

CHAPTER 4

Mind under matter

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...ideas apparently clothed in particles of electric oxygenous fire
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Panpsychism is an eminently sensible view of the world and its relation to mind. If God is a metaphysician, and regardless of the actual truth or falsity of panpsychism, it is certain that he regards the theory as an honest and elegant competitor on the field of ontologies. And if God didn't create a panpsychist world, then there's a fair chance that he wishes he had done so, or will do next time around. The difficulties panpsychism faces, then, are not metaphysical ones. They are, instead, difficulties of understanding, and of acceptance by philosophers.

The main difficulty of this sort the theory faces is that its ontology – with consciousness in some sense at the heart of all that exists¹ – is deemed too bizarre, frankly, too *humano-centric* to be taken seriously. Why should anyone think that consciousness, widely held to be the preserve only of ourselves, plus the most recently evolved organisms, infuses the basement level of all existence? Such a thought seems to many – especially, to scientifically scrupled philosophers of mind – a narcissistic (or at best hopelessly anti-realist) folly, which doesn't even deserve its day in court. Panpsychism appears, in this respect, on a par with the claim that the cosmos orbits the Earth; it seems to place the 'human element' too close to the centre of what exists – in Bernard Williams's (1978:64) phrase – *anyway*.

In this paper I counteract the tendency to view panpsychism as unacceptably parochial. Panpsychism's proponents, far from being metaphysically short-sighted, and lazily reaching for what's nearest by – consciousness – in order to solve perplexing metaphysical puzzles, are those who have taken a most demanding philosophical step, which uniquely positions them to offer a coherent, elegant and wholeheartedly realist account of our world.

Contrary to first appearances, the explanatory trajectory pursued by panpsychists is not the 'top-down' one of taking something familiar to us, something local, and

1. A sense to be explained shortly. By 'all that exists' I mean 'all that concretely exists,' excluding abstract existents from the discussion as is customary in these matters.

trying to shoehorn it into basic ontology for the sake of a comfortable worldview. What we are doing is not, for example, akin to the mistake of conveniently assuming that *everywhere else* must be just like *around here*. Rather, the explanatory direction taken is *bottom-up*; the crucial question for any realist being: Given the world, richly-propriated and populated as we know that it is, what must this world be composed of at its lowest level to metaphysically account for the way that we know it to be?²

By explaining a new argument for panpsychism, I show that the theory answers the call of the deepest and most sober of metaphysical needs, reaching far beyond local human interests and contingencies.

1. Existing motivations for panpsychism

On the way to our central points, I will survey three important existing motivations that have led philosophers to panpsychism. The new argument to be presented here draws upon these motivations in various important ways, as will become clear. Moreover, with other extant reasons to be panpsychist already in view, it will be more easy to clearly distinguish and situate, as well as weigh, the new reasons to be offered here.

Roughly speaking, the exposition of the three extant motivations proceeds according to a decreasing element of humano-centricity in each.

1.1 The problem of consciousness

Perhaps the most obvious reason to endorse panpsychism is as a solution to the mind/body problem, or that aspect of the problem relating to phenomenal consciousness at any rate. Notoriously, contemporary conventional physicalism faces an *explanatory gap*³ when it comes to accounting for the presence of consciousness. Such physicalism – still the orthodoxy in one or another form – claims that the experiential nature of the world metaphysically supervenes upon its non-experiential physical nature. The explanatory gap occurs because we seem – in principle, not merely con-

2. This question reveals the essential reductionism behind panpsychism, as well as most contemporary metaphysics of mind. The mission seems to be to deduce the nature of the world's tiniest components, given that the way it is with all else that exists is determined by their properties and arrangement. So, truly novel properties cannot arise at any 'higher level' of being. This doctrine, which I elsewhere call 'smallism' (Coleman 2006), is open to question, philosophically and empirically, and I have my doubts about it. Perhaps we live in an emergentist's world, for example; this remains to be seen. However, for the purposes of this paper I set these doubts aside. Those interested in the interface between philosophy of mind and the question of reductionism's truth can take my overall argument to be of the form: *if* smallism is true, then panpsychism is true, for the reasons given.

3. The term is Levine's – see his 1983 for example.

tingently – to be unable to make sense of the metaphysical entailment (for example: generation, constitution) of consciousness by non-conscious physical matter.

Conventional physicalism has even been thought by some to disappear entirely into this explanatory gap: there are famous arguments to the effect that without an epistemically transparent transition from the (non-experiential) physical to consciousness, we have reason to think it false that everything which exists supervenes upon the (non-experiential) physical.

Given this backdrop, the allure of panpsychism is clear. For example, Strawson (2006) has recently argued that brute emergence – the production of new properties in ways that are not epistemically transparent – is impossible. Sometimes phenomena at one level do produce entirely novel properties at a higher level, as when non-liquid molecules yield a liquid body by being bonded together in the right way. But it is always intelligible – it always makes metaphysical sense – how transitions like this occur, says Strawson. In the case of liquidity, we understand well enough how loose bonding between non-liquid H₂O molecules (say) allows these molecules to slide over and around one another, in a way that produces the characteristic liquid behavior we recognize of water at room temperature.

Certain other properties though, it seems, cannot emerge from a lower-level ‘base’ that utterly lacks them. Strawson challenges us, for example, to make metaphysical sense of the emergence of mass from the massless space-time points that some (philosophers think that some) physicists believe constitute matter’s ultimate fabric. How could any amount of aggregation of items without mass be responsible for objects having mass, as we know that they do? The purported brute emergence of extension from these space-time points, which are supposed also to occupy no ‘space,’ offers another good case here. To have extended and massy macro-objects, it appears, their ultimate components must also be somewhat massy and extended.⁴

Some properties, then, must be basic: if they are to be possessed by large-scale things at all, they must be present all the way down, even in the *ultimates* – Strawson’s term⁵ for whatever turn out to be matter’s tiniest building blocks. And consciousness is a property of this kind, argues Strawson; for its emergence from non-conscious underpinnings would be as (metaphysically) unintelligible as the emergence of mass and extension from the massless, extensionless space-time points of physical lore. Hence the problem of the explanatory gap for conventional physicalism. The ultimates that

4. Note here the clandestine adherence to smallism, the part/whole reductionism which I am not calling into question in this paper.

5. First coined in his 1999.

compose a conscious being, by virtue of which it is conscious,⁶ then, must themselves be conscious.⁷

One further highly plausible assumption completes the argument for panpsychism here, the assumption I call *refundability*. If you happen not to like the ultimates composing your consciousness, you can always take them back and exchange them for others that you prefer: Allowing that physicists are correct about the ultimates (strings, on one view) being fairly homogenous entities, it seems then that *any* right-sized (and arranged) group of them could compose a sensate human being. After all, we're each constantly exchanging matter with the environment; in fact continuously refunding all of our ultimates. In which case, given that only conscious ultimates could compose a macro-consciousness like one of ours, all the ultimates must be conscious. This is panpsychism.

Still, if Strawson's were our only motivation for panpsychism, then we could perhaps understand the accusation that panpsychism is unacceptably humano-centric. It might seem extravagant, narcissistic, even explanatorily empty, to attempt to explain the production of consciousness as we know it by transposing it to the basement level of existence, and making it the property of every ultimate there is. Indeed, I have heard this maneuver described (somewhat melodramatically) as taking the tumor of the problem of consciousness and metastasizing it throughout the universe.⁸ However, although I agree with the thought driving Strawson's argument⁹ (in fact, I will later claim that the problem of consciousness as Strawson conceives it is but the most local manifestation of the deep metaphysical demand for panpsychism identified in this paper), his has by no means been our only motivation for panpsychism.

6. For an internalist, say, these might be the ultimates that compose the brain of the conscious being.

7. Why must it be the ultimates that are the first home of consciousness, why not something larger – carbon molecules, or brain cells say? As long as these were conscious, the panpsychist could have his story of macro-consciousness' non-brute emergence from its components, but at a (slightly) lower cost to credulity, one might think. The answer is that, were it items above the smallest level of existents that constituted the conscious bedrock, items themselves composed by the (now non-conscious) ultimates, the explanatory gap would just recur at this lower level: How could it be that non-conscious ultimates produced conscious molecules, or conscious brain cells? The puzzle of consciousness' emergence remains untouched here. So for panpsychism to operate at all, it must operate on the policy that it is the ultimates that are the fundamental loci of experience.

8. By an anonymous philosopher.

9. And behind the long distinguished tradition that thinks similarly. See Descartes (1641/1996) and Chalmers (1996) for a good snapshot of venerable and more recent related lines of thought.

1.2 Russell's Insight and the pull of parsimony

I take it that most extant forms of panpsychism have, broadly speaking, a Russellian heritage – deriving much of the structure of their ontology, if not also their philosophical motivation, from Russell's famous analysis of (micro)physics and consequent embracing of panpsychism.¹⁰

According to Russell, physical theory describes the occupants of its ontological catalogue – electrons, protons, photons, forces etc. – in exclusively extrinsic terms. Physics tells us what electrons, for example, are only by telling us how they interrelate with protons, forces and the like. Electrons are proton attractors, they are electron repulsors, they react to forces in such-and-such ways, have a mass of $9.10938188 \times 10^{-31}$ kilograms – which tells us about the kinds of displacements we can expect them to produce – the list continues. We are told about the nature of electrons, then, only in terms that relate them (largely via their doings) with other physical phenomena (similarly defined), and their eventual impact on our measuring instruments. And what of their intrinsic¹¹ natures? Physics is silent on this point. We know an awful lot about what electrons do, but nothing at all about what they are. Physical theory as a whole – the idea goes – sets out a formal structure of entities specified in extrinsic terms: via their relations with one another. What these entities are in themselves¹² is not a matter that physics busies itself with.

It follows, Russell observed,¹³ that we don't know anything about the intrinsic nature of (micro)physical matter that could rule out its being intrinsically *mental*, in some sense. For we just don't know *anything* about its nature. All that we do know, on assumption of physicalism, is that the physical items whose intrinsic natures we have direct access to are intrinsically conscious – these are our own conscious experiences:

[W]e know so little [of matter]: it is only its mathematical properties that we can discover. For the rest, our knowledge is negative...The physical world is only

10. Russell 1927a. Panpsychism is of course a very old view, with exponents including Thales, Spinoza, Leibniz and James (see Skrbina 2005 for exhaustive detail on past panpsychists). My point here is just to emphasise the Russellian influence over modern versions.

11. 'Intrinsic' is just one word often used to gesture at the non-relational nature of physical phenomena in this context. Others are 'essential,' 'categorical,' 'inner,' 'qualitative' and 'core,' and this does not exhaust the list of alternatives. There are difficulties with each term, (see Seager 2006 and Stoljar 2006, for example, for some of these) which I will not address here. I will allow myself to flit between those terms on the list that I feel get closest to *whatever we really mean*, something which I'm hopeful may be more clearly specifiable in future.

12. To the extent that this idea makes sense. We are assuming it true that relations need relations that have 'intrinsic' (but see n. 11 above) natures, that things can't be relational *all the way down*. Whatever that would mean.

13. Though he was far from the first; Eddington, Locke and (arguably) Descartes made much the same observation. See Strawson 2006 for more, especially on Descartes.

known as regards certain abstract features of its space-time structure – features which, because of their abstractness, do not suffice to show whether the physical world is, or is not, different in intrinsic character from the world of mind.

(1948:240)

[W]e know nothing about the intrinsic quality of physical events except when these are mental events that we directly experience.

(1956:153)

[A]s regards the world in general, both physical and mental, everything that we know of its intrinsic character is derived from the mental side.

(1927a:402)

Hence, when considering the physical ultimates, it comes to seem a reasonable move to speculate that what constitutes their intrinsic nature is consciousness.¹⁴ Physics describes their causal/relational roles, experiential natures provide the role-fillers, so to speak. This is panpsychism, but it is also physicalism. For physical descriptions of the ultimates can be taken to pick out the intrinsic, conscious items ('in themselves'). Such descriptions would in effect detail the causal/relational profiles of conscious natures, to be used as reference-fixers by physical referring terms. So in this sense the psychic constituents of physics' world would count as physical.¹⁵

Of course, if 'Russell's Insight' concerning physics is correct, then physical theory is precisely crying out for intrinsic *some things* to serve as the doers of the doings that it records and relates. Panpsychism satisfies this need – the ultimate physical particles are to be thought of, in respect of their intrinsic natures, as loci of consciousness.

Hence, theoretical considerations of parsimony also count strongly in favor of Russellian (physicalist) panpsychism here: Granted that physics requires an intrinsic nature, and we have one conveniently to hand in the form of consciousness, simplic-

14. Two points here: 1. We assume that there will be tiniest building blocks of matter, not an infinite continuum. Indeed there is some empirical hope of this; many physicists, additionally, work on the hypothesis that the ultimates are fundamentally homogenous. Heil (2003) finds the infinite continuum hypothesis practically incoherent, a priori. I have some sympathy with him, but place more weight on current scientific backing. (In any case, it's not clear that the infinite continuum hypothesis would be damaging to panpsychism. Panpsychists could envisage a level of existent *below which* all smaller components of matter had to be conscious, down to the infinitely small. This would avoid, as desired, any jump from non-conscious components to conscious composites, albeit with some sacrifice of elegance for the view) 2. Throughout, 'building blocks' need not be taken too literally: modern microphysical entities are just energy fields of greater and lesser concentration. Nonetheless, 'bigger' ones are 'composed' by 'smaller' ones, and these latter taken to systematically determine the properties of their 'composites.'

15. Also in another sense: On Stoljar's 'object conception' of the physical (Stoljar 2004), the physical is whatever lies at the root of the everyday objects of our acquaintance. This Kripke-style natural-kind view, if it found experiential natures underpinning the microphysical being of tables, rocks and such, would have no problem labelling such natures 'physical.' So, on either of these two plausible ways of specifying the sense of 'physical,' consciousness provides the physical world's (physical) bedrock in the panpsychist scenario entertained.

ity and elegance would prescribe slotting the phenomenal into the physical, yielding a microexperiential solution.¹⁶

As a motivation for panpsychism, Russell's Insight takes us a healthy distance away from the purely local preoccupations of the problem of consciousness, which after all concerned the difficulty of accommodating beings like us in the natural world. Now the focus is on what there is that can provide the required non-relational nature of the microphysical. However, while this focus might appear coldly theoretical, and – for panpsychists desirous of objective grounding for their view – pleasingly untouched by human concerns, this fact can just serve to make the accusations of parochialism against panpsychism even more vehement. For now, someone antecedently unsympathetic to panpsychism might say, we have been so heinously vain as to *drag* human consciousness along into an unconnected matter. At least consciousness as we know it is directly relevant to the *problem of consciousness*! But it could appear short-sighted in the extreme to suggest that phenomenal properties provide the intrinsic nature of the microphysical, *just* because the microphysical is on the look-out for an intrinsic nature, and because we can't be bothered to think any further than the ends of our minds.

To conclude that we have to turn to consciousness to provide the intrinsic being of the ultimates, we must have very good reason to think that there's nowhere else to go, the objection might continue. After all, why not search for an intrinsically physical (as in: conventional, non-consciously physical) inner nature for microphysics?¹⁷ The third existing motivation for panpsychism to be examined addresses this question, and the challenge behind it.

16. Perhaps this is the place to say something about my conception of things and properties, since it matters for the way I put my argument, and is likely to confuse those not already steeped in it. I sometimes talk of consciousness as a property, or properties, and sometimes as a thing, or nature, or use other particular-talk. This mixture is intentional (or not unintentional), because I am dubious about the popular distinction between an object and its properties. I'm no bundle theorist, though neither do I think objects are anything in addition to their ways of being, strictly speaking. Now is not the forum for full explication of the view, but for our purposes it suffices to say that for me consciousness is in a sense both a property (of us, of ultimates) *and* a thing. The view of panpsychism to be pushed here is that the particulars that are the physical ultimates are intrinsically conscious natures. This means that they have experiential properties as their intrinsic properties, and that they are things in so far as they are loci of experiential nature. This nature comprises their objectual existence. Let me apologise here for any confusion that may issue from this way of talking in the paper; to the best of my knowledge this would not have its source in any confusion in me.

17. This is Stoljar's (2006) position for example.

2. Rosenberg's 'No alternative' view

Taking up Russell's Insight, Rosenberg (2004) develops it and drives it very deep indeed into the conventional physicalist worldview. He shows convincingly, it seems to me, that when it comes to the intrinsic natures we require for ontology,¹⁸ the conventional physicalist account is – irredeemably – flat bankrupt.

Rosenberg offers a model of our world as composed of a system of nested circles. These circles correspond closely to the 'levels' distinguished in the 'leveled ontology' popular with reductionist physicalists (and others). So, we can think of physics as describing the biggest circle, with the chemical circle, biological circle, psychological circle, economic circle, social circle (and so on) represented, respectively, as ever-smaller circles nesting inside one another, all ultimately nested within the circle of physics.¹⁹ Why ontological circles instead of levels? Rosenberg observes that the properties/things particular to each domain, each circle-system, rely on one another for their individuation, in a manner that ends up being circular. He illustrates with the following examples:

In economics, what things count as goods and services?...Goods and services are those things that consumers and producers barter. Who are the consumers and producers? Consumers and producers, in their turn, are people occupying distinct positions in the system of bartering for the goods and services...In biology, organisms pass heritable characteristics through their genes. A heritable characteristic is one that parents pass from their generation to later generations. A parent, in turn, is an organism that passes along its genes...to the young. (2004: 235)

He then offers this general moral about all the circles nested inside the circle of physics (the 'levels' above the 'level' of physics, on the old layered scheme): "In each case, a closed...system of theoretical concepts exists...which are directly or indirectly circularly dependent on one another." (ibid.).

Thus far what we have is just an extension of Russell's Insight to all levels of the physical(ist's) world: Each level, each domain of scientific theory seems merely to describe a formally-related web of items: it individuates its denizens in terms of the

18. As in: 'what exists; existence.' Not: 'the theory of what exists.' We need the former to conduct the latter.

19. It's not clear that the social circle really nests inside the economic one. Perhaps they overlap, or have some other relation. Also, there will clearly be some pairs of circles that nest inside a third circle without nesting inside each other. I'm simplifying here for ease of explanation, and will ignore these and other subtleties, upon which nothing substantive hangs for us.

relations they stand in to one another,²⁰ but neglects to tell us anything about their intrinsic natures.

Next, Rosenberg adds an insight of his own. He distinguishes properties *intrinsic to* a system from properties *extrinsic within* that same system. The properties intrinsic to a system are those defined by the discourse of the particular theoretical realm in question, inter-defined by their relations to the other members of their conceptual circle-system. So, in his example of economics, the properties of being a good, or being a service, of being a consumer or producer are intrinsic to economics. A question then presents itself: if the inhabitants (the properties/things referred to) in a theoretical/conceptual circle have no grounding independently of one another, on what do they ontologically depend? The answer is that they depend upon items extrinsic within the circle-system they belong to. These items, in turn, are intrinsic to another, broader circle which encompasses the one presently considered. So the properties defined internally by economics ride on the ontological solidity of things like *desires* and *needs*, properties that do figure in economics, but which properly belong (that is: are individuated with respect) to the psychological circle within which the economic circle nests. These psychological properties are extrinsic within economics, but intrinsic to psychology. And they (along with the other psychological properties) in turn must depend, for their ontological solidity – that is, to avoid being, ultimately speaking, merely formal entities on a circle within which the psychological circle nests. In this case, we might invoke certain biological properties (e.g. survival drives) as extrinsic within psychology, and thus as standing independent of its intra-definitional structure. But of course a similar story is true of the biological properties with respect to further properties that they, in turn, will have to ‘ride upon’ ontologically: these properties, extrinsic within biology, will have to come from a yet larger circle of being (most likely the chemical). And so on. Rosenberg claims that similar stories apply to the relations between each of the progressively larger circles, until at last we arrive at physics:

Reflections on examples such as these lead one inevitably to concepts with wider and wider spheres of application. In the case of the natural sciences, this expanding arena of circularly looping systems traces the same path as intuitive expectations of reduction. When we look at a circular system of concepts, we find that its instances are carried by objects with properties extrinsic within that system but intrinsic to some other system. Inevitably, these other systems are themselves circular...and thus we find them carried by yet another set of objects with properties extrinsic within them. From economics, we look to social relations of a broader sort, then from those to psychology, ecology and biology, then to chemistry, and finally to physics. (p. 236)

20. Rosenberg allows that sometimes an item at one level depends not just on other interrelated items at its *own* level for individuation, but on items at other levels also. I omit this detail for ease, as it does not affect the larger point: that the *overall* theoretical structure provided by the physical sciences is circular (ultimately formal) – in the sense described.

His thought is that each ‘higher level’ domain requires entities from some other domain to get its “foothold on concreteness.” This other domain will be a lower level, ‘broader’ circle of ontology whose entities in turn depend upon the inhabitants of some circle that it nests within. What Rosenberg has done, in effect, is to drain the intrinsicness of the physical world away, all down to the level of physics: Each level of discourse depends upon one(s) lower than it to implement the contrasts that its circular system of concepts expresses. In the end, all higher levels depend in this way upon physics. So then the question presses: ‘What do the objects and properties of physics depend upon to implement *their* relations, to make *them* concrete?’ But physics, as Russell observed, is a perfectly circular system for its own part. Rosenberg parses Russell’s Insight thus:

When we reach physics we find the same kind of circularity as in any other, less fundamental, sciences...we can easily see the circularity in physics by asking questions about the identity conditions on the basic physical entities. These...are broadly functional. What it is to be a photon, for instance, is to play the functional role in our environment that photons play in physics...as a result physics incorporates circularity, just as all functional systems do. (ibid.)

The result is that we search in vain for intrinsicness within the world as characterized by conventionally understood physical science. In so far as any entities have intrinsic being within this grand scheme, they have it only *relative* to a particular area (or areas) of discourse. From the standpoint of economics, social/psychological properties can be considered intrinsic – that is, ontologically self-sufficient (in some sense) – because they are the things that economic properties depend upon for their concreteness. But social/psychological properties are not intrinsic *tout court* in this scheme, for they in turn depend (at least, and ultimately) upon the properties of physics. But with physics itself (as conventionally understood) lacking mention of any *absolutely* intrinsic properties (its concepts also constitute a relativised circle), we must conclude with Rosenberg that the physical/scientific world, understood on its face, lacks any absolutely intrinsic properties.²¹ Yet ontology clearly requires such properties. If there are to be relations – between the items referred to by each theoretical level/circle of reality – then there need to be *relata*. And if none of the *relata* of the conventionally understood physical world have intrinsic identity conditions (except with respect to other systems of entities that in their turn depend on yet other systems, and so on down to physics. And then...?) then we must search for reality’s intrinsic building blocks outside of the physical as conventionally understood. Else we face an ontolog-

21. It may *mention* such intrinsic properties, by telling us about the formal relations they stand in to one another, but it is ultimately silent about their character. In this sense – on this understanding of ‘the physical world’ – it turns out that, since our world requires absolutely intrinsic natures for *anything* to have a ‘toehold on concreteness,’ these natures must be non-physical. This is the core of Rosenberg’s anti-physicalism.

ical house of cards; except, strictly speaking, without any cards really there to hold it up. We face nothingness.

Rosenberg concludes – taking his Russellianism to the natural next step – that, since phenomenal natures are alone in being absolutely intrinsic – they do not rely on any other entities for their individuation – we must look to them for the intrinsic nature of the microphysical ultimates. This provides the ‘very good reason,’ demanded above by the conventional physicalist, for our dragging consciousness into an apparently unrelated matter and deploying panpsychism. We simply have no alternative, says Rosenberg.

Still, some will not consider Rosenberg’s a very good reason at all. True, they might allow, consciousness properties are absolutely intrinsic.²² And true also, perhaps, the physical world has been shown – between Russell and Rosenberg – to be in need of an intrinsic nature to ground its ontology. Yet still, the conventionally-minded physicalist might maintain, it is the worst kind of philosophical laziness to halt our hunt for this intrinsic nature at consciousness. Instead of solving a metaphysical problem at an extravagant cost with panpsychism, we are better off keeping faith with conventional, *the-world’s-nature-supervenies-on-its-non-experiential-physical-nature* physicalism, and holding out for a non-experiential physical heart for the ultimates.²³

I think this response ignores the depth of Rosenberg’s argument that the conventionally physical world could not harbor the intrinsic nature that we’re looking for. But it has to be admitted that Rosenberg’s argumentative strategy, as a device to persuade us of panpsychism’s truth, suffers from being of the ‘we’ve nowhere else to look, so it *must* be here, however crazy that sounds’ variety. Sometimes when we’re searching for something, and even when we have exhausted all available locations for it but one, still this one alternative can appear unacceptable, merely forced upon us. When I can’t find my keys in any pocket, the car, the house, the office or in my wife’s clothing, and all that’s left is to consider the possibility that they might somehow be *inside the cat*, I may understandably balk at this suggestion, and take the view that my previous survey of sites is incomplete in some unobvious way. And similarly might the conventional physicalist reason, again citing humano-centricity as the real drive behind Rosenberg’s lurch to panpsychism. ‘*Anything* but panpsychism!’, we can imagine her saying. So we have not yet done enough to convince our opponent that we turn to panpsychism as a metaphysical solution on honest grounds of philosophical merit.

22. At least some of them, which is all the panpsychist needs.

23. Again, this is how I read Stoljar’s (2006) position, in the face of the challenge that physicalist panpsychism poses to conventional physicalism. Elsewhere (Coleman 2007) I argue that, quite apart from my argument of the next section that the properties required by basic ontology *must* be experiential ones, Stoljar’s solution is anyway far less appealing than a panpsychist solution, on the grounds that panpsychism offers us a here-and-now metaphysical remedy to our problems, as opposed to a dogmatic, and possibly fruitless, wait in hope.

3. A new argument for panpsychism

My argument below runs differently from the considerations motivating Russell and Rosenberg. For I do not propose that we look to the experiential to found our world on account of not being able to find any other candidate intrinsic nature. Though I do agree that this is the way things stand, my argument has a positive turn: I try to present the force of the claim that the very idea of the absolutely intrinsic, absolutely qualitative being, *is* (the same as) the idea of the qualitative-experiential. That is why we should put consciousness at the heart of ontology, and embrace panexperientialism.

To repeat, I am not arguing that a process of elimination reveals consciousness to be our world's only intrinsically qualitative nature; so that given Russellianism about physics panpsychism wins *by default*. Instead, the argument here takes a positive form: the overall claim now to be defended is that *sufficient consideration of the notion of the intrinsically qualitative shows it to be indistinguishable from the notion of the qualitatively experiential*. The idea of that which has an absolutely intrinsic way of being *just is* the idea of the conscious-experiential, in other words. It is (primarily) in this warm-blooded sense that consciousness is the sole candidate to give the ultimates their heart.

I deploy three (roughly; they overlap) points in support of the claim that we should – must – look to consciousness to provide the intrinsic nature of the micro-physical. Having stated and summarized these three points, I'll offer something of the form of a strict argument based upon them to finish.²⁴

1. The leading thought is that the idea of the intrinsically qualitative just *is* the idea of the conscious. Thinking of something that is absolutely in itself qualitative (not merely qualitative *relative* to something else) is *ipso facto* to think of a phenomenal quality. Imaginatively bring to mind an experience of redness; and then, whatever the background, consider the sensation only in respect of its redness. It is clear that this phenomenal quality, so isolated in thought, is intrinsically qualitative; no one seriously doubts this, not even if they think (say) that the phenomenal is representational through-and-through.²⁵ But the converse is not typically held: that to focus on the notion of the absolutely qualitative is thereby to focus on some conscious quality. The thought here is not merely – not only – a challenge: to try to come up with an existence that has quality in its own right other than pure phenomenology, though

24. Stoljar (2006) takes some panpsychists to argue that since we get our concept of the intrinsic from consciousness, it could only be consciousness that provided the intrinsic basis of the microphysical. He, quite fairly, rejects this conceptual link and the argument built upon it. My argument, however, make no use of the claim that our concept of the intrinsic derives from consciousness (although I happen to think that this might be true, for reasons the argument makes clear).

25. Though some at least claim to be able to doubt this. I think Jackson (2003), ironically, is now one of those. See note 37 below for more on this matter.

clearly this consideration has force too. The real force of the point, rather, is positive: to be some way – to have quality – intrinsically and in-and-of yourself – is to be propertied in the kind of way that experience is propertied; it is to have a conscious quality, a phenomenal property. Further support for this thought derives from points 2 and 3 below.

Wait a second. Why can't I think that a nature like energy (or mass, or...) fits the bill? Perhaps Russell is correct, and we can only characterize energy indirectly, using equations and such; but in itself it is what it is – energy – even though the character of its intrinsic nature remains unknowable by us, in your sense. So why could we not say that (at least part of) the intrinsic nature of the ultimates is to have energy (or mass, or...)? And there's nothing remotely non-physical (as conventionally understood) about such an intrinsic nature.

This is to get confused about the difference between the physical as conventionally understood and the physical as a panpsychist ontology would conceive of it. The concept ENERGY indeed very plausibly has to pick out some absolutely intrinsic nature, being a bedrock concept in physics. So there is no disagreement that, in this sense, energy fits the bill: saying of something that it has energy may well be to ascribe to it an intrinsic property.²⁶ However, the important question is what exactly *is* this absolutely intrinsic nature of energy? What inner qualitative nature does energy have? And so, what does it mean to say of an ultimate that its nature is energetic? As the objector notes, the equations – all that the armory of the conventionally physical provides – characterize energy's real nature only indirectly. The claim to be sustained here is that the intrinsic nature in fact picked out by ENERGY can only be a phenomenal nature, because the absolutely intrinsically qualified just is the experiential. To say that something has energy, read as an intrinsic property, will be to ascribe to it a phenomenal property. I understand the interruption, but the overall idea here will hang together more cohesively and persuasively if objections can be saved (I don't suppose they can) until after the statement of supporting points two and three, which flesh out – give more muscle to – the sense of the first point.

2. To say that something is qualitative is to say that there is an answer to the question: 'What is it like?', even when – as is notoriously the case with consciousness-properties – this answer escapes much elucidation in terms of words. But what we require in the case of the intrinsic qualitative nature of the microphysical ultimates is *absolute* what-it-is-likeness; for what we, along with Rosenberg and Russell, are seeking is a core, inviolable, intrinsically qualitative nature upon which to found all ontology. The building-blocks of all existence must be *absolutely* qualitative; they must be some way in and of themselves, and relative to no other standard. For if they don't (as it were)

26. I'm dubious that ascribing mass to something is to ascribe an intrinsic property, however, for reasons I'll not go into here. Anyhow, if MASS *is* taken to refer to an intrinsic nature, similar remarks to those made here regarding energy will mean that this too must be a phenomenal nature.

stand on their own two feet ontologically-speaking, they cannot be expected to play the role that metaphysics assigns them: to provide the essential substance that fills the causal/interactive profiles set out by microphysics. Put simply: Were it the case that the ultimates weren't qualitative in an absolute sense – intrinsically and in and of themselves – then nothing at all could exist. There could be no physical world of substance for the microphysical existents to hold up, were they not themselves absolutely substantial; which means: qualitative in their own right.²⁷ They must owe the way that they are, their qualitative nature, to nothing else but their own being, given that they exist. I'm labouring the point, but that's the only way I can see to communicate this most key of intuitions: to put it in various ways so that one of the reader's tastings of it will prove decisive.

If this is correct, then what we require in our search are natures that are absolutely qualitative; which means, absolute answers to the question 'What is it like?', when considering each individual ultimate. It is no idle co-incidence that this phrase – 'What is it like?' – is intimately associated with Nagel's (1974) famous and incredibly influential attempt to home-in on the nature of phenomenal consciousness in *What Is It Like to Be a Bat?* According to Nagel, asking, of a conscious creature, 'What is it like to be that creature?', 'What is it like for the creature?' is our best way of drawing attention to the qualitative, conscious-experiential properties we take that creature to enjoy; properties that we are so very well acquainted with in our own cases, and which a stone does not have.²⁸ Since *What Is It Like to Be a Bat?*, it has been common practice, more like second nature, for philosophers introducing the topic of the problem of consciousness to call upon Nagel's phrase to evoke phenomenal consciousness to their readers. What-it-is-likeness and phenomenal consciousness have become, in many philosophical circles,

27. Further to note 16, on my view of the overlap between qualitative natures and things: I mean 'substance' and 'substantial' here quite literally, since I regard the intrinsically qualitative ultimates as the paradigm substances – in virtue of the fact, and to the extent that they are absolutely qualitative – from which anything else with a genuine claim to substance-hood must be built. However, if the reader prefers, she need only understand here that the ultimates must have absolutely qualitative natures to be metaphysically 'solid' enough to take on their job as the supervenience-base of all that exists. This is my version of Rosenberg's claim that absolutely intrinsic natures are needed to give existents their 'foothold on concreteness.' (My idea of substance owes much to Strawson 2006)

28. *But since this is panpsychism, surely the stone does have conscious-experiential properties, isn't that the point?* Actually panpsychists needn't take inanimate objects composed of conscious ultimates to themselves have conscious experience as the wholes that they are. So while the stone has conscious-experiential properties in the sense of comprising ultimates that have these properties, the stone, *qua* stone, does not have such properties. My view, in brief, is that it takes a special composition of ultimates (roughly, a brain) to create a macro-consciousness, by pooling together the micro-conscious natures composing it. For a bit more on this idea see Coleman 2006, and for much more see Coleman forthcoming. In any case all I'm calling attention to here is our pre-theoretical sense of the inertness of things like stones, when compared with things like us, so it's not the place to cut me with my own conclusion.

synonymous. And for good reason: absolute – intrinsic, in-its-own right²⁹ – what-it-is-likeness just *is* phenomenal consciousness, for the essence of the latter is intrinsic qualitiveness. The idea of something being a certain qualitative way with respect to absolutely nothing but itself just *is* the idea of the experientially qualitative; think of the smell of pine leaves, the cold of the wind, the color of blood, a stab of that fear when you think you've forgotten to lock your front door... It follows that if the ultimates must be absolutely some way, if there must be absolute what-it-is-likeness at the heart of ontology, then this deep-down nature can only³⁰ be consciousness.

There's an important equivocation here, that you can't get away with: There's Nagel's sense of 'what it is like' when describing the conscious state of a being, yes. And there's also the sense of 'what it is like' that we employ when talking about things that we take not to be conscious, as in 'What is the ice rink like? Is it terribly slippery?' The 'what it is like' locution is used in two different senses in these two contexts however; the first sense is consciousness-involving, but the second is not. And since it is the second kind of context in which we would ask, of an ultimate, 'What is it like?', there's no way that Nagel's sense of 'what it is like' can just be plugged in here so uncritically, so as to yield your desired result that the question of what an ultimate is like can receive the same answer as the question of what an experience is like: i.e., phenomenally qualified.

I might respond that this objection is question-begging, since it assumes what I deny, that the consciousness-involving sense of 'what it is like' is distinct from the (apparently) not-consciousness-involving sense. And I might add that offering a univocal interpretation of the phrase 'what it is like' counts in my favor here. But that would not be to the point, at least not discursively. For I do have some burden to make attractive the equation between Nagel's use of the key phrase and our use of it in everyday, and subatomic(!), contexts:

It is certainly good enough for the naive realism of common sense to consider that when we talk of the properties of (supposedly not consciousness-involving) objects we perceive, of what it is that they are like, we literally ascribe to them properties which many philosophers think of, instead, as being confined to phenomenal experience. When we say that the apple is red, for example, we (in the naive mode) think we are literally ascribing phenomenal red to the surface of the apple, making mental paint³¹ like real paint. Centuries of philosophy and science are supposed to have taught us that this cannot be literally true. Even if we maintain that colour is a real property of surfaces, it is for several reasons hard to make sense of the claim that the property I experience is (also?) a property of the apple itself, that would persist even were I not to. Yet this is certainly the way that the unreflective mind conceives of the situation.

29. More fumbling. See n. 11.

30. In the positive sense earlier explained.

31. I owe this phrase to Block 2003.

If we accept the old thought that phenomenal redness is not really – in some sense – a property of the apple itself, then we should be prepared to try to answer the question of what the apple is *really* like. If it is not phenomenally red, if it is only my experiences that are phenomenally red (in some sense), then how truly *is* the apple?³² Berkeley could make no sense of this question, which is why he denied the existence of extra-mental properties and things, and endorsed something close to panpsychism. But Berkeley's move just represents a forerunner of Rosenberg's thought that we cannot, search as we might, find any intrinsic natures for existents outside of intrinsically qualitative phenomenal properties. I am arguing for the converse claim, that the notion of the qualitatively phenomenal positively equates to, and exhausts, the notion of absolutely intrinsic nature. So I'm not satisfied by the thought that we just can't reach beyond our experiences when searching out intrinsically qualitative natures for things. I *am* satisfied, however, with the observation that it unreflectively makes sense to us that the same properties that (we are told) belong to experience are literally properties of the objects of experience, so that the questions of what an experience is like, and what the object of that experience is like, could have the same answer. What fails to tally in this analysis is the notion that the properties of my experience are *numerically* the same properties as those had by the object I experience. The truth that I could be done away with without that object and *its* properties being done away with does away with this notion. But what doesn't obviously fail to tally is the notion that the properties of the object might be *qualitatively* the same as the properties of my experience. The problem is not so much with the claim that the apple might be the same color as phenomenal red; the problem is with the claim that it might have the very same token property that figures in *my* experience (and yours, and hers, and...). Thinking straightforwardly then, when we consider, of an object, what it is like, one way or another we naturally turn to phenomenal qualities to answer this question. Thinking of what an object is like, in non-relational terms, reduces to Nagel's sense of 'what it is like.' And this sense is consciousness-involving.

It will have occurred to some reading the previous paragraph, where we seemed to lurch into an indirect realist view of perception, that what is needed here is a good dose of *philosophically informed* naive realism, otherwise known as 'direct realism.' Direct realists would deny that there are qualitative properties literally *of* experience. Instead, experience is held to be transparent, in Moore's sense. This means that the intrinsically qualitative properties we apparently apprehend in experience are really just properties of the extra-mental objects we perceive. Rather than having qualitative phenomenal properties of its own, experience is merely transparently full of the qualitative properties objects before us have. On this view, the equation I'm making between experiential what-it-is-likeness and the what-it-is-likeness of objects and ultimates might seem to go to pieces. For if there are not, strictly speaking, phenomenal

32. See Stroud (2000) for an excellent discussion of the intricacies and difficulties of these issues.

properties of experience, then we cannot make use of properties like these to answer the question of what objects and ultimates are like. We cannot export phenomenal properties into the world to provide its fundamental intrinsic nature, because there are no such phenomenal properties in the first place.

I have my doubts that direct realism so understood is even a coherent doctrine, but I leave these for another place.³³ The relevant point to make here is that, contrary to appearances, this doctrine cannot undermine our conceptual equation of experiential what-it-is-like properties with worldly what-it-is-like properties. For direct realism as characterized in fact makes just the same equation as the ‘naive indirect realism’³⁴ we arrived at, only starting from the other direction. Indeed, thus rendered, the claim that what objects (and ultimates) are like is like what experience is like is made even harder to turn away from. Let me explain:

Direct realism says that my experience does not contain qualitative properties that I could graft on to extra-mental objects. Rather, the objects have qualities, and my experience is transparently full of these. Things run something along the lines of this analogy, I think: Looking out of a normal window at a brightly colored scene, let it be a brightly sunlit autumn tree, vivid oranges and reds, we might be tempted – for example if the scene doesn’t noticeably alter when we move our heads – to think that the window itself has the color properties we immediately experience; that it is a highly realistic, photographic-quality stained-glass window, say. But of course in the scenario considered the window does not have these properties; any color properties present are properly taken to be possessed by things other than the window: objects perceived through it, or the light, or some combination of these. The window itself has no ‘qualitative properties’ (at least not of this kind).³⁵ Rather, it is simply transparent to such

33. See Coates (2007), which ably articulates several serious concerns that I share about the view.

34. It might be objected that indirect realism is hardly a ‘naive’ view of perception, i.e. one held by the folk. I’d be inclined to disagree, based on contact with philosophy students starting on the topic. More broadly, the question of what the folk view of perception precisely (or imprecisely) is is obviously up for debate. But none of this matters terribly: my point in this section of argument is really that, so long as you’re a realist about phenomenal character, it won’t matter where you locate it in the mechanics of perception, still we’ll be able to equate experiential what-it-is-likeness with worldly what-it-is-likeness.

35. We’d better forget about its transparency, for the sake of the analogy. When direct realists say that experience is transparent, this reveals, they cannot literally mean it. For a window is transparent on account of intrinsic properties of it, such as the nature and arrangement of its tiny parts (though note that these are not *absolutely* intrinsic properties of the window, even if the natures of its ultimates, as I’m claiming, are absolutely intrinsic properties of them). If transparency, phenomenal transparency, were similarly allowed to be an intrinsic quality of experience then direct realists would be contradicting their avowed view that experience has no such qualities. The direct realist view, it therefore appears, secretly tends more towards the opinion that experience, as such, does not exist. It is in that sense, perhaps, that one can ‘see through

properties, in some sense informed and infused by them. It is supposed, I think, to be this way with experience and its relation to the properties of what is perceived, on direct realism.

But clearly no substantive difference has been made here to the issue of whether or not we can legitimately take the what-it-is-like of experience to be (qualitatively) the same as the what-it-is-like of the world. For now it is not experiential properties that are painted onto the world, but the world's qualitative properties that go into making up the what-it-is-like of experience. The new direction is not mind-to-world, but world-to-mind. But it remains just as true to say that the experiential what-it-is-like and the worldly what-it-is-like can be considered of the same kind. For all there is to the qualitative nature of our experiences, on direct realism, are the properties that the objects of experience are perceived as having. In fact, direct realism, I think, helps me to make *more* sense of my claim that the significance of 'what-it-is-likeness' when talking about the world is the same as Nagel's experiential use of the phrase. For on direct realism, the properties we mistakenly think that experience has are really the properties of objects. So there can be little resistance to the claim that what the objects of experience are like, is just like what experience seems to be like. This is what's entailed by saying that experience is transparent, after all.³⁶

From this discussion I conclude that when we ask what things are like, meaning to refer to their non-relational, qualitative nature, we routinely – almost, it seems, unavoidably – bring in phenomenal, or phenomenal-based properties to do this. Our default sense of the way it is with the world qualitatively is a way that populates it with the kinds of properties we seem to find in experience. This is not surprising, because we have nowhere to turn when we think about what the world is like qualitatively other than to the way it presents itself to us in our conscious experience of it. There is nothing immediately incoherent in the notion that the way it is with experience could be qualitatively the same as the way it is with the world, even when we impute the 'real' properties that exist to the world and have our experience merely saturated by these.³⁷

it' directly to the world. But I take this eliminativist position to be a non-starter, and in any case it is far from implied when direct realists say, as they do, that 'experience is transparent.'

36. Elsewhere I use this equation as the basis of a new, panpsychist, theory of perception and intentionality (Coleman forthcoming). Notice, again, that on direct realism as I describe it here, experience doesn't *disappear* entirely from view. To say that experience is transparent to the qualities of objects is to imply that there is such a thing as experience. I think direct realists sometimes want to deny that there is such a thing as experience. Their deep-down intuition seems to be that there is 'just' the world and ourselves involved in perception; whatever this would quite mean. But direct realism, whatever its proponents wish for, does not imply that experience doesn't exist; it implies that it does. So, since experience exists (can anyone have seriously got into a situation of doubting this?), we are in a position to make the equation between its what-it-is-likeness and that of the world, as explained.

37. Have I neglected to discuss the option of intentionalism, on which 'phenomenal properties' are just intensional properties of experience, which merely 'represent that' phenomenal-like

Look at the way we talk: ‘What is an apple Jolly Rancher like?’ ‘Well, it smells appley, and is bright green, hard to the touch, sweet...’

I must be careful to be quite clear about what I am claiming here. Though I’m tempted to the view, I’m not claiming that the perceivable properties of large scale objects are literally phenomenal properties; that phenomenal redness is out there in the world painted on ripe tomatoes and stop signs and such. The immediate point I am making, instead, is conceptual. It is that when we think about what some thing is like in itself, its qualitative way of being, we naturally, inevitably, invoke phenomenal or phenomenal-based properties in order to do this. The notion of the intrinsic qualitative way of being for some existent coincides with the notion of the quality of phenomenal experience.

When we come to wonder what the needed absolutely intrinsic qualitative nature of the ultimates is, then, all that would satisfy us would be an answer closely enough related to the phenomenally qualified properties of experience; which means, at a minimum, an answer that mentioned consciousness properties. And here let me say that I do intend a strictly metaphysical result; to put consciousness properties literally into the world (at the level of the ultimates). The absolute what-it-is-likeness we seek for the ultimates, therefore, is positively conceptually bound to be the what-it-is-likeness of Nagel: phenomenal-experiential what-it-is-likeness. This is consciousness.

Philosophers are dubious, to say the least, when our conceptual constraints seem to become projected into the world, apparently determining how things can be metaphysically. And yet, if we are getting our picture of the world more or less right (if we aren’t on the wrong track just from the outset of our inquiry) then we can expect the conceptual structures we find ourselves with to find their genesis, their form, and so their mirror, in the world that, after all, gave rise to them. Carefully articulating these structures, we can hope to bridge the intolerable gap between world and mind that is forced upon us by the philosophical *status quo*. (This is, it might be, to employ transcendental reasoning in reverse)

3. Another approach to triangulating the notion of the absolutely qualitative is to think of it as having an *essentially exclusive* nature. Let us unpack this. If something is absolutely qualitative – meaning that it instantiates some particular quality in and

properties are instantiated in the environment? I take it that the point made about the equation of phenomenal what-it-is-likeness with worldly what-it-is-likeness is not touched by intentionalism, given that it acknowledges a what-it-is-likeness of experience. There must still be intrinsic, instantiated properties of experience in virtue of which it is like what it is like. The real threat from this quarter might come if intentionalists could ‘eliminate’ phenomenal properties proper, by reducing phenomenal experience to intentional representation of a naturalised sort. But I don’t believe the latter is possible (see Chalmers 2004 for example for reasons why), although I do concede all that an intentionalist should care to claim: that the phenomenal properties we experience are ineliminably representational. It doesn’t seem to me that this need imply that the phenomenal properties of the ultimates are representational also, which would be an unwelcome result (though not for Strawson, interestingly, as it appears from conversation).

of itself – then this nature excludes any other absolute quality from occupying its location. What it means to say that some patch of reality (absolutely) has *this* quality, is that any second, any different, absolute quality is not instantiated there. Repetition: to say that an item is a certain absolute way qualitatively-speaking is implicitly to mark the fact that it is not (and, is not also) any other absolute way qualitatively-speaking, where the first qualitative nature inheres. A confusion threatens to obscure this clear point however:

Surely, of a green spherical object, it is correct to say that the qualities greenness and being spherical are instantiated together in the same portion of reality? And being green and being spherical are clearly different absolute qualities. So it's mistaken to think that the nature of the qualitative is at core to be exclusive of other ways of being. Clearly, distinct absolute qualities can co-exist in the same location.

My response is that the green ball is *not* green and spherical in the same location. You never really have greenness and spherical-ness overlapping each other. It is true to say that the surface of the ball is green (has a microstructure that reflects light such that we experience it as green, say), and it is correct to say that the shape of the ball is spherical; the ball's matter is shaped into a sphere. But it is not correct to say that the ball's green surface is also spherical. Nor is it correct to say that the ball's spherical shape is also green. The properties do not in fact collide. They merely *meet*, across the en-propertyed, whole material nature of the ball.³⁸

In a certain sense of 'space' that I want to employ, related to its use in space-talk in mathematics, or to the sense that figures in 'the space of possibilities,' the ball's qualities of being green and being spherical do not even exist in the same space, let alone at the same location. We could also helpfully talk of 'dimensions of being,' 'property dimensions'³⁹ or 'metaphysical spaces' here, perhaps. Being green and being spherical are not even properties of the same sort; they exist in different spaces, different property-dimensions, and so cannot collide. To have a chance of existing in the same precise 'location' (again, this spatial talk is not to be taken too literally) at once, which

38. I'm setting aside, for discussion of this case, the Rosenberg thought that the greenness (so described) and shape of the ball are not really absolute qualities. The property of being green here is really just a disposition to cause experiences of a certain kind in beings like us, a quality whose ontological credentials lean on the reactions of perceivers. And the ball's being spherical is a quality really implemented by the relations between the ball's ultimates. That is to say it may be an intrinsic property of the ball, relative to the ball's circle of being, but it is not an intrinsic property in the absolute sense. It is not surprising that the objector here has to create examples of apparent property clashes – of absolute qualities inhering in the same location – from non-phenomenal resources: phenomenal properties being the only absolute ones, such clashes between them are impossible, and consequently the only kinds of properties that might occupy the same location (both apparently and really) are (pairs of) non-phenomenal, and thus non-absolute, ones.

39. Thanks to Brendan Larvor for this simple way of putting things.

is what would constitute the clash I claim to be impossible, two qualities must at least inhabit the same space, in my sense, first.

With this clarification and terminology in place, it is clearly true that distinct qualitative properties, really absolute ways of being, cannot occupy the same location. If some thing is in some respect *this* way, then it cannot also, in that respect of itself, in that dimension or ‘space’ and at the same location – be *that other* way. Absolute qualities, where they inhere, are one way and one way only. This is not at all to say that *objects* cannot have several different absolute qualities of different kinds at once. In the sense of ‘space’ at issue here, these properties are instantiated in different spaces of the same object.

I take these thoughts to reinforce the claim that it is in the nature of the absolutely qualitative to be exclusive of other absolutely qualitative natures, in the location (in the space) where the first nature is instantiated. The layers peeled back, this is perilously close to a tautology, but one of those deep, useful ones that it is hard – and worthwhile – to get a satisfactory grip on.

And when we now turn to think about what it means to be intrinsically, absolutely qualitative, in this sense of excluding other intrinsically qualitative natures, and about which positive class of properties might exhibit this characteristic, I submit that we can look no further than to phenomenal properties. The most immediately striking case, perhaps, is color: Consider a patch of (phenomenal) red. In grasping that this patch is red, we understand that it is qualitatively red *and not any other way*, in terms of color (in the color ‘space’). The redness of the patch precisely precludes that any of the patch’s extension is also green, or blue, or whatever else (but red). If you like, rather than focusing on the positive aspect of absolute quality – as we did above when considering quality as what-it-is-likeness – here we elicit its negative aspect: It goes with being absolutely some way, with the answer to ‘What is it like?’ being ‘Absolutely like *this*,’ that any other way of being is excluded, that any other (absolute) answer to the question ‘What is it like?’ is metaphysically counted out at that location.⁴⁰ And again, we see that phenomenal qualities positively fit the bill of specifications for the absolutely qualitative. More confusions threaten to cloud things though:

I see. This distinction between particular determinate properties in their ‘locations’ and kinds or ‘spaces’ of properties helps somewhat. But there are still problems on the phenomenal property side of things. What about a phenomenally ‘stripey’ patch of red and green? And what about a patch of pure phenomenal red that then becomes tinged with another color before our (mind’s) eyes, as happens when we experience red paint being mixed with drops of blue to give purple, for example? Aren’t these cases where there is more than one phenomenal quality in precisely the same location

40. Given that properties can stand in relations, then two properties – an intrinsic one and a relational one – could co-exist ‘in’ the same metaphysical location. For example, of an absolutely red area, we might say that it is *brighter than* another, dimmer, absolutely red area. In that sense, then, the first red area instantiates two properties, in the same property-space, simultaneously. But the important point is that an absolute quality excludes any other absolute quality.

of the same space? If so then it is far from clear, even if you're right that to be absolutely qualitative is to be exclusive of other absolute ways of being (in the location where one is instantiated), that phenomenal qualities are cut out for the job, let alone alone cut out for it. Phenomenal properties do not really seem to be exclusive of other natures in the manner required.

There are no good objections here. The case of stripes is not one of multiple phenomenal qualities in one location (in the same space), rather it is a case of considering multiple (stripes of...) locations. Of each of the qualitative areas – each stripe of red or of green – it is clearly true that what it means for it to be a stripe *of red* or a stripe *of green*, is precisely that it does not feature the other color (nor any third), else it would not be what it actually is. And the case where red is steadily tinged blue (eventually giving way to purple), though more tempting, doesn't get anywhere either. For it is never the case that multiple *phenomenal* qualities are instantiated in the same location. Whatever mixture of red and blue paint there is before the eyes, the quality before the mind's eyes is determinately *that way* at each instant, to the exclusion of all other ways. That, after all, is how the patch of red turns from being red to becoming purple: at each moment it exhibits a certain phenomenal quality that *ceases to be* once a noticeable further amount of blue is added. And if a noticeable further amount of blue is not added, then, clearly, the patch remains the same (phenomenal) color that it was, to the exclusion of the past and future shades that have occupied or will occupy that patch. We should not get confused here between the mixing of different color paints, and the 'mixture' of different colors of phenomenal paint. The latter is strictly impossible: whatever phenomenal quality inheres in an area, *that* is the way the area is. (But this is not to say that two phenomenal qualities cannot *blend* to produce a new one:⁴¹ the flavors of beef and of red wine can (pleasingly) interpenetrate. It is just that the result is not to be thought of as a *mixture* of phenomenal qualities, where each quality remains intact after the mixing. Rather what happens here is a *phenomenal reaction* (after: chemical reaction). Two qualities may blend with one other to produce a third, new, quality that indeed bears hints of where it came from. If it didn't bear these hints, then this wouldn't be a case of phenomenal blending at all.⁴² But the third quality is

41. Indeed this is a key idea in understanding the panpsychist procedure for mind-composition that I propose, as explained in Coleman forthcoming.

42. This story might seem to beg a nasty question: On pain of there being only one phenomenal property experienced by a person at any time – the blended mass of all their sensations – how are we to know when phenomenal qualities have blended together into new ones, or when they instead stand distinct from their phenomenal fellows, in a phenomenal multitude rather than a mass? How are we to individuate phenomenal qualities, in other words? But this is not really a problem. The ideas of phenomenal blending and of phenomenal distinctness clearly make sense, and refer to phenomena we're all well acquainted with; experiencers will know what I'm talking about here. (Others presumably won't be reading this) And of course we want to say that subjects experience many qualities at once, alongside saying that some qualities blend together into others. As for the discriminatory rules here, they are going to be nothing other than

itself, as matters for this account, entirely phenomenally determinate and unitary. This is the case too with the blend of phenomenal blue and phenomenal red that produced phenomenal purple, considered just now.)

The idea of being absolutely qualitative, then, involves the idea of excluding distinct qualitative natures from one's location. And we need not (and cannot) look any further to find properties that do this than to phenomenal properties. For it is in the nature of consciousness to exclude all else from it.⁴³ This remark sounds cryptic. What I mean is that any element of consciousness is determinate at any instant – there is a determinate what-it-is-likeness for the experiencer⁴⁴ in respect of this phenomenal element, even if that determinacy is just *being determinately vague*, e.g. not-quite-red-nor-orange – and what it means for it to be so determinate is that the conscious element, of its own force, excludes any second qualitative element from its location.

To summarize these three points, then, and to capture something of the way in which they interconnect: To be intrinsically, absolutely qualitative is to offer an absolute answer to the question 'What is it like?', it is for the what-it-is-likeness of a portion of reality to reside in the nature of that portion alone, independently⁴⁵ of its co-existents. It is also for that portion of reality to exclude any other (absolute) qualitative

phenomenal rules (what else could they be?): when qualities *feel* to be blended (as with the beef and wine), then they are. And if the phenomenology reveals distinct qualities, distinct aligned phenomenal determinates, why then, that's what we have. People are reluctant to let the phenomenal answer to phenomenal modes of inquiry, as if this practice threw the objective reality of the phenomenal into question. But, short of the knowledge argument being falsified by a real-life Mary (*per impossibile*, for the purposes of this paper), it is hard to see what other means we have. A deeper point is that if one already holds the phenomenal to be objective and real, then it can do no harm to use phenomenal means to investigate it. The worry must be that the case of phenomenal realists then looks more shaky less *scientific*, whatever that's supposed to mean – to the dubious than if there were good third-personal handles on the phenomenal phenomena. But for some time I've considered this conversation with (what are in effect) eliminativists to be wasted breath. It is better to start off by being soberly, eyes-open realist about what existents we find, and what the differences are between them, and to sort the mess out later.

43. Thanks to Frederik Willemarck for this phrase, and for discussion of this point and many others.

44. Where there is one. My variety of panpsychism is committed to the notion of some unexperienced phenomenal qualities; those possessed by the ultimates. This is in direct contrast with Strawson's version. See Coleman 2006 and the author's reply to commentators in Strawson 2006 for more on this tricky issue between panpsychists, as well as Rosenberg 2004. The lack of an experiencer to witness a phenomenal quality does nothing in my view to affect the absolute determinateness, and so exclusive tendency, of that quality.

45. The right sense of 'independently' here is famously difficult to pin down. We certainly don't mean *metaphysical* independence, since a tokening of absolute quality may depend on something else for its instantiation (like the interaction of prior qualitative instances). *Conceptual* dependence is somewhere nearer the mark: making sense of the quality of a patch of absolute what-it-is-likeness requires consideration of nothing other than the quality in question. But

nature from its region of existence. These are not separate ‘functions’ of absolute qualitativity, not even separate aspects; rather what it means to be absolutely some way qualitatively-speaking, what it means to be absolutely *like this*, is that a unique way of being is instantiated, necessarily to the exclusion of all others. To say that these are flip sides of the same coin would be to put too much distance between them.

Given that these – absolute what-it-is-likeness, and exclusion of other natures – are (at least some of) the characteristics of the absolutely qualitative, I suggest that our notion of the absolutely qualitative *just is* our notion of the qualitative-experiential. It is not (only) that we cannot think of any properties with absolutely qualitative natures other than phenomenal properties. It is rather – to return to point one above – simply that in entertaining the idea of the absolutely qualitative, absolute what-it-is-likeness and exclusion of other qualities, we *positively* entertain the idea of the qualitative-experiential. The two ideas converge and merge in one. It is difficult to know how else to recommend this insight to the reader other than to ask him or her to think hard about it.

I conclude that the requirement by the microphysical world of an absolutely intrinsic, absolutely qualitative nature – in order that there might be anything at all to this world and everything it composes – is met neatly, compellingly – I would add: necessarily – by phenomenal properties. For not only are they the sole absolutely, in-and-of themselves qualitative properties that we know of, but they positively satisfy and exhaust the profile of the desired natures. There is just no room to see what else could have absolute quality in and of itself, without *thereby* being an experiential quality. To be qualitative absolutely, in-and-of yourself, then, is to be qualitatively experiential – that is, conscious.

More formally put, then, the new argument for panpsychism runs like this:

Premise 1. The microphysical ultimates have absolutely intrinsic qualitative natures.

Premise 2. That which is absolutely intrinsically qualitative is experiential.

Therefore: The ultimates are intrinsically experiential. Panpsychism is true.

In this section I have spent my time motivating premise 2, having taken Russell and Rosenberg to have motivated premise 1 for me already.

conceptual independence will be thought to fall short of expressing solid, real world relations, which are (had better be) at issue. Could it be that *ontological* independence is the right sense? While perhaps depending on other entities for the contingent fact of its tokening, an area of absolute qualitativity owes no debts at all as regards *being the way that it is, given that it is*.

4. Conclusion

It is not humano-centricity, far from it, that drives the panpsychist ontology. It is nothing more nor less than the strict and sober metaphysical demands of the world that we find ourselves inhabiting, if we still harbor any hopes of being realists about it and all that we know it to contain.

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