IMAGINE AN IMAGELESS IMAGINATION

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Contents

Abstract

A trend in contemporary discussion pertaining to the imagination has attempted to theoretically conceptualise a type of qualia-free imagination, commonly referred to as propositional imagination. This paper argues that an act of imagination cannot be an act of imagination without both cognitive and sensory phenomenology. Both sensory and cognitive phenomenology play an important role in "fixing" the content of imaginative thoughts. Sensory phenomenology is what distinguishes imagination as an act of imagination; it is what sets imagination apart from other attitudinal mental states, such as the attitudinal mental state of supposing. Cognitive phenomenology is both proprietary and individuative to conscious thoughts, including imaginings. Each imagining takes as part of its content a distinctive kind of cognitive phenomenology which allows us to identify, differentiate and understand the particular content of a given imagining. I conclude that a type of qualia-free imagination is not, in fact, conceivable – theoretically or otherwise. Propositional imagination has phenomenology.

Introduction

"Imagine that Pokémon invade planet Earth…"

There is a popular trend (particularly among physicalists and functionalists) in contemporary imagination discussions to theoretically conceive of the imagination as a phenomenology-free type of mental state. For this reason, one should be able to imaginatively understand and entertain propositions such as the one above without any associative imagistic, sensory or cognitive phenomenology whatsoever. When you *imagine that Pokémon invade planet Earth* you are to imagine this state of affairs without any associative imagery at all. This type of qualia-free imagination is commonly known in philosophical literature as *Attitudinal Imagination* or *Propositional Imagination.*

Contrary to this influential view, this paper argues that an act of imagination cannot be an act of imagination without some kind of imagery, sensory "feeling", experiential element, or simply – associative phenomenology. Imagination must have both sensory phenomenology and cognitive phenomenology in order for it to be the type of attitudinal mental state it is. This paper further argues that both sensory and cognitive phenomenology play an important role in fixing the content of what is being imagined. The role of sensory phenomenology not only makes an imagining an act of imagination as opposed to any other type of attitudinal mental state, such as supposition, but it also does some work in fixing the content of *what* is being imagined. But because we can imagine different propositional content with the same imagery, and different imagery with the same propositional content, the extent to which sensory phenomenology can fix the content of an imagining is limited and thus, on its own, it is not enough to fix the content of a given imagining. Cognitive phenomenology is also needed, and it does the work in fixing content that sensory phenomenology cannot.

The first half of this thesis focuses on the role of sensory phenomenology in propositional imagination, before moving onto the role that cognitive phenomenology plays in propositional imagination. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, phenomenology has traditionally been considered to be sensory phenomenology only. What follows from this is that so-called phenomenology-free attitudinal mental states, have been conceived with the view that the only kind of qualia that needs to be extracted from our understanding of attitudinal mental states, is sensory phenomenology. For this reason, I focus on building a counterargument that directly tackles this particular physicalist conception, before including an argument that supports the need for additional qualia – cognitive phenomenology. The second reason is to avoid any confusion between the role of cognitive and sensory phenomenology in imaginative thoughts.

The particular role that cognitive phenomenology plays in conscious thoughts is this; it allows us to identify, differentiate and understand the particular content of a given conscious thought, including imaginings.

Accordingly, cognitive phenomenology is both *individuative* and *proprietary* to states of imagination. To say that cognitive phenomenology is proprietary is to say that each and every conscious thought is accompanied and marked by a distinct cognitive phenomenology. To say that cognitive phenomenology is individuative is to say that the distinctiveness of the proprietary cognitive phenomenology that is present in every conscious thought allows us to distinguish and identify – individuate - the thought as the thought it is – different from all other thoughts. Thereby the distinct cognitive phenomenology that is both proprietary and individuative to conscious thoughts provides conscious thoughts, including imaginings, with the particularity that each thought has.

There are some philosophers, such as David Pitt (2004), who uphold a position that cognitive phenomenology is constitutive of conscious thoughts. This is to make a claim that all there is to conscious thoughts is phenomenology. I do not defend the claim that phenomenology is all there is to the content of an imagining. Rather, I take the view that there is clearly more involved in what fixes the content of imagination than just phenomenology. The full extent of what properties are essential to constitute an imagining is beyond the scope of this paper. My aim here is to demonstrate that whatever else imaginings may be made up of, phenomenology, both sensory and cognitive, plays an essential role in fixing the content of imaginings, and thus an explanatory account of what the imagination is, and what it does, is incomplete without phenomenology.

The layout of this paper is as follows.

Section one gets a grip on what propositional imagination is and how it is being used. Attitudinal and phenomenal mental states are outlined in greater detail, demonstrating the extent to which some philosophers (particularly physicalists and functionalists), are invested in a propositional qualia-free type of imagination. For this reason, section one includes a brief overview of the architectural model of the imagination. This overview explains

how, without phenomenology, functionalists think the content of propositional imagination and other attitudinal mental states is fixed.

Section two makes a case for introspection being the process which allows us to not only be aware *that* we are imagining but also *what* we are imagining. Introspection enables us to access the qualia that fix the content of our conscious thoughts. When we introspect our conscious thoughts, we can understand the content of our thoughts and imaginings. Since we can think and imagine in this way, this provides evidence for phenomenology, both sensory and cognitive phenomenology.

Section three sets about undermining the main functionalist justification for removing all phenomenology from propositional imagination: that imagination is theoretically conceivable without phenomenology. I argue here that imagination, propositional or otherwise, is in fact not theoretically conceivable without imagery. An act of imagination is simply not an act of imagination unless it has imagery of some kind.[1]

Section four outlines the main difference between supposition and imagination. It argues that sensory phenomenology is what distinguishes supposition from imagination. Sensory phenomenology fixes imagination as the type of attitudinal mental state it is – in a way that it does not fix the attitudinal mental state of supposition. I conclude that imagination of all types must have imagery in order to make it the type of mental state it is. Sensory phenomenology cannot therefore be extracted, "theoretically" or otherwise, from propositional imagination.

[1] There are some philosophers, such as Nichols and Stitch who clearly think that phenomenology can be separated from the propositional content of attitudinal mental states – attitudinal mental states that include imagination. I argue that phenomenology *cannot* be separated from propositional imagination. This includes the actual separation of phenomenology, and Nichols' theoretic separation of phenomenology or imagery from propositional imagination. Where Nichols thinks that it is theoretically possible to remove qualia from propositional imagination, I think it is not theoretically possible to remove qualia from imagination. For this reason, I use the term "theoretically conceivable" with a view that the possibility of such an action is saturated with scare quotes and doubt.

Section five sketches out the way in which we ordinarily experience imagery when we undertake an extended episode of imagination. It proposes that although imagery is an essential property of imagination, it does not appear to fix the content of each and every imagining because not each and every independently imagined state of affairs is necessarily accompanied with clear and distinct imagery.

Section six argues that although imagery cannot be doing all the work in fixing the content of what is imagined (as outlined in section five), imagery must at least be doing some of the work in fixing the content of what is imagined. This is due to the relationship that imagery has with the propositional content of a given imagining.

Section seven argues that not only can we apply introspection to determine that our conscious thoughts have sensory phenomenology, but we can also apply introspection to determine that they also have cognitive phenomenology. Cognitive phenomenology has a very particular role to play in fixing the content of conscious thoughts, including imaginings. Where sensory phenomenology does some of the work, but not all of the work, in fixing the content of an imagining, cognitive phenomenology does the rest of the work in fixing the content of imaginings. It picks up some of the slack. Cognitive phenomenology therefore also does some work in fixing the content of a given imagining.

The paper concludes that an act of imagination cannot be an act of imagination without both cognitive and sensory phenomenology and that both types of phenomenology have an essential role to play in fixing the content of imaginings. By demonstrating that propositional imagination has phenomenology, and, moreover that the phenomenology does some work in fixing the content of propositional imagination, the SI/PI distinction so widely used by contemporary philosophers collapses and the conception of a type of qualia-free imagination is brought into serious question. This creates an ongoing problem for functionalists, physicalist and those who support the

notion that imagination – propositional or otherwise - can be theoretically conceptualized without phenomenology.

For the sake of brevity, the rest of this paper abbreviates propositional imagination to PI; sensory imagination to SI; cognitive phenomenology to CP; and sensory phenomenology to SP. Please also bear in mind that imagery is meant to include visual, auditory, olfactory, and other sensory experiential elements; in short, imagery is sensory phenomenology. Qualia is a term meant for plural sensory data. The terms 'qualia' and 'phenomenology' are often indiscriminately interchanged throughout this document.

Section One - Propositional Imagination

Propositional Imagination

The PI conception has its roots in the representational theory of mind. This theory postulates that all of our mental states can fit into two categories: mental states that are attitudinal in kind and mental states that are phenomenological in kind. Attitudinal mental states take propositions as their content and are without phenomenology. Belief, desire, hope and hate, are all thought to be paradigm examples of attitudinal mental states. Phenomenal mental states, on the other hand, are conceived as not taking propositions as their content. They are phenomenological in kind. Having a headache, seeing a colour, feeling a pleasurable sensation, are all thought to be paradigm examples of phenomenal mental states. Philosophers have had a difficult time placing imagination in either mental state category because imagination, by its very nature, appears to be able to take both propositions and imagery as its content.

In order to deal with this problem, the imagination has been given some exceptional treatment - treatment that no other mental state has endured: imagination has been theoretically separated into two different types

of mental state. One is attitudinal in kind and takes propositions as its content, and the other is phenomenological in kind and takes phenomenology as its content. The first is known as propositional imagination and is often identified with *imagine-that* cases. The second is known as sensory imagination and is often identified with *imagine* cases.

There are two main approaches to this separation. There are those who think that attitudinal mental states can have phenomenology, but accept that phenomenology is inessential to attitudinal mental states, and therefore attitudinal mental states can theoretically be conceptualized without phenomenology. Then there are those (physicalists) who think that mental states simply do not have phenomenology. In fact, physicalists outright deny the existence of phenomenology altogether, because phenomenology is not a physically reducible property. On a physicalist view, everything can be explained by a causal story with concrete inputs and outputs, and there is nothing more to it.

Aside from clear instances where the distinction has been used in debate, a comprehensive description of PI does not appear to exist anywhere in the philosophical literature. So, in order to get a firmer handle on what we are talking about, here are a range of examples from recent texts where the PI/SI distinction is outlined:

> Acts of imagination that take the form of imagining-that are what philosophers typically call propositional or attitudinal imagining, and this is typically contrasted with sensory or imagistic imagination (Kind, 2016, pg.5).

> Having mental imagery of an apple should be differentiated from imagining that there is an apple in the kitchen, an imagining episode, which amounts to having a propositional attitude. The sense of imagination where there are interesting questions about the relation between perception and imagination is not propositional imagination, but mental imagery (Nanay, 2016, pg.124).

> Philosophers who think about imagination often distinguish between propositional imagination on the one hand, and experiential, or "sensory," imagination on the other… "propositional imaginings" and "factual memories" are those cases of imagination and memory which do not have any experiential characteristics… both in the case of imagination and in the case of memory, we can distinguish between a propositional kind on the one hand, and an experiential kind on the other (Debus, 2016, pg.135-136).

> Throughout, I'll focus on propositional imagination, in which we imagine that some state of affairs obtains – for example, imagining that lava is flowing, as opposed to imagining lava. This may be the kind of imagination for which unified approaches are the most promising, since belief is a propositional attitude – one can believe that lava is flowing, but it doesn't make sense to talk about believing lava (Sinhababu, 2016, pg.111).

> [C]ontemporary cognitive accounts of the imagination tend not to treat the imagination as imagistic. And indeed, on Yablo's notion imagination, sensory-like images are not required (Nichols, 2006, pg.2).

By doing some detective work with these segments as evidence, we can deduce a few things about PI. As reported by Kind, Nanay and Debus (2016), PI is often strongly distinguished from SI. Therefore, we can infer that there is a clear contrast between the two kinds of mental states, where everything that is true of PI is not true of SI, and everything that is true of SI is not true of PI. Thus, if PI is an attitudinal mental state, then SI is not an attitudinal mental state; if PI takes propositions as its content then SI does not take propositions as its content; if SI has imagistic and therefore phenomenological content, then PI does not have imagistic or phenomenological content. In sum then, PI is an attitudinal mental state that

takes propositions as its content, and does not have imagery or phenomenological content.

In fact, physicalist/functionalists such as Nichols (2006) even go so far as to claim that a full account of imagination can be gleaned from PI alone and there is no need to invoke any other type of imagination such as SI. On Nichols' terms, imagination is an attitudinal mental state that takes propositions as its content; "images are not required," in any account of the imagination and that's all there is to it. For Nichols, the content of an imagining is, and is only, propositional content. As such, Nichols & Stitch (2000) and Nichols (2006) have developed an account for a propositional, qualia-free imagination. The functionalist account for PI provides a causal story which describes how PI works and interacts with other attitudinal mental states such as belief. Through describing how imagination treats its propositional qualia-free content, this account is designed to provide a coherent explanation of not only how an imagining is an imagining, but also, how it differs from other attitudinal mental states.

True to functionalism, everything on their model is functionalisable. Because qualia are non-physical and so cannot be functionalized, they have been deliberately left out of their model. For physicalists and functionalists alike, imagination must be explained without phenomenology, and in a purely physical way. If the physicalist position is undermined if they fail to provide a comprehensive explanation of what the imagination is and how it works without qualia. Thus, there is a lot riding on the physicalist move to extract the qualia from imagination and a potentially big problem is created for physicalists if it can be demonstrated that without phenomenology, their causal story falls short of a full explanation of imagination.

The Functionalist Architecture of the Imagination

The functionalist architecture of the imagination relies on Representationalist theories of the mind (Nichols, 2006, pg.6). Representationalism theorises that propositions are mentally represented by something referred to as *representational tokens*. These "tokens" representationally express the propositions which specify the world as being a certain way. Representational tokens often take the form of expressing propositions by mentalese[2] *that*-sentences (that such-and-and such is the case). All aspects of the functionalist architecture of the mind can be functionalized, and in what follows I briefly explain how.

Attitudinal mental states such as belief, intent, like, and so on all take propositions as their content; they are attitudes *to* propositions. It is easy to think of an attitudinal mental state and a propositional content as being analogous to a container and its contents where the attitudinal mental state is the container and the proposition is the content. The containers are able to do different things with the contents, and the nature of the containers are determined by their ability to do these different things. In a similar way to a container and content, if an attitudinal mental state does not have a proposition to direct itself toward, the attitudinal mental state is not doing anything. It has to have propositional content in order for it to work and it makes no sense to have one without the other. And, just as different contents can be placed into the same container, and different containers can have the same content, we can have the same mental attitude to different contents, and different mental attitudes towards the same content. When we apply different attitudinal mental states to the same proposition, we believe that *p*, hope that *p*, or desire that *p*, etc. For example, we:

- Believe that the sun will rise tomorrow.
- Hope that the sun will rise tomorrow.
- Desire that the sun will rise tomorrow.

And so on…

[2] Mentalese sentences are thoughts that are expressed in a language that is unique to our thoughts. These thoughts can be represented as concepts, ideas, words or sentences.

We can also change the attitude. We can:

- Believe that Donald Trump is the 45th President.
- Believe that Donald Trump is a disastrous choice of President.
- Believe that Barack Obama was a much better President.

And so on…

Functionalists claim that the essence of attitudinal mental states is the role they play; the cause and effect of a given mental state *determines* what the mental state is. Moreover, they claim, everything can be explained by the causes and effects of a given mental state. No experiential character, 'what it is likeness' or phenomenology plays any role or needs to be accounted for. Everything can be explained in a physical way. Here is a rough illustration that offers short-hand versions of the unique profile of cause and effect that, according to functionalism, might individuate each type of mental state:

Propositional Attitude	**Proposition**	**Output/Action**
Jo believes	That Pokémon invade planet Earth	Jo searches for them
Jo hopes	That Pokémon invade planet Earth	Jo prays for it to happen
Jo expects	That Pokémon invade planet Earth	Jo prepares for their arrival
Jo fears	That Pokémon invade planet Earth	Jo hides from them
Jo imagines	That Pokémon invade planet Earth	Jo instigates a game of pretence

Where the output can be identified as the effect of a given attitudinal mental state, the content of the attitudinal mental state consists in one's disposition to do these things. In addition, functionalism also defines a mental state by its causal relations to other mental states. The causal relations that a given mental state has towards propositional content, and other mental states defines it as the mental state it is. Jo's fear *that Pokémon invade planet Earth*,

is different from Jo's fear *that she will fail her Masters Philosophy degree*, because it leads to different effects. In the first case, she might hide away and wait until the coast is clear, in the second case she might work harder to sharpen the argument of her Masters dissertation.

Cognitive and Conative mental states

Attitudinal mental states are thought to differ not just in their operation, but in the direction of their operation. They are usually divided up into two separate classifications: conative and cognitive. Attitudinal mental states that are thought to be cognitive attitudes are those attitudes that have a *world-to-mind* direction of fit (Kind, 2016, pg5). They are operating successfully if they are accurately representing the way the world is. Belief is thought to be a paradigmatic case of a cognitive attitude because it is thought that belief is working well for us if it is accurately representing the way in which the world actually is. We generally struggle to hold contradictory beliefs about the same proposition. For example, we cannot believe that the sun is both hot and not hot. And we also find it difficult to hold a belief when faced with evidence that the belief is untrue. For instance, we find it difficult to believe that the Earth is flat in the face of all the evidence that the Earth is spherical.

Mental states such as desire are thought to be conative in nature. Conative attitudes have what is called a *mind-to-world* direction of fit (Kind, 2016, pg.5). They are operating successfully if they are aimed at how we would like the world to be, not how it already is. If the proposition under consideration *is* already the case, it is difficult to desire that it *be* the case; for once the desire is satisfied, it ceases to be a desire. One can desire that a state of affairs remain the case, but one cannot desire that something come to pass, if it already has come to pass. For this reason, conative attitudinal mental states are only thought to work if the world is not already how we would like it to be. If we were to hope or desire something that is already true of the world, in a similar way to belief, our attitudes would not be behaving in the way we think they should (Kind, 2016, pg.5).

The attitudinal mental state of PI is thought to be a cognitive mental state as opposed to a conative mental state. This is because PI is thought to not only resemble belief in certain respects, but like belief, it has a *mind-to-world* direction of fit. The difference is that in the case of belief, the world that the attitudinal mental state is directed towards is the actual world, whereas in the case of PI the world that the attitudinal mental state is being directed towards is a possible world. For this reason, the idea of a Possible Worlds Box is central to the functionalist's architecture of the imagination.

The Possible Worlds Box (PWB)

PWB is where PI is able to consider a rich array of counterfactual claims based upon what we believe to be true about the actual world. The way in which the PWB operates is as follows: an initial representational token that expresses a proposition is placed inside the PWB. The token need not be an expression of a proposition that describes the way in which the world actually is, but it can be. For instance, we can start with propositions such as *that President Trump has two terms in office* or propositions such as *that purple crabs invade from Mars*. The first proposition can be true of the real world or a possible world because it is relevant to the real world, and can be made to be relevant to a possible world. Whereas the second proposition can only be true of a possible world, for it is clearly not true of the actual world.

Once inside the PWB, the way in which we treat the proposition under consideration is similar to the way in which we would treat the proposition if we were to apply the attitudinal mental state of belief towards it. According to Nichols (2006, pg.461), the representations in both the PWB and the belief box are coded similarly; they are in the effective 'same code'. The details of this code are unknown. All that is suggested is that whatever the code may be, the representations in the belief box and PWB are the same, or at the least, very similar and that the representations take the same logical form as one another (Nichols & Stitch, 2000, pg.126). This similarity is thought to allow them both to produce affective responses that are very much alike. They write:

> [F]or any mechanism that takes input from both the pretense box [PWB] and the belief box, the pretense representation *p* will be processed much the same way as the belief representation *p*… On the single code hypothesis, then, if a mechanism takes pretense representations as input, that mechanism will process the pretense representation much the same way it would process an isomorphic belief (2006, pg.461-2).

Not only do Nichols & Stitch propose that representations within the PWB and the belief box are similarly coded, but it is also thought that the attitudinal mental states of PI and belief process representations in a similar way (Nichols, 2000, pg.126). They do this via inferential elaboration (both deductive and non-deductive) and grounding in real world beliefs.

In order to ground imaginative episodes in our real-world beliefs, Nichols & Stitch (1999), argue that what happens to the initial proposition is that our cognitive system starts to fill the PWB with a detailed description of what the possible world would be like, if it were the case that the initial proposition was true. In order to do this, all of the propositions that we believe to be true of the actual world are also active within the PWB (or at least clusters of beliefs that are relevant to the propositions under consideration (Nichols & Stitch, 2000, pg.126)). They 'assume that in addition to the pretence initiating premise, the cognitive system puts the entire contents of the Belief Box into the Possible World Box' (ibid, 2000, pg.123). For this reason, the PWB can become filled with a rich array of tokens expressing propositional contents, both in terms of the propositions that we imaginatively entertain in a Possible World, and the propositions we believe about the actual world.

This aligns with a claim first made by Kendal Walton, (1990, pg.21). He proposes that our imagination is working well if it is not completely uncoupled from the way in which the world is. Imaginings usually take anchorage in the real world. When imagining, our touchstone is usually that which we believe to

be true of reality. By using what we believe to be the case in the real world, we are able to work through various scenarios using logical chains of inference. Unless we are expressly told otherwise, or decide otherwise, we assume that Trump is a human and lives in the USA, and that he is not one of the purple-crab Martians. Moreover, purple crabs invading from Mars should not logically follow from Trump having two terms in office. Unless otherwise agreed upon, to imagine that strange consequences can follow from the initial propositions would be to imagine incorrectly.

PI also relies on the same inference mechanisms used by belief. After filling in background knowledge of a given proposition under consideration with our real-world beliefs, it then sorts through relevant plausible possibilities of what might come next in an imaginative episode. So, one might start by imagining that Pokémon invade planet Earth. For the sake of the imagining, one would have to accept, *when inside the PWB,* the proposition as true. Given that all of our beliefs about the actual world are also in the PWB along with the imagined propositions of *that-Pokémon…,* what follows next are inferential searches to options of what would plausibly follow given the starting imagined proposition within the context of all of our real-world beliefs. For example, one might imagine that what follows next is that:

- There will be widespread excitement or panic.
- People will go out Pokémon hunting.
- There will be associated news bulletins.

And so on…

The similar inferential behaviour of imagination and belief, coupled with the need to draw on our beliefs whilst inside the PWB is nicely summarized and justified by Currie & Ravenscroft (2002, pg.13):

> It is this capacity of imaginings to mirror the inferential patterns of belief that makes fictional storytelling possible. If imaginings were not inferentially commensurate with beliefs, we could not draw on our beliefs to fill out what the story tells us, and storytellers would have to give us all the detail explicitly.

As the imagining becomes richer and new propositions are introduced that conflict with our actual world beliefs (which are tokened within the PWB), our actual world beliefs are updated within the PWB in order to correspond with the imagining. This allows us to avoid contradictions and inferential chaos within the PWB. This "updating" is the specific job of a sub-component of the inference mechanism used in the belief box and PWB. This Sub-component is referred to by Nichols & Stitch as the UpDater. When a new premise is added to the PWB, it plays the role of a new belief and the UpDater sets about removing or changing the real beliefs inside the PWB that are incompatible with the new imagined premise (2000, pg.124). This updating allows us to believe, for example, that one is not capable of magic, whilst at the same time imagining that one is capable of magic (Sinhababu, 2016, pg115).

In summary, this is the functionalist story of how the imagination works without imagery or phenomenology: each and every time a new imagining takes place, propositional tokens are placed inside the PWB, along with tokened beliefs about what we believe to be true of the actual world. As imagined propositional contents are inferentially sorted and selected, the imagining starts to move away from the actual world and so an UpDater, updates the beliefs in the PWB accordingly. An act of imagining is an act of imagining simply by the way in which the contents of our tokened propositions are mentally processed. There is no need for imagery or phenomenology of any kind... Or is there?

Section Two – Introspection

Introspection can best be described as our "mind's eye" or "inward looking-glass". It allows us to access our conscious thoughts, and also to take stock of what our conscious thoughts contain. In order for us to have this access, introspection provides us with direct acquaintance with the content of our conscious thoughts; direct acquaintance that is *experienced*. We can only

have this experiential acquaintance however, if the thought has a distinct phenomenal character. Introspection “reads” the phenomenology of conscious thoughts and is able to identify the thought as the thought it is by the thought’s distinct phenomenology. Without phenomenological content introspection cannot work, and furthermore, if introspection cannot work, the thought is not an experienced thought – and, by extension, not a conscious thought.

To illustrate this idea: phenomenal mental states such as having a pain in the back, or feeling a tingling in the toes are commonly thought of as being mental states that are consciously experienced. They are consciously experienced because when we introspect we are able to directly acquaint ourselves with the distinct phenomenology that comes with the sensation of pain or tickling. David Pitt (2004, pg.14) explains that when we apply introspection to our conscious thoughts we not only experience them, but we are also able to attend to what our thoughts contain. By so doing we not only have an awareness *that* we are consciously experiencing a pain in the back rather than a tickling in the toes, but, in addition we are also aware *what* the content of that experience entails – that it is about a pain in the back. Introspection then, is the attentive experience of our conscious thoughts.

Since attitudinal mental states are considered by some, such as functionalists and physicalists, to be without phenomenology, they cannot be consciously experienced in the same way that phenomenal mental states can be experienced. According to this view, there is nothing ‘it is like’ to be in them. Pursuing this line of reasoning, what then follows is that since attitudinal mental states do not have phenomenology, we cannot introspect them. If we cannot introspect them, they are not consciously experienced, and thus, they are not conscious thoughts. This reasoning has led to a very odd and counterintuitive position where phenomenal mental states are understood to be conscious thoughts, but attitudinal mental states are not understood to be conscious thoughts.

Accepting that attitudinal mental states do not have phenomenal properties, but that phenomenal mental states do have phenomenal

properties splits our thoughts into two categories. By this reckoning, desiring-that Jo get a fantastic mark on her MA thesis is not a conscious thought, whereas feeling hungry is a conscious thought; believing-that Donald Trump is a wally is not a conscious thought, whereas having an orgasm is a conscious thought, and so on. There are two main ways that this odd conclusion can be avoided. Like the physicalists/functionalist, we could deny consciousness altogether and claim that no thoughts are conscious thoughts. Or, we could accept that attitudinal mental states do indeed have some form of phenomenal character, and that we are able to directly acquaint ourselves with the experiential nature of these thoughts when we introspectively attend to them.

Those philosophers who do not wish to deny the existence of consciousness, but who still wish to maintain the PI/SI distinction have an even bigger issue to contend with. If the PI/SI distinction is accepted, then a problematic conclusion arises where our imaginings are split into two categories. The problem unfolds as follows: if SI is considered to be a phenomenal mental state and PI is considered to be an attitudinal mental state, it would seem that half of our imaginings are consciously experienced imaginings, and half of them are not consciously experienced imaginings. For instance, imagining Pokémon invading planet Earth is an imagining with phenomenal properties. We can therefore introspect the phenomenal properties of the thought and what the thought entails. The thought is therefore consciously experienced, and since we can introspect the phenomenal properties of sensory imaginings, all sensory imaginings must be conscious thoughts. If we accept that imagining-that Pokémon invade planet Earth is without phenomenal content, we also have to accept that it has no experiential aspect – there is nothing ‘it is like’ to think this thought. If we have no conscious experience of this thought, it is because we are unable to introspect its content due to its lack of phenomenal properties. Thus, if we are unable to introspect the phenomenal properties of this, and all other PIs, PIs are not conscious thoughts.

How can it possibly be the case that one type of imagining is not consciously experienced, but, by merit of the other imagining being seemingly richer in SP content it is consciously experienced? It is quite clear that we have a conscious experience of both kinds of imaginings. Imagining-that Pokémon invade planet Earth, is just as much a conscious thought as imagining Pokémon invading planet Earth. It is quite clear that we experience imagining-that Pokémon invade planet Earth as a conscious thought, because, when we introspect this thought, it provides us with a feeling of what it is like to have it. We may not necessarily have a strong experience of its SP properties, but, the mental attitude we have towards the content 'feels' like an imagining. We experience it; it has an experiential quality to it.

If we accept that imagining-that Pokémon invade planet Earth, and other PI imaginings have an experiential aspect to them, we are also saying that imagining-that Pokémon invade planet Earth, and all other PIs are conscious thoughts. And, as David Pitt outlines, to 'say that a state is conscious just is to say there is something it is like to be in it; and it follows immediately from the description of a thought as conscious that there is something it is like to have it' (Pitt, 2004, pg.3). Propositional imaginings are experienced thoughts because we are able to directly acquaint ourselves with the content of the thought when we attentively introspect them. If the content of the thought can be experienced, it is because the thought contains phenomenal properties. It has qualia. And, just as with phenomenal mental states, by virtue of the thought having qualia, the qualia fix the content of the thought and allow us to be aware *that* we are imagining, and be aware of *what* we are imagining.

Section Three - Theoretically Conceivable

Traditionally, SP has been thought to be the only kind of phenomenology there is. So, if we can have a mental attitude towards some content without entertaining requisite associative imagery, the imagery or SP

properties of attitudinal mental states are not considered to be an intrinsic and essential property of the mental state. And so, if SP properties are not an essential property of attitudinal mental states, we should be able to theoretically conceive of attitudinal mental states without SP properties. In accordance with the model outlined in section one, we can believe-that seventeen is a prime number without having an imagistic experience accompanying the belief. We can also desire-that it not rain tomorrow, without having an imagistic experience accompanying the desire.

Therefore, if SP is the only type of phenomenology there is, and this type of phenomenology appears to be extractable from some attitudinal mental states because SP is not an essential property to the content of the thought. It then follows that attitudinal mental states are theoretically conceivable, and analysable not just without SP content, but without phenomenology altogether. This theoretic removal of SP, is one of the main justifications for the lack of phenomenology in PI in the functionalist model for the imagination. It is also the main justification for the subsequent deployment of a qualia-free type imagination in contemporary discussions pertaining to the imagination.[3]

According to functionalists, it would appear that if imagination is an attitudinal mental state, we should be able to apply the same theoretical extraction of its sensory phenomenology. We should be able to theoretically conceive of, and analyse the imagination as being independent from any SP content or imagery. However common experience would dictate that when we imagine, we do it with imagery. Asking someone to imagine without imagery contradicts all of our expectations of what it is to imagine. The word 'imagine' specifically invites us to be attitudinally disposed towards some state of affairs that has imagery. If the state of affairs to which we are attitudinally disposed does not have imagery, we are surely not imagining as we ought to. Attempting to imagine that a particular state of imagery-free affairs obtains, contradicts our natural impulse to imagine with imagery. In fact, some people

[3] I argue against the view that SP is the only type of phenomenology there is in section 4.

might find a request to imagine without some form of imagery, not just strange, but simply not achievable. Let us indulge ourselves for a moment, and try and do some imagining without imagery.

Imagine-that:

- The person sitting next to you has just turned into a zombie.

Now,

- *Imagine-that* London Bridge is made of candy floss.

Try this one,

- *Imagine-that* your mother is a time traveller from the sixth dimension.

How about,

- *Imagining-that* the floor is lava!

Or something a bit more involved, like,

- *Imagining-that* you and I jointly knit a blanket big enough to plug the hole in the ozone layer…

How did you get on? Try as I might, I cannot imagine without imagery. When I consciously apply the attitude of *imagination* towards a particular state of affairs, such as the ones above, imagery *always* comes to mind, and I will wager that I am not the only one to experience imagining in this way. We might claim that imagination appears to be theoretically conceivable without its SP properties, but this does not mean to say that we can imagine without SP properties. SP properties are an essential feature of what it is to imagine. Without this essential feature, an act of imagining is simply not an imagining. It is the equivalent of theoretically conceiving of wine without grapes, a river without water. Both properties are theoretically removable from wine and rivers, but, by doing so, we have extracted properties so intrinsic to the object of wine and rivers, that we have completely changed the concept of what wine or a river is.

Maybe there are those who will claim that they can, in fact, imagine some of the examples above without imagery. And, at a push, I might concede that I can be attitudinally disposed towards propositional content that does not have imagery too. However, in such instances I would also have to insist that the attitudinal thought I am having is not an imagining, but some other kind of mental attitude - perhaps that of entertaining, considering, pondering or supposing – but not imagining. In order for one to imagine, imagery has to be present. If imagery is not present a person is simply not imagining, but rather engaging in some other attitudinal mental activity.

The reason why we are unable to use our imagination without imagery is because imagination is uncannily like our perceptual experiences – but a perceptual experience from the 'inside'. This likeness to our perceptual experiences is a compelling reason to think that imagination has to have phenomenology in order for it to be an imagining. Amy Kind (2001, pg.94) writes that, 'imagination feels like perception.' She proposes that imagination is a much weaker imitation of our perceptions, but an imitation of our perceptions it is nonetheless. And, this resemblance to our perceptions can only be rooted in our phenomenological experiences. Thus, imagination must have SP. Without SP, we cannot have an inward experience of our perceptual experiences, and without this inward experience, it cannot be an imagining.

Let us be clear, not all uses of the words 'imagination', or 'imagine' in common usage are intended to invite a person to engage in an activity of imagination. These instances should be considered as counterexamples of what it is to imagine a particular state of affairs. Take for example, proclamations of surprise such as "imagine that!" or sentiments of sympathy such as, "I can't imagine what it must have been like for you…", or disbelief: "my imagination fails me!" These are instances where the word 'imagine' or 'imagination' is being used to express a different meaning, or invite a person to engage in a mental state other than the mental state of imagination. It is unusual to take these sorts of instructions literally and actually try to imagine them, or understand them as an actual imagining. We generally tend to understand these sorts of statements as loose uses of

colloquial language, rather as we understand phrases such as “this is my view of life” as not literally being about a visual experience.

Just as there can be linguistic confusion about what mental state we are referring to, sometimes we can misunderstand the attitudinal mental state that we are applying to given content. In particular we often confuse the mental attitude of supposition with imagination. There are times when we are invited to imagine that a particular state of affairs obtains, but, because we are unable to imagine that state of affairs (for reasons that will become clearer in section four), we end up supposing the state of affairs instead. Supposition and imagination share strong similarities in the type of attitudinal mental state they are. So it is, at times, easy to become conceptually confused about which mental state we are either applying to content, or which mental state we are supposed to be applying to content. In fact, imagination and supposition are so conceptually alike, that the only way we can functionally distinguish them one from the other is by virtue of imagery being an essential property to the act of imagination – an essential property that is not attributable to supposition.

Section Four – Supposing and Imagining

In *On the Epistemic Value of Imagining, Supposing and Conceiving* (2016, pg.42), Magdalena Balcerak Jackson supports the need for a ‘systematic philosophic taxonomy that describes the difference between supposing, conceiving and imagining [and] that explains the epistemological consequences of these differences.’ She notes that so far in the literature, a comprehensive philosophical taxonomy of these terms does not exist. This absence of taxonomy perhaps explains why supposition and imagination can so often become conceptually muddled. She also contends that while there does appear to be a terminological similarity between them, there is, in fact, a

fundamental difference between these cognitive capacities and what they are used for.

In concurrence with Amy Kind and myself, the general distinction Jackson sketches for imagination and supposition, in the main, supports a concept of the imagination that is, by its intrinsic nature, phenomenological. Supposition on the other hand, need not have sensory phenomenology as a prerequisite. She writes:

> While imagination involves a phenomenology familiar to us from mental states such as perceptual experiences and emotions, supposition intuitively does not require such phenomenology (although supposing something might initiate a subsequent act of imagining)' (2016, pg.46).

What follows if we accept this distinction is that supposition has "flexible" sensory phenomenology; sensory phenomenology is not an essential property of supposition. This makes supposition akin to other attitudinal mental states such as belief and desire, which also do not appear to have intrinsic SP properties. When we suppose-that there is a pink star, we can perform this supposing with, or without the image of a pink star. But, when we imagine-that there is a pink star, we *must* do this with an image of some kind, otherwise we are not imagining, but rather, we are supposing.

The fact that supposition can take-or-leave its SP content, whereas imagination, by contrast, cannot, leads to a few striking differences in the way that imagination and supposition behave. This behaviour is mainly wrapped up in the restrictive role that the essential SP property has on imagination, but does not have on supposition. SP restricts the content of *what* can be imagined, in a way that it does not restrict the content of what can be supposed. There could of course be many ways that SP exerts a restriction on imagination in a way that it does not restrict supposition. I can think of three. Imagination is bound by SP in a way that supposition is not bound, by: (i) phenomenal experiences we have previously had (Jackson, 2016), (ii) metaphysical and logical limitations, and (iii) imaginative resistance.

Imagination is bound by our phenomenal experiences, because if we have not had a phenomenal experience similar to what we are to imagine, we are unable to properly replicate those experiences in an imagining (Jackson, 2016). Without prior phenomenological experience, the best we are able to do is suppose that the given state of affairs under consideration pertains. In order to illustrate this point, Jackson outlines a scenario where a person would find it difficult to imagine, with phenomenal accuracy, what it is like to have an IV needle in their arm. She argues that unless one had previous experience of what it is to have an IV needle in their arm, a person is unlikely to accurately represent the phenomenal feel of the situation. On the other hand, without the requisite previous experience, they could, by contrast, accurately suppose the situation of having an IV needle in their arm.

Arguably, if one cannot imagine such a state of affairs, one might be inclined to suppose it instead. Or suppose it, but claim that one is imagining it. Contrariwise, because a person might have previously had the experience of having an IV needle in their arm, they might be inclined to imagine with SP, that such a state of affairs obtains even though they might have been asked to just suppose it. Since we can suppose with SP, supposition can often be confused with imagination. However, since we cannot imagine without SP, we cannot easily confuse imagination with supposition. The fact that these mental states can often be muddled to us, both conceptually and in practice, demonstrates how very alike they are. No wonder, if the only fundamental difference between them is the role that phenomenology plays in determining what type of mental state they are.

Imagine-that you are giving birth. This is a prime example of imagination needing previous phenomenal experience in order to authentically imagine that such a state of affairs obtains. Women complain incessantly that men do not know what the pain of childbirth is like. Children ask inquisitively what it is like to give birth. Mothers do their best to explain the sensation, but know that it is something that cannot be explained. It has to be experienced. Without the previous phenomenal experience of childbirth, one cannot faithfully reproduce the appropriate SP for such a scenario, and therefore

cannot imagine, with appropriate SP, giving birth to a child. One can suppose it however. One can suppose that it is painful, arduous, degrading, empowering, and so on. One can suppose that such a state of affairs obtains with some associative imagery even. But a person cannot truly imagine what it is to give birth if they cannot recreate past phenomenal experiences when imagining this state of affairs.

Distinguishing SP from supposition also allows us to suppose things that we find metaphysically impossible to imagine. Take for example a round square. We can suppose that there is such a thing as a round square, but we cannot imagine it. Since we have never experienced a round square because it is metaphysically impossible, we are unable to reproduce the image of it in our mind's eye. If we cannot bring this image to mind, we cannot imagine a round square. We can, however, suppose it; we can suppose-that there is a round square. This proposition can be supposed because it is possible to suppose logical contradictions, since that is how proofs by contradiction work. We can suppose in this way because SP is not an intrinsic property of supposition in the same way it is for imagination, and SP does not therefore fix the content of supposition in the same way it does for imagination.

Obviously, there are instances where we can authentically imagine content even though we have not had a previous phenomenal experience of what we are imagining. We can imagine Pegasus. We can imagine Pegasus because we have had prior experience of the image of a horse and an image of wings. We can therefore put these two images together in our mind's eye in order to authentically imagine-that there is a flying horse. One who has never experienced a horse or wings however, is going to struggle to imagine Pegasus. In such an instance, they would have to just suppose the state of affairs, maybe with some kind of inauthentic imagery, preferably after being given a description of some kind relating what a Pegasus even is.

A third argument to support a case for imagination needing SP in order for it to be an imagining is the phenomenon of imaginative resistance. There are many forms of imaginative resistance. One such form is an inability to

imagine situations which strongly disagree with our most firmly held moral beliefs. Embedded in these beliefs are phenomenal feelings of rightness and wrongness. In these cases, one might balk at, or indeed "resist" an imagining when it involves a situation or scenario that deliberately affronts the SP aspect of these firmly held beliefs. Take for example a request to *imagine-that the sexual harassment of an under-aged girl by her teacher is not just morally acceptable, but morally incumbent on the teacher to do so*. An imagining such as this provokes feelings of disgust and repulsion within us because it directly affronts the SP content of our firmly held belief that this proposition is morally wrong. We would sooner condemn it, than imagine it. Thus, it is natural for us to want to resist such an imagining. Many people would understandably say, "no, sorry, I just can't imagine a world where this could be the case."

If imagination did not come with SP content however, the feelings of disgust and disturbance by imagining such a proposition would not be a problem for us, as we can observe when asked to instead, *suppose* the state of affairs obtains. *Supposing-that the sexual harassment of an under-aged girl by her teacher is not just morally acceptable, but morally incumbent on the teacher to do so*, does not invite us to "feel" the situation in the same phenomenal way that imagining the state of affairs does. We are able to suppose that this state of affairs obtains but not imagine it because supposition is able to accept the proposition in a way that imagination cannot. Unlike imagination, supposition is able to accept the content of a proposition such as the one above, because supposition can suspend all of our phenomenological experiences from the content that is supposed. Whereas imagination cannot accept it because of the restriction that our phenomenal experiences puts upon imagination. Therefore, without associative phenomenal content, supposition is able to accept content that imagination might resist.

In her "supposition as acceptance" argument Jackson (2016, pg.52) quotes Stalnaker in considering:

> "a category of propositional attitudes and methodological stances towards a proposition" that includes belief, but also many other mental

> attitudes very much like belief: “To accept a proposition is to treat it as true for some reason. One ignores, at least temporarily and perhaps in a limited context the possibility that it is false.”

Supposition, then, is as a type of acceptance which is analogous to other attitudinal mental states such as belief because it is an attitude that “takes a methodological stance towards a proposition.” In this case, the methodological approach is one of acceptance and compartmentalization.

In a similar way to our current understanding of PI, supposition is cognitively compartmentalised. Supposition is compartmentalised in order to be able to accept the proposition as true for the sake of the supposing, without calling into question or creating any conflict with any of our firmly held beliefs about the world. The nature of supposition also allows us to accept a proposition we do not know to be true in order to reason through its consequences. It is best understood as a minimal form of acceptance that allows us to take propositions as true for a limited time and in a limited context, and that enables us to reason through their implications (Jackson, 2016, pg.53). Like so-called PI, supposition is a way of inferentially sorting through plausible possibilities in a reality-congruent way of what might follow if such-and-such were the case.

For these reasons, we should think of supposition as a cognitive capacity that can operate without sensory phenomenology or previous phenomenological experience. The way supposition compartmentalises itself from belief allows us to avoid some imaginative resistance conflicts. In addition, it also allows us to accept propositions as true for a limited amount of time. It is difficult at this point then, to determine how supposition is any different from so-called PI. Without SP content, there are no qualifying features that allow us to distinguish the mental attitude of supposition from the functionalist’s description of PI; without SP content, the PI has not conceptual difference from supposition. Furthermore, without essential SP content, we are unable to resolve any conceptual distinction – both functionally and

consciously – that one might have of the two mental states. There is nothing to tell the attitudes apart from one another.

Thus, SP has to be an essential and intrinsic property of PI. Imagination must have SP content. Without SP content, a so-called imagining simply is not an act of imagination. Imagination that appears to be qualia-free is actually supposition. Supposition is an attitudinal mental state that behaves just like imagination, but, unlike imagination it does not have to have imagery in order to make it the type of mental state it is. Since, by applying introspection, we can determine that SP is an essential property of imagination, SP must do some work in fixing PI content – at least insofar as it distinguishes imagination as the type of mental state it is.

Section Five – Content Outruns Imagery

In order to simplify what is being analysed, it is useful to consider one thought or one mental state at a time. Then, from that analysis, we can determine what essential elements are needed in order to make the thought, the thought it is. This way of analysing thoughts appears to work quite well for attitudinal mental states such as belief or desire. We can quite easily desire one state of affairs at a time, and we can easily do the same with belief. We can believe that the world is round, that catching Pokémon is a waste of time, that it is better to be a glass half-full kind of person, and so on. In theory, this way of analysing imagination should also work well. We should be able to analyse PI as one state of affairs at a time, and our analysis should be able to do much the same work, and glean much the same results as when we analyse other mental states, one state at a time.

Unlike belief, desire and many other attitudinal mental states however, we clearly have extended episodes of imagining where many states of affairs are tightly interlocked in a continuous chain of thoughts. Even if it were the

case that we could theoretically conceive of a particular imagined state of affairs without SP content, it does not mean to say that, taken as a whole, the act of imagination does not have SP content. This is to say, that we cannot have an imaginative episode without any imagery whatsoever. Functionalists have of course made allowance, with their PWB, for this sort of particular behaviour. Inferentially sorting through extended chains of imagined states of affairs is one of the specific jobs of the PWB. If we recall, the behaviour of the PWB is somewhat different from the behaviour of the belief box or the desire box. While the desire and belief boxes contain – long-term – all of our clustered and singular belief and desire tokens, the purpose of the PWB is to hold representational tokens that are related and relevant to one another just for the duration of the episode of imagining. This is why, in practice, when we imagine-that a particular state of affairs obtains, we do not usually imagine one state of affairs on its own and in isolation. We usually imagine an extended scenario of some kind; that a whole chain of interrelated imagined states of affairs obtains.

The interesting thing about the architectural model of the imagination is that although we have a theoretical description of how the whole thing is supposed to work, we do not have a description of how the whole thing actually does work. Theoretically many representational tokens should be active and segregated within the PWB at a time. We are also informed that theoretically, a single state of imagined affairs does not have SP as an essential property, and that therefore NO states of imagined affairs necessarily have SP as an essential property. We are then provided with an inferred conclusion that an entire episode of imagining can take place within the PWB without any SP properties whatsoever – no imagery is needed.

Of course, if we were just considering one belief, or one desire token, a conclusion such as this might, for some, be acceptable. But we are not. Imagination is not like belief or desire. It is very rare to imagine just one state of affairs on its own. The way we usually imagine, is by entertaining several states of affairs in succession. The fact that we imagine in this way, is another way that imagination is different from other attitudinal mental states. It is a

difference which is distinctive, and therefore, this difference should not go overlooked.

Let us consider, for argument's sake, that you were able to rise to my challenge in section three and do some imagining without any SP. You were able to imagine-that London Bridge is made of Candyfloss without any associative imagery. Perhaps I have not convinced you that, if you are able to do such an "imagining", what you are really doing is supposing. In this case, I am going to challenge you to imagine a series of states in the form of a short scenario. But, you must imagine the scenario without any associative imagery whatsoever. No one can read a work of fiction or hear a story without entertaining some sort of imagery. It is impossible. As soon as some phenomenal description is involved in the imagined scenario, SP does the work of recreating our phenomenal experiences with images. These images are always related in some way to the propositional content of the imagining, and to an extent, the images fix the content of what it is that we are imagining. Here is a little story to elucidate my point:

> *Imagine-that –*
> *There are hundreds of dead whales. All of them massacred, probably due to the pollution in the sea. Imagine-that they completely cover the hot sandy bed. Their pink skins and silver fins flash in the light of the sun. Imagine-that you are stroking the back of the whale nearest to you. It lifts its head. Starts talking in German and then jumps back into the sea. It is laughing at you, because pink whales with silver fins that speak fluent German do not actually exist and so you should not have felt so sad that you thought they were all dead…*

You might have had a very full phenomenal experience during this episode of imagining. You might have only had flashes of imagery. But you did have imagery of some kind. What this proves it that, even if it is possible to imagine-that a particular imagery-free state of affairs obtains, we cannot have an extended episode of imagining without any associative imagery whatsoever.

What this also shows is that when we imagine a series of states of affairs in succession, the SP content of the episode as a whole, can be sporadic. What I mean by sporadic, is that not each and every state of affairs necessarily has to have *strong* and distinctive imagery. Our imaginings, taken as a whole, do not run like a neat little movie, filled with rich and detailed pictures and sounds that fill the entire inward "movie screen" of our introspected conscious thoughts. The imagery that comes with an extended episode of imagining, tends to focus on specific details rather than the picture as a whole. We zoom in, we zoom out, we freeze frame. We hear fragments of sound, smell wafts of scents and taste the sea air (even if we do not "see" it). Sometimes the imagery is sparse in an imaginative episode, and sometimes an imaginative episode is experientially packed with SP content. Some states of affairs might be very rich in imagery whereas some states of affairs less so. SP is not always in complete alignment with the propositional content of what is being imagined. We know that when we engage in a sustained episode of imagining we might not have a fine grained detailed picture of what we are imagining. The accompanying imagery might be sketchy, or disjointed. We might get only snippets of imagery – snippets that amount to disproportionately less than the propositional content of the imagining. It might appear that an imaginative episode is richer in content than it is in imagery, giving the appearance that the content of imaginative episodes "outruns" the imagery of imaginative episodes.

One of the reasons that content outruns imagery in an episode of imagining is that when we imagine a series of states, we often use the same image for more than one state of affairs. This might seem like a sort of freeze-framed effect. Perhaps whilst I merrily described the stroking of the whale's back, you still had the image of the whale's silver fin to mind, and by doing so, you were using the same image for more than one propositional content. Of course, this example is for sampling purposes only. Think of any instance of prolonged imagining, and a similar effect can, and often will apply. We often have imaginings whilst perhaps reading a work of fiction, where an image will

remain the same, even though the propositional content has changed or the narrative has developed.

Furthermore, it is not just the image that can remain the same for different propositional content. We are often able to imagine the same propositional content, time-after-time, but with different associative imagery. The image of a black hairy dog that accompanies the proposition, imagine-that there is a black hairy dog, might be a Doberman today, and a Scottie dog tomorrow – depending on our predilections at the time. Perhaps if you were to imagine the same whale scenario again, you might have a different image for the same propositional content. When you stroke the whale's back, you stroke it with your right hand instead of your left hand this time. Since we are able to use the same imagery for different propositional content, and, have many different images for the same propositional content, Amy Kind (2001), claims that although imagery is an essential property of imagination, SP cannot be doing the work of *fixing* the content of what is imagined.

Section Six – SP Does *Some* Content Fixing

"Imagery can be thought of as the paint of the imagination." (2001, pg.108)

Writes Amy Kind in *Putting the Image Back in Imagination*. What this metaphor sets out to claim, is that just as we cannot paint a picture without paint, we cannot imagine without imagery. It is an apt metaphor to use, because the comparison of imagining and painting also entails a second feature of both the act of imagining and painting: just as the object of *what* we paint is not the paint, the object of *what* we imagine is not the image. By deploying this metaphor, Kind intends to illustrate an important distinction between two claims. The first is an essentialist claim: that imagination has to have imagery in order to make it the type of mental state it is. The second is

an individuative claim: that imagery is individuative of imaginings; imagery makes a given imagining the thought that it is.

She argues that since, when imagining we can use different imagery for the same propositional content, and the same imagery for different propositional content, imagery cannot be a factor in what individuates a given imagining – and by extension fixes the content of an imagining. But, she claims, just because imagery does not individuate imaginings, this does not entail that imagery is not an essential property of imagination. Imagination must still have some form of imagery in order to make it the type of mental state it is. Thus, she concludes one can viably hold the position that, whilst imagery is essential to imagination, imagery does not have to be individuative of imaginings.

She makes two main arguments to support her claim that imagery does not individuate imaginings. The first of these is an argument that postulates something similar to the argument I have outlined in section five. Since imaginings are not accompanied with specific images that are particular to the imagined content, the image must therefore not have a direct relevancy to *what* is imagined. Kind's second argument is called the *object claim*. She writes that it is very easy to confuse the essential accompaniment of imagery in imagination, with what is being imagined. She points out that because imagery accompanies imaginings, we can often assume that *what* is being imagined is the accompanying image.

This, of course is not the case. *What* is being imagined is what the token represents and, what the accompanying image depicts. So, we might imagine a particular state of affairs such as Donald Trump skydiving and this imagining is accompanied by an image of Donald Trump being shoved from a plane. We are not imagining the image of Donald, but rather, we are imagining the state of affairs at hand – we imagine Donald skydiving. The image does some work in representing the object, but it is not the object. The same rule applies when we imagine Sherlock Holmes. Kind (2001, pg.106) points out that if the image is the object that is being imagined, then it would

not be possible for us to imagine Sherlock Holmes, since he is a fictional entity.

She concludes that, although images do not do any work in individuating and fixing the content of what is being imagined, images are an essential property of imagination. Images at least do some work in distinguishing imagination as the type of mental state it is. Sensory phenomenology is therefore essential in making an act of imagination, an act of imagination, but, according to Kind, it does not do *any* work in fixing the content of what is imagined. It is on this last point that Kind and I part company. Whilst I think that she has successfully proven that SP does not, by itself fix the content of imaginings, I do not think that they do no work at all in fixing the content of what is imagined.

Aside from the restrictive role that imagery seems to play in what can be imagined, there is at least one other role that imagery plays in fixing the content of an imagining. It is this: there are limitations of the range of images that we are able to use to accompany a given propositional content of an imagining. Kind Says as much herself. She writes:

> Not just any image will do, of course, for it has to be an image of him [Clinton], and moreover an image of him in the act of giving a campaign speech, but it does not matter whether the image I produce has him dressed in a hard-hat or tuxedo' (2001, pg.102).

This quotation implies two things – things that Kind probably did not intend. One, is that accompanying images have to be *relevant* to the propositional content of what is being imagined, and so therefore the image plays some role in fixing the content of an imagining. The other, is to do with the influential role that imagery has in relation to the propositional content of *what* is being imagined. The fact that the image has to be relevant to the content of what is imagined, indicates that images must play some sort of role in fixing the content of an imagining. If images did no work in fixing the content of imaginings, there would be no problem in having any old imagery to

accompany imaginings. If we accept, as Kind argues, that images are essential to imagination, but do not do work in fixing the content of what is imagined, in theory, we should be able to have any old imagery with our imaginings. So long as an imagining has imagery, it should not matter if that imagery has any relevancy to the propositional content of the imagining. We should be able to imagine Donald Trump skydiving, with an accompanying image of pink whales with silver fins. Or that Pokémon invade planet Earth with an accompanying image of London Bridge made of candy floss. But, we can do neither. All of our imaginings come with accompanying imagery that has some sort of relationship to the propositional content of what is being imagined. Since we always imagine with accompanying imagery that is related to the content of what is being imagined, the accompanying imagery of a given imagining must be doing *some* work in fixing the content of *what* is imagined.

The relationship that imagery has with the propositional content of an imagining does not stop at just being relevant. The fact that imagery has this relevant relationship with the propositional content of an imagined state of affairs indicates something more. It indicates that Kind is wrong to think that she can imagine the propositional content that-Clinton is giving a campaign speech with different imagery. There is an either/or aspect to her imagining. If Kind imagines-that Clinton is giving a campaign speech with the image of a hard-hat, she is imagining a different state of affairs from Clinton giving a campaign speech. If Kind imagines-that Clinton is giving a campaign speech whilst wearing a tuxedo, again, she is imagining a different state of affairs from either Clinton giving a campaign speech, or Clinton giving a campaign speech wearing a hard-hat. The image that accompanies the imagining appears to influence the propositional content of *what* is being imagined. If, when I asked you to imagine stroking a whale's back, you did this with an image of your right hand, then what you imagined was not the specific state of affairs I asked you to imagine. Rather, you imagined a state of affairs where you stroked the whale's back with your right hand. If the image that Kind, I, or anyone else uses in a given imagining changes or differs from the original propositional content, the given state of affairs changes also. The imaginer is

thinking a different thought. Therefore, both the image and the propositional content of a given imagining appear to jointly, through their relevant relationship, do some work in fixing the content of a given imagining.

There are instances however, where we are able to use the same imagery with different propositional content. And this is why SP cannot be doing all the content fixing of imaginings. If I were to ask you to imagine-that there is a dead dog, or imagine-that there is a sleeping dog, you might have the same image for either propositional content. We can imagine-that a glass is half full, and imagine-that a glass is half empty with the same image, yet, the propositional content of the imagining is different. The fact that we are able to do this indicates that the extent to which the image has an effect on the propositional content of an imagining has to be limited to some extent. Imagery is not doing *all* the content fixing of what is imagined, only *some*.

So, let us then return to the original functionalist position where we are to think of an imagining with a "proposition first" approach. If we persist with this approach, there is no problem with Kind's claim that we can have different imagery with the same propositional content. And, if we hold this position, we have still gained some ground. The image relevancy issue has still not been satisfied. There is still a restriction on the range of images that are able to accompany the propositional content of an imagining, so the image must be doing *some* of the work in fixing the content of what is imagined, and we can therefore claim as much. We can also claim that SP is most definitely an essential property of imagination – it's what makes an imagining an imagining rather than some other kind of attitudinal mental state. But, we still have a problem. Due to the tendency of imagery to act more like an accompanying property of the representational token of a given imagining, as we have seen in our "content outruns imagery" argument, and Kind's "same image for different propositional content" argument, it is difficult to claim that SP is doing all the fixing of a given imagining. It does not individuate specific imaginings as the imaginings they are (mark them or single them out).

Since our imaginings are conscious because we are able to introspect their phenomenal properties, phenomenology must be doing the work of fixing the content of a given imagining. Since SP is not doing all of the work – only some of the work, we have an explanatory gap problem. But, we only have this problem *if* SP is the only phenomenology there is. However, recent discussions have popularised the idea of a new type of phenomenology. Namely cognitive phenomenology [CP]. There are varying views as to the full extent of what role CP plays in conscious thoughts, and by extension imaginings. My view is this: CP is both individuative and proprietary to conscious thoughts, and by extension PI, and, by virtue of this, it also plays a role in fixing the content of conscious thoughts and imaginings – a role that SP does not play.

Section Seven – Cognitive Phenomenology

Imagine-that it is getting dark…

Now,
Imagine-that after his brief trial he was stoned…

What about something already used as an example:
Imagine-that there is a hot sandy bed…

How were you able to identify and understand the propositional content that these sentences express? Moreover, these sentences each express more than one proposition. How were you able to distinguish between the different propositional content that these sentences express? One can either understand imagine-that it is getting dark to express that there is a removal of light, or one can understand the same sentence as expressing that something sinister is happening. Similarly, one can understand the sentence of imagine-that after his brief trial he was stoned as expressing the proposition that either

stones were thrown at some poor guy, or some more fortunate guy enjoyed himself a reefer high. How were you able to distinguish imagining-that there is a hot sandy bed from our story in section five, as expressing a beach of hot sand, rather than a bed covered in hot sand? The short answer is: cognitive phenomenology does the job of distinguishing one thought from another.

CP is often contrasted with SP and is thought to be a type of phenomenology that is over and above SP. CP is not to be thought of as reducible to SP; as mere sensation or *feeling*. Rather, CP allows us to know 'what it is like' to think that *p*. David Pitt (2004, pg.45-46) writes:

> I would not characterize cognitive phenomenology as a feeling. That would be (in my view) to class it with such experiences as tactile sensations, proprioceptions and emotions. But I do not think it is any of these. It is a kind of awareness closer, in fact, to visual or auditory experiences – which, I take it, are not literally felt. Yet it is unique; it is not like any other kind of phenomenology.

What can be gleaned from Pitt's description is that CP is not to be thought of as reducible to SP. CP is a very different kind of phenomenology. CP allow us to cognitively experience, and be aware, through introspection our conscious thoughts and what our conscious thoughts contain. It does this in a way that SP cannot. Pitt states that CP is not a feeling, whereas SP is. There are some who would argue however, that CP is a type of feeling – it is a type of cognitive feeling. Whether you agree or disagree with Pitt that cognitive experiences can be experienced as a feeling or not, makes no odds here. Either view accepts that CP allows us to access and *experience* our occurrent conscious thoughts in a way that SP cannot. Where SP allows us to consciously access our sensory experiences, CP allows us to access our cognitive experiences.

There are many arguments that provide evidence for the need of a type of phenomenology that is over and above SP. These arguments often focus on the particular role that CP plays in fixing the content of conscious thoughts

– a role that SP does not play. Contrast arguments, such as the one above, are one of the most popular ways of demonstrating that CP is not only present in thoughts, but what role CP plays in thoughts. Contrast arguments seek to respond to the question of what it is to *cognitively experience* our thoughts when we introspectively attend to them – particularly if we cannot reduce the experience to a sensory feeling of some kind. What the experience of CP comes down to is a type of cognitive experience; an experience of *understanding* the content of our conscious thoughts.

In order to make sure that the understanding of our conscious thoughts is due to CP, rather than SP, philosophical thought experiments that advocate CP seek to neutralise the role that SP plays in order to highlight the role that CP plays in our ability to understand our conscious thoughts. According to Michelle Montague (2017, pg.305):

> Phenomenological contrast arguments involve the presentation of two scenarios that allegedly differ in overall phenomenological character but not in sensory-phenomenological features. The idea is simple: because, by hypothesis, there is no difference in sensory phenomenology, the phenomenological contrast between them must be nonsensory, and is best accounted for by some form of nonsensory CP.

Some contrast arguments appeal to the best explanation of the difference between sentences that we do understand and sentences that we do not understand. For example, a case might be presented where a sentence is in one's native tongue is contrasted with a sentence that expresses the same proposition in an unfamiliar language. Such as *the writer of this thesis is slightly crazy* contrasted with *awdur y traethawd hwn yn wallgof ychydig*. Where for an English speaker an experience of understanding takes place when presented with the first sentence, no experience of understanding takes place when presented with the second sentence (unless the person also speaks Welsh). This then indicates that CP must be present in the thought that we understand because understanding is a conscious experience only if

we can introspect the CP properties of the conscious thought (Strawson, 1994).

Other contrast arguments, such as the one used at the beginning of this section, include proposing instances where we can not only understand more than one meaning of the same sentence, but we can identify which is the meaning that we are to grasp from the sentence. Arguments such as these present propositions in the speaker's language that could be understood to have more than one interpretation. CP is thought to be essential in being able to grasp the right content of sentences such as these; sentences that use the same verbal imagery, but differ in propositional content (Horgan and Tienson, 2002). Other cases involve seeing and recognising two different images in the same picture, such as the infamous rabbit and duck sketch or the young-lady, old-lady drawing. Another way of illustrating the "double seeing effect" might be, two people who hear the same sound, but have different experiences of that sound; they understand them in different ways. Take for example a fire-alarm. If one has had first-hand experience of fire-alarms and their purpose, one will act accordingly upon hearing a fire-alarm. If one has no knowledge or experience of the meaning of a fire-alarm, the sound is likely to be baffling.

Contrast cases demonstrate that there is not only a difference in the role that SP and CP play in conscious thoughts, but contrast arguments also serve to outline the specific role that CP plays in our conscious thoughts. The specific role that CP plays in conscious thoughts is that, through applying introspection, we are able to identify a given thought as the thought it is and what it contains. In order for CP to do this, each and every occurrent conscious thought has to have CP properties. This includes PIs. In this respect, CP is proprietary to all conscious thoughts – all conscious thoughts have distinctive CP properties. And, CP is individuative of all conscious thoughts – because of the distinct CP of each thought, we are able to distinguish, identify and instantly understand the thought as the thought it is.

Without CP and the proprietary and individuative role it plays in fixing the content of conscious thought, any account of conscious thought – or imagination for that matter – will fail, 'to distinguish between knowing that one knows something and knowing what one knows' (Pitt, 2004, pg.25). What Pitt means by this statement is that, not only does CP allow us to know, and therefore identify what type of mental state we are experiencing, but, it also allows us to know and therefore identify the particular thought we are having. In summary, CP allows thoughts that seemingly have no SP properties to be conscious thoughts, because we are able to introspectively understand them. In addition, CP does the work that SP cannot do in fixing the content of thoughts that have essential SP properties, such as an imagining.

Thus, when we introspect the phenomenal properties of our imaginings, we find that we are able to distinguish our imaginings as imaginings, not just from an imagining's SP properties, but also from an imagining's CP properties. Where SP marks an imagining as the type of attitudinal mental state it is, and does some work in fixing the content of what is imagined, CP fixes our cognitive understanding of the content of an imagining. So, when we imagine-that there is a dead dog, or imagine-that there is a sleeping dog, we are able to understand the difference in the propositional content of these thoughts. SP cannot help us to understand the propositional difference, since we might experience exactly the same imagery in both instances. In a similar vein, when we imagine-that there is a glass half full, or imagine-that there is a glass half empty, the distinct CP properties that both thoughts have, allow us to distinguish the propositional content of these thoughts from one another – even though both thoughts may have the same SP properties, or imagery. Moreover, we are able to understand the propositional content of the thoughts and what the propositional content of the thoughts entails. Without the CP properties of these thoughts, there is nothing to explain how it is that we are able to consciously understand the propositional and imagistic content of what the thoughts contain, or, what the difference between the thoughts is.

Therefore, the fact that all thoughts have a distinct proprietary CP that individuates them as the thought they are, allows us to introspectively differentiate between imagining-that Pokémon invade planet Earth and imagining-that T-Rex's can pole dance. It also allows us to introspectively discern, when imagining-that Pokémon invade planet Earth, in what sense the imagining is meant. Are we to take this imagining in a literal sense and imagine little spaceships with Pokémon on board descending to planet Earth? Or, are we to imagine-that we are playing an interactive game on our phones? The ability to individuate thoughts in this way, enables us to know what our thoughts are about; CP provides thoughts with a particular intentional content (Montague, 2017, pg.306-307).

To recap, it would seem that there are certain attitudinal mental states, that, when applied to given propositional content (such as believing-that seventeen is a prime number), do not have SP as an essential property. If SP is the only type of phenomenology there is, it would follow that a theoretical framework giving a full account of these attitudinal mental states could be established without phenomenology. However, we would have to accept that these thoughts are not conscious thoughts, since we cannot introspect their phenomenal properties if they have no phenomenal properties. Once one acknowledges that there is another type of phenomenology other than SP, namely CP, and CP is an essential proprietary and individuative property of all conscious thoughts, it is not theoretically conceivable to remove ***all*** phenomenology from attitudinal mental states. We can introspectively attend to our conscious thoughts and cognitively experience the content of our conscious thoughts. Therefore, conscious thoughts must at least have CP in order to fix the content of thoughts. Without CP, a thought cannot be cognitively understood as the thought it is and we cannot immediately distinguish thoughts one from another, and identify the thought as the thought it is.

Since CP is an essential property that fixes the content of all conscious thoughts, CP is also an essential, proprietary and individuative property of all propositional imaginings. Accordingly, CP does some significant work in fixing

the content of propositional imagination. In cooperation with SP, CP plays a particular role in imaginings, by enabling us to determine *that* we are imagining, and *what* we are imagining. Because it doesn't allow for CP, the functionalist model falls short of a full explanation of what the imagination is, how it works, and what its basic essential properties are.

Wrapping Up & Recap

When we consciously experience our imaginings, it is because we are able to acquaint ourselves directly with their phenomenal content by introspectively attending to them. Through applying introspection, we are able to determine that imagination – propositional or otherwise – has both cognitive and sensory phenomenology. SP distinguishes an act of imagination, as an act of imagination, rather than some other mental state. And, as such, an act of imagination cannot be an act of imagination without SP. It is therefore an *essential* property of the mental attitude of imagination. SP also has an important role in fixing the content of a given imagining, at least insofar as it restricts the imaginer in relation to what can be imagined; so SP content has to have some relevancy to the propositional content of what is imagined. Furthermore, the relationship that SP has with the propositional content of an imagining means that, if the SP changes, it also influences a change in the propositional content of what is being imagined. The full extent of the role SP plays in fixing the content of PI is still yet to be determined. There could still be many ways that SP plays a role in fixing the content of imaginings – ways that are yet unidentified in this paper. Whatever the case, it is clear that SP does at least *some* of the work in fixing the content of imagination.

Yet SP is not doing *all* the phenomenal content fixing of imagination, because there are at least two ways that SP has a limitation when it comes to fixing the content of imaginings. Firstly, we are able to use the same imagery for different propositional content. And secondly, when we imagine several

states of affairs consecutively, the content of an episode of imagining seems to outweigh its associative SP, indicating that “content outruns imagery.” We can therefore claim, that although the act of imagination must have SP, SP is not individuative of each imagining, and cannot then, be doing all the work in fixing the content of each imagined state of affairs.

Since we can apply introspection to determine that SP is present in the content of our PIs, we can also apply introspection to determine that CP is present in our PIs. The specific role that CP plays, provides us with a cognitive experience of our conscious thoughts. In the case of PI, the experience that CP provides us with is what it is to imagine-that such-and-such is the case. CP is both proprietary and individuative to imaginative thoughts and by virtue of this, CP also does some content fixing of imaginings. It allows us to identify, understand and differentiate imaginings as the distinct imaginings they are.

Conclusion

It is clear that so-called propositional imagination must have both SP and CP properties in order to make it an act of imagination. SP and CP properties jointly fix the content of what is imagined, and, in combination they allow us to introspectively experience our imaginings, both sensationally and cognitively. By demonstrating that propositional imagination has phenomenology, and moreover, that the phenomenology plays an essential role in fixing the content of propositional imagination, the SI/PI distinction collapses and the conception of a type of qualia-free imagination is debunked. This creates an ongoing problem for functionalists and those who support the notion that imagination – propositional or otherwise, can be conceptualised without phenomenology.

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