects) is—on its rule-like, rather than non-rule-like dimension. Moreover, if, as seems, you need not know what you are seeing to be seeing it, then the fact that you could not tell whether the surface you see is a tomato's or a wax ringer's hardly suggests that what you *see* could not just be the one thing or the other. The surface enquiry turned on no such inference. What does so turn is no mere extension of it.

The da Vinci enquiry minus emendation yields the conclusion that what one sees of the tomato, if anything, is something with no thickness. This alone does not drive us to conclude that one sees something which might still be there were the tomato not; much less to look for objects of *perception* which are not part of our environment at all. One can, e.g., think of the tomato as inhabiting a spatial shell (closed surface) in which it forges its career. The shell would travel with it. It would be deformable, as a cat's, or a squash ball's, shape is. It would not be made of molecules. Any time-slice of it would be made of points—in the space we all cohabit. It would not be something non-environmental. If the *da Vinci* were sound, what one would see in viewing an opaque object might be the facing part of such a shell.

Or one *could* view such a shell as spatially fixed, filled at one moment by the tomato, at another moment by nothing, or by something else, or part of something else. A shell so thought of is still a part of space, the locus of visible things. So thinking, what one sees when he views a tomato really is no part of the tomato, nothing essentially present when the tomato is. But it is still part of *space*, a part of that environment in which things which reflect light form images on retinas, are thus *visible* (to *one* who is sighted). We are still not led out of the environment. We can take such shells to be the things we see while still following Frege in taking *Vorstellungen* to be had, not seen, without thereby falling into contradiction. There is still no call for sense-data (if these are *Vorstellungen*) to fill the role of what is seen.

But *are* sense-data *Vorstellungen* in Frege's sense—things which need a bearer (to be

which is to belong to some particular thinker's consciousness) and which brook no two bearers? Frege tells us that you and I may stand shoulder to shoulder viewing the same tree, and yet, if we have visual *Vorstellungen*, have different ones. You and I can stand shoulder to shoulder viewing the same (occupied) spatial shell. We need not be seeing different ones. Does this matter to whether spatial shells are sense data? Not if they are spatial shells. But they are, and thus are not where any extended surface enquiry leads, if they meet any of the following conditions:

1. They are immune to ringers. It could not be just as though you were seeing (or experiencing visually) the sense datum (or data) you now are while you were *not* experiencing them, but rather some ringer for them (something visually indistinguishable from them). Sense data have no such ringers.
2. (Correlatively) the sense datum (or data) you experience visually now is/are what you would be experiencing visually no matter how things were at least in your extra-dermal environment. What sense datum (or data) you see (or have) is independent of how things are there. (Such is the price of *not* admitting of ringers.)
3. Correlatively, they are not things for *one* to see (or experience visually). Their career is *entirely* fixed by how things are for their haver, *now*. They are what you experience visually now in a sense in which to experience *thus* one would need to be you.

Condition 1 is what makes sense data argument-stoppers. If amended da Vinci were sound, then whatever A was, it could not be what you *see* (or directly experience visually) if there were some B such that things would have looked *just* the same had it been B and not A that you viewed. If sense data admitted of ringers, amended da Vinci would thus rule them out as what was seen. So for such an enquiry to lead to sense data, 1 must hold of them. Conditions 2 and 3, I think, follow upon this. But any one of these would do to remove sense data from the environment.

Our present concern is not to settle whether there *are* sense data, but to see what can be learned from the search for them as to the different sorts of relations to the world that seeing and knowing are. Nowadays few own up to belief in sense data. It may still be that more than just these posit objects of perceptual experience which meet at least some of conditions 1-3. There may be more than one way to make seeing disappear.

3. The Role Of The Surface Inquiry: Neither *Legacy* and *Surface*, makes Clarke's own attitude towards the surface inquiry clear. In his thesis he is more explicit. The surface enquiry relates to sense data in the second of the two ways so far suggested. It is to be a simpler model for a form of enquiry which is also exemplified, in different instantiations, both by what he calls 'the hallucination enquiry', that is, the sceptical enquiry into knowledge and 'the sense-data enquiry'—what is meant to land us with that sight-destroying conclusion just scouted. In the thesis he says,

I believe the sense data inquiry is too complex to tackle head on. In this chapter I shall study it *indirectly* by studying a far simpler inquiry which is a microcosm of the sense data inquiry. (1962: 52 (ch. 2))

The sense datum enquiry is thus supposed to have a certain form, which it shares with the surface inquiry, and also, Clarke elsewhere tells us, with the sceptical inquiry. Later in the thesis Clarke outlines that form, the elements in it filled in with their values within the surface inquiry:

The maze of the sense data inquiry should be easier to traverse, however, if we are fore-armed with a blue-print of what its general interlocking elements probably are. These elements are the following: seeing is a *unit* concept. The *rules* of ordinary language, applied in the *philosophical* case, from which the *non-rule-like dimension* responsible for criteria of relevancy/irrelevancy is absent, conditionally dictate the basic philosophical inquiries. The philosopher's *assumption* that ordinary language is, in this kind of case, fully meaningful implies that these inquiries are to be performed together with the *mental act* which, because Seeing is a *unit* concept, moves Seeing down, before our eyes, to surfaces (or, in the sense data inquiry, to colors-in-certain-shapes). Finally, the *generalisation* ... seemingly makes surfaces (and sense data) into independent entities. (1962: 229-230 (ch 4))

What *form* of inquiry is set out here? In the surface enquiry what occupies the first place in that structure is the idea that seeing is a unit concept. Clark suggests that that place holds the same occupant in the sense datum enquiry, though that enquiry remains to be specified. In the sceptical enquiry that first place must be occupied by something else. For seeing to be a unit concept is for it to exhibit a particular sort of occasion-sensitivity—variation across Clarke's 'non-rule-like' dimension. On different occasions for asking what N saw (on some fixed occasion), different things are to be understood as to what would count as seeing such-and-such. In the sceptical enquiry, which Clarke does set out, it is another sort of variation across such a dimension which occupies that same place in the structure. That *form* common to all these enquiries is thus that the concept (or way for things to be) as to whose instantings the enquiry asks has a particular sort of occasion-sensitivity—susceptibility to understandings—which is crucial to what the answer would be (if any) to the questions the enquiry tries to pose.

The second element is that certain 'rules of ordinary language' apply to the relevant concept. Strictly speaking, rules of language cannot apply to a concept. But perhaps there are rules which apply to any expression which expresses a given concept. A distinction of Frege's can help, I think, in understanding what Clarke has in mind here by a rule. Frege distinguishes between what has generality of a particular sort—call this a generality—and what does not—what he refers to as a particular case—but is what might instance such generalities. He writes:

A thought always contains something which reaches beyond the

particular case to present it to consciousness as falling under some given generality. (1882: 189)

A thought, in Frege's sense, just is a particular way to make truth turn on how things are. It is *of* things as being a certain way there is for things to be. It makes truth hang on things being that way. Ways for things to be are thus the first locus of the sort of generality in question. For it to be determinate how truth is to turn on how things are is for there to be indefinitely many (possible) cases of instancing that generality (if any), and indefinitely many ways of failing to (if any). If Pia is drinking absinthe, that might be the way things are while Sid fiddles, or while he does a slow burn. Such are two ways for things to be such as to fit that generality. By contrast, what does the instancing—things being as they are—is the wrong sort of thing itself to be instanced. It does nothing to fix what truth *is to* turn on. Perhaps Pia is drinking in a murky corner. Her doing what she thus does does nothing to determine what would count as someone drinking absinthe, or being in a murky corner—what would be a case of that, what not; and equally for any other generality. No instance of a generality fixes how it reaches. Nor does any proper part of the range of its instances.

Two distinct sorts of things are thus in play: things with a certain generality—ways for things to be—and particular instances of things, or a thing, being some given such way. A way for things to be thus participates in two distinct sorts of relations: relations with other ways for things to be—relations *within* the domain of generalities in this sense of the term—and relations *between* some such generality and particular cases, the fundamental relation of this second kind being *instancing* (or its converse, call it *reaching to*). Sipping absinthe is sipping something alcoholic. (First type.) What Pia is doing is sipping absinthe. (Second type.) Clarke's rules of language govern relations of the first type. If it's yellow, then it isn't blue. Variation along his non-rule-like dimension is variation, from occasion to occasion for counting something as a case of something, in which particular cases then count as instancing the generality in question.

We come now to the philosophical case, the third element in the form. Here the philosopher actually carries out the relevant enquiry. In the course of it he finds himself reaching conclusions, making judgements as to, e.g., whether Sid (really) saw Pia's yellow Porsche. He thus applies the relevant concept—seeing, say—to a (usually imagined) particular case. He applies it as it then seems it does apply. For the case to be *philosophical* is for the non-rule-like dimension to be out of play. No particular value of the variable along the relevant dimension—no particular *sometimes*-called-for understanding as to what, e.g., seeing a Porsche might be—is operative in the philosopher's case. Still, while conducting the enquiry, the philosopher feels no such lack. It thereby seems evident to him that the relevant concept must apply as he then applies it.

The variable in the non-rule-like element thus concerns that inter-domain relation, instancing. Where it takes on no value of the sort occasions fix—where no choices are made between those different understandings the relevant generality (seeing X, knowing X) can bear, it remains accordingly unfixed what bears this relation to that generality—despite an impression the philosopher might have to the contrary.

Were there no occasion-sensitivity, the non-rule-like dimension would be inert. There would be no cause (here) to be alert to it. But since there is, blindness to it can be fatal. If what Pia is doing (reclining languidly) would sometimes not count as *sitting* on a sofa, then, noticing this, and supposing that in matters of what counts as what, what is sometimes so

must always be, it can come to seem mandatory to think that there are actually sitting is a much rarer phenomenon than, before philosophical reflection, one would have supposed. Clarke, in the cases he does work out—seeing, knowing—does more to make the philosopher's position poignant, to show how what one would sometimes say seems forced on the philosopher as what he then must say. But this catches the form of the wages of ignoring occasion-sensitivity. Clarke has brought the nature of this peril well into view.

A philosophical case, then, is to be one in which an occasion is called on to fix some occasion-specific understanding of a concept under investigation, but fails to fix any such. The concept alone does not fix, for the relevant particular case (or cases) whether it is to count as instanced by them. Rules of *language* (relations *within* the domain of generalities) may remain in force in the philosopher's circumstances. *They* need not vary across any relevant range of occasions for applying them. But nor do they fix what stands in the instancing relation. The philosopher, blind to occasion-sensitivity, supposes otherwise. For him, rules of language, by themselves, must fix what words are true of. The truth on that assumption, Clarke argues, *would* be that Sid see at most the front surface of the tomato.

There is a fourth element in Clarke's form, which he calls 'generalisation'. The philosopher considers a particular case—say, Sid facing a tomato. He comes to his conclusion about Sid. He then generalises: if the most Sid sees is a facing surface, and if Sid is in as good a position for seeing more as one could ever be, then the most *anyone* ever sees of an opaque object is its facing surface. There is no occasion-sensitivity—variation across occasions for answering a question as to what someone sees—so there is also no variation across occasions for seeing (or missing) things.

In the case of the surface inquiry, the occasion-sensitivity being ignored is contained in the idea that seeing is a unit concept. What matters in that idea can be put as follows. (Here and henceforth I depart somewhat from Clarke's way of setting things out. But the operative idea remains the same.) A determinate (fully meaningful) question 'What did N see?' is asked against the background of a (determinate enough) space of options. The correct answer to that question, if there is one, is the best option among these. As one might put it, the content of a correct answer—when there is one—is always of the form 'This, rather than any of those'. What the relevant space is depends on (conversely, identifies) what the question is; which (normally) depends, further, on the circumstances of its posing. So, e.g., the detective enters and looks at the sideboard. What did he see? Possible answers: a tomato, a lemon, a cherimoya, nothing (it was all a blur, went by too fast, there was a lot of dry ice between him and the sideboard, just at that moment he got hit on the head). If there was a tomato on the sideboard, in plain sight, clearly illuminated, then, *ceteris paribus*, 'A tomato' is the right answer to that question. In other circumstances, there might have been a different question. 'What was on the sideboard?' 'A tomato' 'Are you sure?' 'But you know this was a philosopher's study. Philosophers are always up to tricks with half tomatoes. Did you really see the whole tomato, or only a facing half?' 'Well, now that you mention all that, I suppose I only saw the facing half.'

So the relevant occasion-sensitivity here consists in this. There are different questions to pose in asking what N saw on occasion O. These differ in that each is to be understood as asked against a different background—with a different space of possible answers. Their correct answers may differ accordingly. A question what N saw on O, posed on a given occasion for the posing, may, in the circumstances, be to be understood as asked against some given such background. As circumstances of the posing may differ, so, too, will the question asked. Such a question *will* be to be understood as asked against some such background if a question was

successfully posed at all. But there is no guarantee of such success. For this circumstances must do their work. Nothing ensures that wherever one tries to pose such a question, circumstances will be up to the job.

When the philosopher tries to ask what N saw, his circumstances are not up to the job. Among the different understandings the question what N saw might bear, they choose no one in particular. They do not fix with what seeing the tomato is to be contrasted. Moreover, even if they did some such selecting, the most they would achieve is fixing what it would be true to say in *those* circumstances—what would *then* count as seeing such-and-such. One would get the philosopher's result only in supposing that what it is *sometimes* true to say as to what the detective saw on entering the philosopher's study—what might sometimes count (or fail to count) as seeing a tomato—is what it would always be true to say as to this; what it would *really* be, *per se*, to see a tomato. Which is just to suppose that there is no occasion-sensitivity in the notion *see*, or none of the kind Clarke points to. Which at best begs a question.

For the sceptical enquiry the idea again will be that there is a diversity of things to ask, here in asking whether N knows that P, for given N and P; various things knowing that P might be understood to be, each on *some* occasion. Relevant differences might start from this idea: a doubt must earn its spurs. A doubt is a way for it not to be the case that P, perhaps, in pointed cases, even while so seeming. E.g., a way for there not to be tomatoes in the bin is for there to be tomato-like persimmons. A doubt so understood may, or may not, make it *doubtful* whether P—count as a way P might not, in fact, be so. Such is liable to vary from one occasion to another of asking what N knows. In given circumstances for so asking, it may or may not count as so that there might be persimmons in that bin. Only where it does so count might failure to settle it impeach N's claim to know that P. Or so it is if the notion *know* is occasion-sensitive.

If the notion *know* so behaves, what might vary along a non-rule-like dimension is thus what it would be for a doubt to have earned its spurs, and accordingly which doubts have done so. With this comes that pattern found in the surface inquiry. The possibility of persimmons would *sometimes* matter as per above. A philosopher, noticing this, and blind to occasion-sensitivity, could do no other than suppose this always to matter. *Mutatis mutandis* for other doubts. At which point knowing comes to seem an entirely unattainable ideal. At which point, too, Prichard's maxim collapses and with it the concept of knowing *überhaupt*.

So the surface inquiry is, indeed, a model for a sceptical inquiry into knowledge just as Clarke says. It does bring out the structure of that inquiry. I think it also helps defang it. But now what about sense data? Here we need a particular kind of non-rule-like dimension; a variation across occasions in what seeing something, V, is to be understood to be. Specifically, within this range of variation there would have to be occasions on which what would count as seeing V rules out seeing *any* part of an opaque object, or its shell or envelope on either of the above understandings of this; anything that might be before the eyes. Noticing what we would thus *sometimes* say, the philosopher might, in the way thus scouted, conclude that we *never* see anything before the eyes. But with this, the road to sense data would be only half traversed. So far, the terminus of this (imagined) enquiry might just be: no one ever sees anything. Such would be a kind of collapse of the concept. What still must be added in a sense datum enquiry is something, not before the eyes, which in fact, in the imagined circumstances, counts as something one *does* see.

The sought-for enquiry runs into trouble enough meeting the first of these two demands. With the second it faces a fundamental obstacle. For there is now a significant

departure from the pattern of the other two cases. The surface enquiry leads us to a conclusion as to the most one *ever* counts as seeing when viewing a tomato full face, where this would at least be a true conclusion as to what one could truly be said to have seen on at least *some* occasions for saying this. One *would* sometimes say (truly) that the most N saw of the fruit before him was its facing surface (e.g., so he has no basis for thinking it is a tomato and not a persimmon). Similarly, there can be circumstances in which one would say that N cannot really *know* it is a tomato before him if he has not cut it open, or squeezed it. But, as Frege notes, a sense datum is not even a candidate for being seen. It *cannot* bear that sort of relation to us. Nor (accordingly) are there purposes for which it would count as true that the most N saw in viewing the tomato was a thing of a sort not liable to be before anyone's eyes at all. If someone did not see the tomato, what he still might have done for all that is see its facing half. Such are alternatives to choose between in identifying what it is he saw. A sense datum is never such an alternative. The notion *see* admits of no *such* understandings.

The variation across occasions relevant to the surface enquiry is in the possibly correct answers to a question posed on them as to what N saw, where, throughout that variation one thing which remains constant is that *all* possible answers cite something environmental, before the eyes. No such variation (mishandled) could drive a sense datum enquiry. Such an enquiry (if there is one) must thus fit a different pattern from that exemplified by the surface enquiry. It must drive us out of our environment by appeal to *something* other than what we had anyway always been prepared to recognise as so.

3. All Those Colours: At any given stage in the surface enquiry we are faced with a choice (or choices): Did N see A, or, rather (at most) B—the tomato, or at most the front half? Given *that* choice, we *seem* always forced to choose the B option. If there is a sense datum enquiry which takes this form, it, too, would need some sort of choice with which to face us, and then something to (seem to) force our hand. As just noted, if there were such ingredients for a sense datum enquiry, they would have to be of an entirely different sort than those which drive the surface enquiry. What might they be? Clarke sometimes describes the sense datum enquiry as a *continuation* of the surface enquiry. But he never actually presents it, either in his thesis or in either article. He does not explicitly answer these questions. But he gives hints. He thinks, for one thing, that sense data are 'colours with shapes', or 'shaped colours'—items with colour and extension. Nor are such items just (parts of) surfaces, or of space. Here he is aligned with Prichard and, I think, many of Prichard's contemporaries.

In one place Clarke comes (a bit speculatively) nearer to saying what it is whose non-rule-like dimension, mishandled, lands us with sense data. That place is an appendix to his thesis where he is comparing his own view with that of Roderick Firth. There he says,

There must be a proposition in the sense data inquiry which, like the above proposition in the surface inquiry, has to be *true* if the common sense beliefs are fully meaningful, and which is not properly meaningful unless accompanied by distinguishing. I think this proposition may be the assertion that there could be an hallucinatory experience which looked and felt just the same as the present veridical experience. (1962: 259)

'Distinguishing' is marking off 'units', fixing possible answers to a question what was seen. For

the surface enquiry's questions, this is properly done in an occasion-sensitive way. *Mutatis mutandis* for the sense datum enquiry. Where the need for this is ignored, we are landed, in the one case, with surfaces, in the other with sense data. It is not entirely clear what Clarke thinks is relevantly occasion-sensitive in the assertion he cites—whether that sensitivity is contained in that 'there *could* be', or rather in the notion of looking and feeling *just the same*. Perhaps it is the two working jointly. In chapter 2 of the thesis (p. 97) he says,

In the surface inquiry a mental act is required if we are to attend "properly" to the how much fact. In the sense data inquiry I think a mental act is an essential ingredient if we are to take in "properly" the fact that hallucinatory experiences can look just like real ones.

So it seems, all turns on how one understands *being capable of looking just like real ones*. Missing the occasion sensitive in how this is to be understood is to be what saddles us with sense data.

For an enquiry to be what Clarke has in mind here it must be what, if valid, would land us with sense data as the most we ever (really) see, and be what *would* be valid were it not for the relevant occasion-sensitivity. I do not think that any enquiry could meet these conditions. I have given one reason for so thinking. The role of fact to be taken in *improperly* in the enquiry—here a fact of things being capable of looking just the same while there is nothing relevant before one's eyes—is to force our hands in making a certain choice. It is a choice between options for things that *might* be seen. But something not in the environment (not suitably 'before our eyes' is never *such* an option at all. It cannot be made so simply by observing our experience more carefully.

With ringers, here hallucinations, in the picture, there is a further reason. With the pig in full view before him, Sid may yet not qualify as *knowing* there is a pig before him either because of *his* capacities for distinguishing pigs from other things, or, if ringers might be good enough, because pigs are simply not distinguishable from other things by sight. There is a fact which, if taken in improperly, may land us with *scepticism*. But that a ringer might look *just like* a pig (or so look to Sid) does not even begin to touch a claim that what Sid *saw* (whether he knew or not) was a pig. You need not *know* what you are seeing. Glancing at the next table, you need not know who is sitting there to have *seen* Rachel Weisz in the Lansdowne.

Such is central to what makes knowing and seeing two fundamentally different sorts of relations to the world. *Knowing* there is a pig before one is recognising the *instancing* of something general by something not—one case of what admits of others. It is success at what one *might* get right or wrong. *Seeing* the pig is simply gaining (or being afforded) acquaintance with what might do such instancing. It is not getting something right as to how things are. It is not responding *rightly*; it is not a response (though it may implicate responsiveness). Knowing thus has credentials to be queried, where for seeing there are none.

Clarke supposes that a sense datum enquiry will appeal to hallucinations. Must it? Viewing a wax tomato, one confronts a ringer for *a tomato*. The ringer is *before* him, *looking* as it does. Hallucinating a tomato may be, perhaps, a ringer for seeing one. Such does not make it *of* what is a ringer for a tomato. Nor is there clear sense to be made of *that* idea. Emended da Vinci appeals only to ringers which may be before the eyes. Is there a way in which hallucinations yield impetus towards sense data which such environmental ringers do not? Emended da Vinci, to be sure, leads us off that track Clarke wants to keep us on. With it we

leave the pattern of the surface enquiry. We descend into argument, or grammar-defying assumption. The problem is now with seeing's 'rule-like' dimension. Are hallucinations means for staying on Clarke's designated path?

In emended da Vinci Sid stares at a tomato on the sideboard. We are struck with the thought that there *could* have been a wax ringer there. Had there been, Sid *could* not have told the difference. But why should he have been able to? To repeat, seeing a tomato does not require *knowing* it to be such. There might seem to be this reason. Ringers being ringers, seeing what he does gives Sid nothing by which a ringer might be told from what he sees (or vice-versa). This *could* be put: what he sees is *just the same as*, or stronger yet, *just*, what he would see were there a ringer. Such are (sometimes) natural enough things to say; *true* if properly understood. But what Sid does see, and would see were there a ringer, cannot be any part of the tomato. So, it seems, if *what* he sees is just the same, ringer or not, then what he sees viewing the tomato cannot be any part of it, or of any bit of the environment. It must be something *not* before the eyes. Such 'just's and 'just the same's here *may* be mishandled occasion-sensitivity, in which case, what strikes us here may be just a seeming fact, or else a fact which only *seems* to mean that all we ever see are things not before the eyes. We might then have here what fits the form of Clarke's diagnosis in the surface enquiry. Nor need hallucinations be invoked to arrive at this point.

But how ought one understand *just the same as* here? Pia makes fake Rolexes. Showing her handiwork to a peripatetic merchant she might say, 'You see nothing here you would not see were it a real one.' If the merchant can point to something—say, 'Rolex' is in the wrong font'—then Pia is refuted. If there is no such thing to cite, she is right. Similarly for the tomato. What Sid sees is *not* what he would see if he were viewing a wax ringer if, say, the wax ringer would look waxier, or more orangish, or scab-free. It is built into the notion of a ringer that no such thing is so. What Sid would see in either case is something reddish, something roundish, and so on.

Now the question. Sid sees *something* red. He would have seen *something* red had it been wax. The same thing? Viewing the tomato, Sid sees *a case of* something being red, an instancing, by what is before him, of a certain way for a thing to be—for a thing to be red. He would see *that*—that is, an instancing of *that* way for a thing to be were it a wax ringer. For Sid to see just the same as he would see were he viewing a wax ringer, on the understanding on which this is what he does, is just (or no more than) for him to see—witness—visible instancings of all the same ways for a thing visibly to be. The instancings he happens to witness are *by*, and in, what is visibly before him being as it visibly is. Were there a ringer, he would not be witnessing *those* witnessings, but rather instancings by what then would have been before him. The case for sense data thus collapses at this point, by virtue of a mishandled rule-like dimension. Mishandling of non-rule-like dimensions need not be an issue.

A misunderstanding of *see the same*, and with it a false appearance of seeing something ultra-worldly, are thus defused. Hallucinations played no role in this misunderstanding. But nor did we arrive at a sense datum enquiry. Might appeal to hallucinations allow us to avoid the pitfalls just cited? In fact they seem only to make matters worse. Sherwin-Williams makes paint. Their motto: 'Sherwin-Williams covers the earth.' The crucial point has thus been hit: colours spread. An instancing of that way for a thing to be, for it to be red, takes up space. Hallucinating a tomato may be a ringer for seeing one. If so, for one so hallucinating it is just as though he were seeing a tomato (or ringer therefor). But hallucinating a tomato is not

experiencing something which takes up space. (If one hallucinates a tomato on the (actual) sideboard, one may *hallucinate* it taking up a given portion of space. But in fact there is no tomato in that space, or at least none one thus experiences.) So it is not experiencing, certainly not visually, something red, nor (*a fortiori*) something which is a ringer for a tomato. (*Perhaps* if it was that little red pill that caused the hallucination, hallucinating might count as experiencing the effects of that red pill.)

To drive a sense datum enquiry one needs a seeming fact to the effect that what Sid sees viewing the tomato is (just) what he might see, or visually experience, were he hallucinating. But such is *simply* not so. Where Sid hallucinates a tomato it may be for him just as though he were seeing a tomato; just as though he were witnessing instancings by what was before him of such ways for things to be as *being a tomato* or *being red*. But its being *as though* one were witnessing such things is not witnessing them. For Sid to witness instancings, e.g., in seeing, is for him to witness instancings by *what is before him*, or suitably related to him in the environment. As Frege shows, such are the only sorts of instancings there are. *Hallucinating* may be a ringer for seeing. But this does not make it the witnessing, or experiencing, of ringers for the sorts of things that might be seen—ringers in the sense that they *do* instance all those ways for things to be which one could see to be instanced in things looking as they do. If the possibility of hallucinations seems to suggest sense data where the mere mundane possibility of a ringer for a tomato would not, this can only be because one has misidentified what the ringer is in an hallucination: not something which is *what* is hallucinated, but simply the hallucinating.

It would be nice if occasion-sensitivity were the only barrier to sense-data, as I think it is the only barrier to scepticism. It would be nice if the concept of seeing, like that of knowing, would simply collapse without it. But I cannot see how this is so. Rather, it seems, the road to sense data is blocked simply by minding one's grammar—by attention to what there is to see along the *rule*-like dimension, to use Clarke's term. This leaves us with precisely that problem to which Clarke offers such a nice solution on the assumption that the sense datum enquiry does follow the pattern of the surface enquiry. Why should the idea of sense data have such a strong and enduring hold on our imagination? Why should it have seemed to so many completely compelling, however unpalatable? Unlike Clarke, I have no answer to offer, unless it is, 'Different things for different people.'

There is, though, one small factor which may sometimes play a role. As Clarke notes, 'traditional' (post-Cartesian) epistemology is often done in the first person. One prominent occasion for someone to say what he saw is by way of supporting a claim to have settled such-and-such. In that context, if his claim will not stick, then it is often called for for him to withdraw or modify his statement of what he saw. Sid, asked how he knows there are tomatoes for a salad might reply, 'I saw some on the counter.' Pia might reply, 'Are you sure they aren't those persimmons I brought home yesterday? They look quite a lot like tomatoes.' Then Sid may need to retract his claim to know there are tomatoes. But then too his claim to have seen some, since if he saw tomatoes, there *are* tomatoes, so if he can vouch for having seen them, he can vouch for *them*. He might then say: 'All I really saw were some reddish, roundish, things.' So when we enquire in the first person into what it is that *we* really saw, considerations as to what we really *know* can seem to reduce what it is we can claim to have seen, even though—now paradoxically—considerations which may seem to count against knowing such-and-such are not the sort which would have *seemed* to bear on whether we *saw* such-and-such.

Here we need only note that there are two reasons why one may need to withdraw a

claim, or why one would not be asserting it correctly. First, one might not be correct in claiming it because it is not so: what one would thus say is not correct (not true). Second, one might not be correct in claiming it because, whether it is so or not, he is not in a position to vouch for it. To claim that such-and-such (e.g., that the sun has almost set) is to represent oneself as having settled (having proof) that it is so. Even if it happens to be so, if it might not be for all *you* know, then you will have misrepresented, not necessarily the state of the things on which you report, but yourself in so reporting. If Sid has not settled whether those are tomatoes or persimmons on the counter, then he is in no position to assert that he saw tomatoes there. He will be incorrect in so claiming because he will misrepresent himself—the way he stands *in re* the question whether he saw *tomatoes*. He need not thereby be incorrect in so claiming in that what he *claims*—namely, that he saw tomatoes—is not so. Clarke makes a point of conducting his enquiries in the third person. He is wise to do so.

4. Seeing and Knowing: It is important to Clarke that his three enquiries are not *arguments*. In the surface enquiry, we consider Sid staring at a tomato. A certain fact then occurs to us: Sid cannot see the insides or the backside (or etc.). We focus on what Sid thus cannot see. We then just *see* the fact, or ‘fact’, that the most Sid can see is the front surface. It is not as if we first need to be convinced of some principle of the form ‘One sees A only if ...’, and then, having come to accept it, manage, with its aid, to deduce the conclusion that the most Sid sees is the front surface. The conclusion is, Clarke tells us, ‘right before our eyes’. Perhaps a rough parallel is this. We look at the large closed plastic surface filled with little pellets. We cannot recognise it as a chair. But then we observe people using it. We see *how* one sits in it. And we immediately see it as a chair. Not that it follows from some principle about chairs that this is what it must be. Our ability to recognise what counts as a chair as so counting is enough. Similarly for the sceptical enquiry. We consider Sid standing towards the tomato as he does, with all the capacities he in fact has for settling whether something is a tomato or not. Then some sceptical possibility occurs to us. We think of some ringer for the situation Sid in fact is in, there staring at the tomato. We focus on this. It then occurs to us (or seems to) that, for all Sid can tell, he in fact *might* be in the ringer situation. We now see—just as we see the bean bag chair to be a chair—that this cannot *really* be knowing that there is a chair. I think Clarke is right about these first two enquiries.

In stressing that they are not *arguments* Clarke calls our attention to an important feature of those cases. But the road to sense data is not like that. There is no way of landing us with them without getting us to accept some principle linking seeing to something else. Given the principle, we can see it to *follow* that, with a tomato in plain sight, the most one could *see*, strictly speaking, is, if anything, a sense datum. Here we deal in argument. The most likely source of such a something else to link to seeing is epistemology, specifically, some notion such as knowing, telling, or having proof. Perhaps some such links have at least initial plausibility.

Clarke himself suggests that the road to sense data may be paved with some connection between seeing and knowing. He says, e.g.,

Traditional epistemology has shown that if empirical knowledge must be independent of the non-rule-like dimension, then we are confined to a world of sense data. (1962: 246)

The image of confinement here needs to be unpacked. But it is clear *what* it is here which is meant so to confine us. If empirical knowledge must be independent of the non-rule-like dimension, then, Clarke argues (and I agree), the sceptical enquiry is valid. Knowledge thus disappears (not because we have none, but because there is no such thing as knowing or not). What we want to see now is how this brings down seeing with it.

One might seek a link in an epistemic role which seeing is designed to play. Abstractly put, the mission of seeing is to make the world bear *for us* on—sometimes to *settle*—what the thing to do (or think) would be. If a tomato is the sort of thing one might see, e.g., then at least sometimes it should be a (true) answer to the question how one knows there is a tomato before him that he *sees* it. Put otherwise, at least sometimes seeing the tomato should settle the issue for someone whether there is a tomato before him. Seeing it should not inevitably leave over some task of inferring the presence of a tomato from other premises of one sort or another. Of course, seeing is not always having proof. You cannot always tell a tomato at sight. The requirement is only that *sometimes* you can truly be said to have done so. If seeing Rachel Weisz is the sort of thing that *one* can do (her income may depend on this), then knowing that Rachel Weisz is dining because he *sees* her doing so is the sort of thing that *one* can do.

Weak as this requirement may be, if the sceptical enquiry is valid, it is surely not met. You cannot know that Rachel Weisz is present because you see her if you can never know that Rachel Weisz is present *überhaupt*. Such would defeat the purpose of seeing. It would not be entirely implausible to take it to defeat seeing *tout court*. Such *might* be the end of the story. The concept of seeing has collapsed. Visual experience, if such is still recognised, must just go looking for other descriptions. Sense data are not yet in the picture.

But one *might* then try a different tack. The thing about Rachel Weisz is that she admits of ringers. That is why, if the sceptical enquiry is valid, you can never know whether she is there. *If* there were items which did not admit of ringers, the *sceptical* enquiry would not thus defeat a claim to know one was experiencing them; so nor, by the above line, a claim to *be* experiencing them visually. Prichard's sense data fit this bill. He rightly takes it to follow that these are *not* what you can know things about, since there are no such things to *know*. But suppose someone missed this point. He might then think: if you so much as *seemed* to experience some such item (e.g. visually), you must be doing so; we do surely at least seem to be doing so; so we do so; so there are such items. (It would, of course, need arguing that we *seem* to be experiencing such things; an argument to be supported by the now-presumed fact that there is nothing else which could be doing what we seem to do.)

Such tries to leave us something to see even while seeing remains linked to knowing as above and the sceptical enquiry is sound. As Frege and Prichard both saw, it is doomed to fail. There is nothing to know about what does not admit of ringers. As Frege wrote, "By the step by which I win myself an environment I expose myself to risk of error." (1918: 73)) And, as he argued, the environment is all there is to judge about: what did not admit of ringers must be a *Vorstellung* —needing a bearer, brooking no two; a thought cannot be a *Vorstellung*, so nor can its truth turn, for some *Vorstellung*, on its being as it is..

The sceptical enquiry leaves us with nothing *other than* sense data—if *even* that—towards which to enjoy empirical cognitive success. Such is one understanding of confinement. Frege offers another. Near the end of "Der Gedanke" he writes,

Sense impressions are certainly a necessary *element* of perception, and these are part of an inner world. ... These alone do not open an outer

world for us. ... Having sense impressions is not yet seeing things. ... What must still be added is something non-sensory. And it is just this which opens the outer world to us; for without this non-sensory thing we would remain confined in an inner world. (1918: 75)

A propositional attitude, such as taking something to be so, relates one to two absolutely different sorts of things: to a way for things to be—what has that sort of generality intrinsic to a thought; and to what instances such generalities, while lacking generality itself—the particular case, things being as they are. The attitude represents some way for things to be as instanced (pleonastically, by things being as they are). Perception is a form of acquaintance with what might be held to do such instancing—acquaintance which may make one knowledgeable, but, prior to that, which allows one to think thoughts of *it* (that on which the truth of such a thought turns) at all. But if acquaintance with the particular case is required for thinking of it that it is a case of things being some given way for things to be, acquaintance with that way for things to be is required for thinking *it* to be instanced. One must be sufficiently sensitive, responsive, to the particular form of generality inherent in it; to *its* way of being realised or not by the particular cases there might be. One is thus sensitive to something *not* an object of sensory awareness, not liable to be before the eyes, or in the environment at all. (The sunset took place at Foz do Douro; *that* the sun has set is neither there nor elsewhere.) It is just the capacity for such sensitivities—a capacity for *thought*—whose absence, Frege tells us, would lock us in an inner world, a world of *Vorstellungen*.

If such capacity for thought went missing, perceptual capacities—sight, hearing, etc.—need not thereby fail to keep up their part of the bargain. They might still provide an acquaintance with the world that *would* allow for recognising instantings—cases of things being thus and so—were thought equipped to do its part. In plain terms, one might still *see* the tomato, engaged in its career from vine to compost; it is just that what one sees would be nothing to him (except, perhaps, entertaining, frightening, alluring). It would not be what he could recognise as, or mistake for, say, a persimmon, or on a sideboard. It might elicit reactions from him (e.g., flight). But it could not make the world bear *for him* on how to think or act as would its being so that there was a persimmon on the sideboard were he to take in (or seem to take in) things so being. There would be no such thing as how *that* there was a persimmon on the sideboard would bear for him on the pursuit of successes he is in no position to pursue at all.

Sid views the persimmon before him. His experiencing as he thus does falls under various generalities. It is, e.g., a case of someone seeing a persimmon. What falls under these generalities is experiencing which is essentially *Sid's*. So for there to be *that* experiencing, there would need to be a bearer, Sid, and it would need to be *that* bearer. So, Sid's doing the experiencing he thus does is his having *Vorstellungen* (though it is he who falls under generalities). Given his capacity for thought Sid can recognise what he is doing as a case of someone seeing a persimmon. Without it, he could not think such thoughts at all. He would still have *Vorstellungen*. *We* might recognise his being as he then is as, e.g., his seeing the persimmon. He would not. He would just experience as he does, locked in a world of *Vorstellungen*.

To use this vocabulary is not to produce, or mention, any new objects of Sid's perceptual awareness. Sid's experiencing as he does in any given instance is presented to him as *one's* episodes of experiencing—as one's episodes of having the wind blow his hair—are presented to him alone. For Sid to experience such-and-such—e.g., some particular sort of item in some

particular condition—is for him, and his experiencing, to fall under some generality. The generalities there are for such particular cases to fall under are not touched by his capacities, or lack thereof, to recognise their instantings.

One can be right or wrong only as to ways one might *think* things to be. One can only think things to be ways whose instantings one would know. If the sceptical enquiry is sound, there is no knowledge. So there is no thought. At which point, perhaps, Clarke's confinement imagery and Frege's merge.

5. Concluding: In *Legacy* and *Surfaces* occasion-sensitivity plays two quite different roles. In *Legacy*, the idea of knowing something collapses without it. It is a *sine que non* for there being such an idea. Hence (since we have such an idea) we are occasion-sensitive thinkers. In *Surfaces*, without occasion-sensitivity we get some strange results. One might argue, in Moorean fashion, and plausibly, that we *know* these results to be wrong, given what we know the concept of seeing to be. Still, there is no case that without occasion-sensitivity seeing would disappear from the scene altogether. It would just turn out to be something rather odd. Perhaps *Surfaces* just did not explore the issue fully: there *is* a sense datum enquiry, in which occasion-sensitivity plays the role it does in the sceptical enquiry; it is just that Clarke never fully spells this out. But, on inspection, there is no such enquiry. The idea of sense data founders before mishandled occasion-sensitivity becomes an issue. Nor would sense-datum be compulsory but for occasion-sensitivity.

This difference between seeing and knowing manifests a deeper one. Following Frege, I have identified that deeper one in terms of a distinction between, on the one hand, what has, intrinsically, generality of a certain sort (call this 'the conceptual'), and what, lacking such generality, may be a case of, instance, what has it. It is a distinction between what belongs to thought—ways for things to be represented as being—and what belongs to history—the careers of our spatio-temporal surroundings and their denizens. These two disjoint domains are connected by a fundamental relation. Thinking from world to thought, I have labeled this relation *instancing*. (Its converse could be called *reaching*.)

Seeing connects us to what falls on the historical side of this relation. It is, or affords, a form of acquaintance with that which instances, or fails to instance, those ways things may be represented being. It thus positions us to recognise instancing where it occurs. Knowing is *responding* to what does the instancing: the particular case, things being as they are. It is *recognising* a case of instancing for what it thus is; as one of a certain kind. It thus presupposes a capacity to distinguish what *would* be a case of things being the way in question from what would not. A capacity for recognition is, *per se*, a capacity to get things *right*—where one might also get things *wrong*. So it rests on a capacity to get things right or wrong—in Frege's terms to judge; more plainly, to think things so. To think things so is to make oneself liable to risk of error. For one to *know* things so is for such risk to be cancelled. In seeing there is no such risk to cancel. Seeing is neither getting things right nor wrong.

One who *knows* that such-and-such—*recognises* a case of instancing—holds a stance towards something—a question of truth—about which one *can* be mistaken. To know, or to recognise, is in fact to run no such risk. The sceptical enquiry shows that risk-management which allows for this is available only with occasion-sensitivity. Seeing offers no risk to be managed. So a claim that N saw such-and-such is not impeachable on grounds of any risk N might have run. Accordingly, there is not the same role for occasion-sensitivity to play in enquiries into what we see as it does in enquiries into what we know. In the search for sense

data, the surface and the sceptical enquiries are side show. A sense datum could not be the most one saw *of* a tomato; ringers being inert in this arena, nor could they show sense data to be the most one saw in viewing one.

Clarke ends *Legacy* with the remark,

It's a pleasant surprise when skepticism, which has always given us plenty to think about, gives us something new to ponder. (1972: 768)

What skepticism, examined closely, gives us to ponder is the role of occasion-sensitivity in our thought. The search for what can make sense data seem compulsory reminds us, at least, of something Frege gave us to ponder: the significance of the distinction between what is instanced (the conceptual) and instances (the historical). Attention to this distinction would restructure many philosophical debates. It is also worth noting that without these two distinct domains, related as they are in instancing, there would be no room in which for Clarke's 'non-rule-like dimension', that is, occasion-sensitivity, to operate.¹

Charles Travis

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¹ Mike Martin and Mark Kalderon have helped me greatly in coming to whatever clarity I have come to on the above issues.