Indiscriminable Shades & Demonstrative Concepts

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A familiar perceptual fact: it sometimes happens that, say, two distinct shades of red are so similar in colour that you cannot discriminate them visually. In spite of their chromatic difference, they are chromatically indiscriminable: no matter how hard you look, you seem unable to detect the relevant difference in the way these shades visually appear to you.

It can also happen in such cases that the relation of indiscriminability between such shades is non-transitive. That is, one shade of red $a$ is indiscriminable from another shade $b$, which, in turn, is indiscriminable from a third shade $c$. Yet, the difference in colour between the first shade $a$ and the third shade $c$ is such that they look chromatically different—they are perceptually discriminable.¹

The fact that perceptual indiscriminability is non-transitive—call this fact the Intransitivity of Indiscriminability (II)—has been exploited in a variety of arguments against a variety of views in the philosophy of perception.² In particular, such a fact has been taken by many to raise a specifically thorny difficulty for the advocates of Conceptualism. According to Conceptualists like John McDowell (1994, 1998) and Bill Brewer (1999, 2005), a perceptual experience $e$ represents a given worldly feature $f$ only if, at the time, the perceiver possesses (and deploys) a concept $C$ for $f$.

But a consequence of the Intransitivity of Indiscriminability, it is suggested, is that some of the concepts the Conceptualists appeal to—like colour concepts, for instance—end up with incoherent conditions of individuation. Such an unwanted


² For instance, against sense-data (Armstrong, 1968: 218); against phenomenal qualities and phenomenal concepts (Dummett, 1975); or against the transparency of our own experiences (Williamson, 1990: 49-64; Fantl and Howell, 2003).
consequence, the suggestion goes, seems to force Conceptualists towards a dilemma: (i) abandon Conceptualism or (ii) deny that perceptual indiscriminability is intransitive.

Though no friend of Conceptualism, I have some reservations as to whether such a dilemma really threatens Conceptualism in any way. Not because perceptual indiscriminability isn’t intransitive (I think it is); but because Conceptualists have the resources to disarm the dilemma—simply by clarifying the individuation-conditions of the concepts which, on their view, make up the representational content of perceptual experiences. And so, Conceptualism is compatible with the Intransitivity of Indiscriminability: if one is tempted by Conceptualism, one doesn’t have to choose between one and the other.

As Christopher Peacocke (1992: 83) first introduced it,³ the problem for Conceptualists has essentially to do with the emphasis they place on the role demonstrative concepts play in experience—in particular, on the conceptualist view, such concepts are supposed to capture the very specific properties (such as fine-grained shades of colour, for example) represented in experience. After a brief review of Peacocke’s argument, I turn my attention to a new—and apparently more powerful—version of the argument. According to Jérôme Dokic and Élisabeth Pacherie (2001), two distinct objections (at least) can in fact be mounted against Conceptualism on the basis of the Intransitivity of Indiscriminability.⁴ The first forces Conceptualists towards an incoherent position about the phenomenology of colour experience (call this the “Phenomenological Objection”), while the second makes it impossible for Conceptualists to account for the fineness of grain with which perceptual experiences represent the environment (the “Representational Objection”).

Unfortunately, neither objection fares any better than Peacocke’s original point—or so I shall argue. This is due mainly to Dokic and Pacherie’s failure to fully appreciate the resources available to Conceptualists. My aim in this paper, I hasten to say, isn’t to rescue Conceptualism. I only want to show that the Conceptualists’ account of demonstrative concepts can in fact take care of the

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³ See also Martin (1992: 757, n. 14).

⁴ I ignore a third objection they advance in their paper, which is epistemic, and has less to do with the phenomenon under consideration. But I think that this third objection fails too.
difficulties the Intransitivity of Indiscriminability allegedly raises for Conceptualists. But I agree with Dokic and Pacherie that having experiences doesn’t require concepts. Still, more care ought to be taken when assessing which argument(s) can successfully rebut such a view. Before I try to show why Dokic and Pacherie’s objections aren’t among the successful ones, some preliminaries are required.

1. The Story so far
The problem raised by the Intransitivity of Indiscriminability originates in the context of another, more familiar, objection against Conceptualism—the Objection from the Fineness of Grain of Experience. Having sketched a very minimal characterisation of Conceptualism (§1.1), I briefly review this latter objection (§1.2), so that Peacocke’s argument can be better situated in the dispute between Conceptualists and their opponents (§1.3). Next, I consider Dokic and Pacherie’s Phenomenological Objection (§2), and then their Representational Objection (§3), and show how to answer both.

1.1. Conceptualism
Admittedly, what the conceptuelist conception of experience exactly amounts to isn’t too clear. Often, such a view is cashed out in terms of the slogan that “the representational content of perceptual experience is fully conceptual”. The idea seems to be that experiences are representational (or intentional) in a way that is akin to that in which thoughts and beliefs represent the world. Perceptual experiences represent objects and properties in the subject’s environment, and thus make the subject aware of such objects and properties—in the sense that she can think and form beliefs about them. And what is crucial for the intentionality of thoughts and beliefs, according to Conceptualists, is the possession (and deployment) of concepts by the subject who entertains such thoughts.

The recent debate surrounding Conceptualism is an instance of a more general and long-standing disagreement about the nature of experience between those philosophers who reduce perceptual experiences to some kind of thought and those who resist such a reduction. The reduction in question usually proceeds with the claim that experiences have certain crucial properties in common with thoughts. According to Conceptualists, it is in virtue of their conceptual content
that perceptual experiences are akin to thoughts. This, their critics insist, over-intellectualises perceptual representation. On their view, creatures without concepts can have experiences more or less like ours—it’s just that their experiences aren’t accompanied by thoughts in the way ours usually are.

Although essentially an issue about the nature of experience and perceptual representation, the disagreement between Conceptualists and their opponents has wide-ranging psychological and epistemological consequences. For instance, it impacts upon our conception of animal thought and animal perception (Can animals have experiences with representational content if they lack concepts?), but also on whether we can acquire concepts on the basis of experience (How could we, ask some Anti-conceptualists, if experiences already require the possession of concepts?). According to Conceptualists like Brewer (1999, 2005) and McDowell (1994), whether or not Conceptualism is true also largely matters for our knowledge of the external world: without conceptual content, they argue, perceptual experiences simply cannot justify beliefs about the environment.

Conceptualism is essentially a thesis about the nature of the representational properties of experience.\(^5\) Such properties, Conceptualists claim, are determined by the perceiver’s concepts, to the effect that which representational properties an experience has depends on which concepts the subject of that experience possesses and deploys. But what does it mean to ‘possess’ and ‘deploy’ a concept? An answer to these questions, it would seem, partly depends on what concepts are supposed to be. One difficulty at this point owes to the profusion of theories of concepts both in the philosophical and empirical literature.\(^6\) Presumably, Conceptualists don’t intend their claim about perceptual experience to fall hostage to the fortunes of any such particular theory. The question then is whether the notions of ‘possession’ and ‘deployment’ of a concept can be characterised without recourse to a particular theory of concepts.

Perhaps, they can. Usually, the ascription of concepts in psychology goes hand-in-hand with attribution of certain psychological capacities. Thus, one might say

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\(^5\) To say that an experience has a content, I assume, is to say no more than it has certain properties (its representational properties) in virtue of which the experience is associated with a set of correctness-conditions, which are satisfied just in case the experience correctly represents the subject’s immediate environment.

\(^6\) See Laurence and Margolis (1999) and Prinz (2002) for useful surveys.
that the possession of a concept \( C \) is essentially a matter of having certain psychological capacities.\(^7\) Which capacities? Not any psychological capacity will do, obviously. The capacity to suffer bouts of depression has little to do with concept-possession. Furthermore, Conceptualism would turn out to be trivial if concept-possession only required the capacity for mental representation (since it is precisely the nature of some sub-species of mental representation that is at issue). But certain psychological capacities seem to have a particular importance in specifying the functional role of a concept \( C \) in a subject’s psychological life. These are likely to include, say, the capacity (i) to identify and re-identify things that fall in the extension of \( C \), (ii) to discriminate such things from others to which \( C \) doesn’t apply, (iii) to draw certain inferences involving \( C \), etc. A fully developed theory of concept-possession, I assume, should provide a complete list of such capacities—and perhaps, different lists will be drawn for different types of concepts.

What about the deployment of concepts? Psychological capacities are dispositional properties of subjects. By the ‘deployment’ of a concept \( C \), I shall mean the manifestation or exercise (an event) of some of the capacities associated with \( C \). Thus, when inferring the proposition that there are kangaroos from the proposition that kangaroos are hopping around, you are deploying the concept Kangaroo (here, I follow the standard practice of writing names of concepts in capital letters).\(^8\)

We now have some (admittedly rough) idea of the sense in which experiences might be said to be ‘conceptual’. It entails at least this much: if, at the time of experience, a perceiver doesn’t (i) possess and (ii) deploy a concept for a given object in front of her, such an object isn’t represented in her experience. No doubt, more needs to be said about what makes the content of an experience

\(^7\) This holds irrespective of whether one thinks of the possession of concepts as being constituted by such capacities (Peacocke, 1992), or whether one prefers to see it as a contingent fact that having a certain concept \( C \) imparts certain capacities on a subject (Fodor, 1998, 2003).

\(^8\) As with other dispositions and capacities, one can possess a given concept at a certain time \( t \) without necessarily deploying that concept at \( t \). Experiences are events, though. This is why a characterisation of Conceptualism must insist that the representational properties of a given experience are determined by the concepts the subject deploys. According to McDowell (1994: 66), conceptualist capacities “are operative in” experience (my emphasis).
‘conceptual’. But the necessary condition just stated already imposes a substantial—and controversial—constraint on perceptual representation.

What about the claim that the representational content of experience is wholly conceptual? The thought seems to be that any difference in the way things are represented in experience should amount to a difference in the concepts the perceiver brings to bear on what she experiences, and vice versa. Otherwise, an experience might represent the environment in a way that remains unmatched by the concepts the perceiver deploys at the time. Thus, combining these two points, the conceptualist slogan can be fleshed out with a little more precision in terms of the following co-variance thesis:

\[(C) \text{ any two features (objects, relations, etc.) } f_1 \text{ and } f_2 \text{ are represented in experience}\]

\[\text{as different IF AND ONLY IF, at the time, the subject of experience } S \text{ (i) possesses and (ii) deploys distinct concepts } C_1 \text{ and } C_2 \text{ for each feature respectively.}\]

According to (C), the representational content of experience is exhausted by the concepts the perceiver deploys at the time of the experience. Any variation in one dimension (content) requires a corresponding variation in the other dimension (concepts), and vice versa.

Against this, opponents of Conceptualism have advanced various counter-examples to show that the representational content of experience isn’t entirely conceptual in the sense captured by (C). One such counter-example exploits a particular feature of perceptual experiences: their so-called ‘fineness of grain’.

**1.2. Fineness of Grain & the Demonstrative Strategy**

Perceptual experiences, it is often pointed out, can represent the environment in a way that is fine-grained. For instance, they can represent highly similar, yet distinct, features in all their nuance and specificity, thus allowing perceivers to carry fine-grained discriminations of such features.

This aspect of experience, some have argued, poses a major problem for Conceptualists (see Evans, 1982: 229; Peacocke, 1986: 15-6; 1989: 315-7). It seems possible that a perceiver visually discriminates two distinct features—say, two very similar, but not quite identical, shades of red, \(f_1\) and \(f_2\)—without possessing different concepts for such features. After all, while most of us seem able to visually discriminate a wide range of distinct shades of red, it seems fair to say that
our conceptual repertoire for such shades is seriously limited.\(^9\) But, the argument goes, if a perceiver can visually discriminate \(f_1\) from \(f_s\), her experience must represent such shades differently. And so we have a counter-example to (C): it is possible that \(f_1\) and \(f_s\) are represented differently in her experience, whilst the perceiver lacks distinct concepts for such shades. In short, the fineness of grain of experience “outstrips” the conceptual repertoire of normal perceivers.

However, this doesn’t seem to present a real problem for Conceptualists. Granting that experiences are fine-grained indeed, they rightly observe that the objection ignores the availability of demonstrative concepts in experience. Normal perceivers, they insist, can conceptualise specific shades of red in terms of demonstrative concepts like THIS, THAT RED or THIS SHADE—call this response the “Demonstrative Strategy” (McDowell, 1994: 56ff; Brewer, 1999: 170-4). The objection fails, they claim, because whenever a subject visually discriminates between two specific shades of red, she can deploy distinct demonstrative concepts for each shade. And so, the fineness of grain of experience can be matched by fine-grained demonstrative concepts.

This is where Peacocke’s appeal to the Intransitivity of Indiscriminability enters the scene. His remarks suggest that the Demonstrative Strategy, while solving the problem raised by the fineness of grain of experience, encounters some difficulties of its own.

1.3. Peacocke’s Objection & McDowell’s response

Peacocke’s (1992: 83) argument begins with the suggestion that demonstrative colour concepts (hereafter DCCs) such as THIS RED, THAT SHADE, or COLOURED THUS, which are supposed to pick out specific (or determinate) shades of colour, have their extension determined by the following principle:

\[^9\] One reason why a subject might lack concepts for such fine-grained features has to do with the fact that normal subjects typically fail to re-identify these features in experience, due to certain limitations on perceptual memory (see, e.g., Raffman, 1995; Dokie and Pacherie, 2001: 198, and the references therein). The point relies upon the assumption that the ability to re-identify a feature \(f\) constitutes a necessary constraint upon possession of a concept for \(f\) (for discussion, see Kelly, 2001b.). It follows that, insofar as a perceiver can perceptually discriminate things she is not able to re-identify, her experience must be representing things for which she has no concept. Such a constraint on concept-possession encounters serious difficulties, but I shan’t discuss them here.
At first sight, (E) seems quite intuitive: if two objects have exactly the same determinate colour, they can be expected to be indiscriminable, and thus fall under the same concept—namely, the concept of the particular colour they share.

Given such a principle, all it takes to create trouble for the Demonstrative Strategy is a situation which instantiates the Intransitivity of Indiscriminability, such as three samples of distinct—yet very similar—shades of red, \(a\), \(b\), and \(c\). The combination of such a situation with (E) seems to commit Conceptualists to a contradiction.

The argument is familiar:

1. \(a\) falls under the demonstrative colour concept \(\text{THUS}_a\).
2. \(a\) and \(b\) are indiscriminable with respect to colour.
3. \(\therefore b\) falls under the demonstrative colour concept \(\text{THUS}_b\). [from (1), (2) & (E)]
4. \(b\) and \(c\) are indiscriminable with respect to colour.
5. \(\therefore c\) falls under the demonstrative colour concept \(\text{THUS}_c\). [from (3), (4) & (E)]
6. it is not the case that \(a\) and \(c\) are indiscriminable.
7. \(\therefore a\) and \(c\) do not fall under the same demonstrative colour concept. [from (6) & (E)]
8. \(\therefore a\) falls under \(\text{THUS}_a\) and \(c\) falls under \(\text{THUS}_c\). [from (1) & (5)]

And so, if Conceptualists accept (E), they are forced to endorse both the claim that \(a\) and \(c\) fall under the same specific demonstrative colour concept (8), and the claim that they don’t (7).

To avoid this unfortunate conclusion, McDowell (1994: 170) and Brewer (1999: 175) have responded that, on their view, the extension of demonstrative concepts isn’t determined by (E). Instead, they suggest, the extension-conditions of DCCs such as \(\text{THUS} \ or \ \text{THAT SHADE}\) are better captured by:

(E*) \(\forall x \forall y \, (x \text{ and } y \ fall \ under \ the \ same \ demonstrative \ colour \ concept \ \text{THUS}_x \ if \ and \ only \ if \ (i), \ while \ forming \ such \ a \ concept, \ the \ subject \ is \ experientially \ confronted \ with \ x, \ and \ (ii) \ y \ is \ indiscriminable \ in \ colour \ from \ x.\)
Unlike (E), (E*) does not allow that, insofar as x and y are indiscriminable, they both fall under any colour concept which applies to either x or y. (E*) restricts the application of DCCs to those objects which are chromatically indiscriminable from the original sample the subject perceives while forming the DCC in question. After all, one lesson of Peacocke’s argument (and of the Intransitivity of Indiscriminability in general) is that indiscriminability tout court doesn’t preserve sameness of colour. And so, since chromatic indiscriminability is intransitive, it seems natural that the fact this fact should be built in the extension-conditions of specific colour concepts.

With this new principle in hand, Conceptualists can block Peacocke’s argument and avoid the contradiction. When (E*) is substituted for (E), premise (5) in the argument doesn’t follow anymore. Sample c might fall under the DCC \( \text{THUS}_b \), since c is indiscriminable from b—the original sample perception of which grounds the formation of \( \text{THUS}_b \). But c doesn’t fall under \( \text{THUS}_a \), because c isn’t indiscriminable from a—the original sample, perception of which grounds the subject’s formation of \( \text{THUS}_a \). Therefore, (E*) cannot be used to derive the problematic intermediate conclusion that c falls under such a concept.\(^\text{10}\)

As we shall see, however, Dokic and Pacherie’s new versions of the argument cause trouble for Conceptualists, even when (E*) is substituted for (E). Nevertheless, I shall argue that the Conceptualists’ account of demonstrative concepts contains the resources to answer these new difficulties.

2. The Phenomenological Objection

According to Dokic and Pacherie, the difficulties raised for the extension-conditions of demonstrative concepts have further drastic consequences for Conceptualism. For instance, Dokic and Pacherie argue, if Conceptualists maintain that the perception of specific shades of colour essentially involves DCCs such as \( \text{THIS RED} \), \( \text{THUS} \), or \( \text{THAT SHADE} \), they are committed to incoherent phenomenological descriptions of colour experience.

\(^\text{10}\) Peacocke (1992: 83) suggests that his objection could be answered by a theory of partial denotation for vague colour concepts. In response, McDowell claims that, given (E*), there is “no need for the apparatus Peacocke introduces” (1994: 171, n. 7). But this is a mistake, if Peacocke’s objection can also be run with non-demonstrative concepts, the extension of which isn’t plausibly determined by (E*).
Dokic and Pacherie’s first argument begins with McDowell and Brewer’s modified constraint on the extension of DCCs:

\[(E^*) \quad (\forall x) (\forall y) \text{ if and only if } (i), \text{ while forming such a concept, the subject is experientially confronted with } x, \text{ and (ii) } y \text{ is indiscriminable in colour from } x.\]

Once again, trouble arises when this constraint is considered in light of the fact that perceptual indiscriminability can be intransitive. That is,\[\text{(II)} \quad \text{there are colour samples, say, } a, b, \text{ and } c, \text{ such that, (i) while } a \text{ and } b \text{ are indiscriminable in colour, and (ii) likewise for } b \text{ and } c, \text{ (iii) } a \text{ and } c \text{ are discriminable.}\]

But, Dokic and Pacherie (2001: 195) point out, \((E^*)\) and (II) together entail two problematic implications about the extension of DCCs:

\[(A) \quad \text{any given object is apt to fall under more than one DCC.}\]
\[(B) \quad \text{any given DCC has in its extension things that are discriminable in colour.}\]

The reasoning behind implication \((A)\) goes like this. Since samples \(a\) and \(b\) are chromatically indiscriminable, and \(a\) falls under the DCC \(THUS_a\), \((E^*)\) implies that \(b\) also falls under \(THUS_a\). Next, since \(b\) is indiscriminable from \(c\), and \(c\) falls under \(THUS_c\), \(b\) falls under \(THUS_c\) too—by \((E^*)\) again. But now, given that \(a\) and \(c\) are discriminable in colour, the demonstrative concepts \(THUS_a\) and \(THUS_c\) which apply to \(a\) and \(c\) respectively—but not to both—have a different extension. And, the assumption seems to be, concepts with a different extension are distinct. Therefore, a uniformly coloured object \(b\) falls under at least two distinct DCCs: \(THUS_a\) and \(THUS_c\).

As for implication \((B)\), it can be derived more or less in the same fashion. Since sample \(b\) is indiscriminable from both \(a\) and \(c\), principle \((E^*)\) entails that, if \(b\) falls under \(THUS_b\), such a DCC must also apply to both \(a\) and \(c\). But \(a\) and \(c\) are discriminable in colour. \(Ergo\), the demonstrative colour concept \(THUS_b\) has differently coloured objects in its extension.
Obviously, implication (B) is bad enough as it is. DCCs are supposed to be concepts of *determinate* shades of colour.\(^1\) Such shades may be specific enough so that any shade \(x\) discriminable from a given shade \(y\) must be distinct from \(y\). Consequently, a demonstrative concept for such a shade cannot apply to objects that are chromatically discriminable.

Similarly with implication (A), which makes a claim about objects and what colour concepts they fall under. Again, since the DCCs in question are meant to be concepts of *specific shades*, (A) is problematic if a *uniformly coloured* object could fall under two distinct DCCs. As Dokic and Pacherie (2001: 196) observe, specific shades are “mutually exclusive”. Of course, a given object might fall under distinct determinate colour concepts in different conditions and at different times. But (A) is problematic because, in the way it was derived, a *uniformly coloured* object falls under two distinct concepts of specific shades “at a given time (in fixed conditions of observation)” *(ibid.)*.

Now, Dokic and Pacherie insist, (A) raises a further complication for Conceptualists, which goes beyond issues about the individuation of DCCs. Implication (A), they claim, has the following consequence:

**The Incoherent Consequence:** if \(b\) falls under \(THUS_3\) and \(THUS_3\), then “a given thing, although uniformly coloured, presents more than one shade at a given time to a given observer” (2001: 195).

Presumably, this is why the Demonstrative Strategy isn’t “phenomenologically adequate” (Dokic and Pacherie, 2001: 194).

This, in effect, is Dokic and Pacherie’s phenomenological argument. It encounters, I think, at least two problems: it is unclear whether (i) the Incoherent Consequence really follows from (A)—Dokic and Pacherie fail to provide the details of how such an inference is supposed to go. What’s more, it is not even clear that (ii) Conceptualists must embrace implications (A) and (B). I take each of these points in turn.

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\(^1\) Note that (A) and (B) are entirely unproblematic when applied to determinable colour concepts (or to less specific colour concepts). For instance, a uniformly blue object can fall under both *blueish* and *Yves Klein blue*—no problem with (A). And things which fall under the concept *blue* are surely discriminable since they instantiate different determinate shades of blue—no problem with (B).
2.1. *A Non-sequitur?*

Why think that a thesis about the extension of colour concepts—implication (A)—impacts on the way certain objects are perceived, and on the phenomenology of experience more generally—the Incoherent Consequence? Presumably, since Dokic and Pacherie take the latter to arise for the *conceptualist* conception of experience in particular, their argument relies to some degree on what Conceptualists say about experience. Let’s look at thesis (C). To simplify somewhat, (C) can be broken into two different conditionals:

(C₁) if two features $f_i$ and $f_j$ are represented in experience as different, the subject $S$ must (i) possess and (ii) deploy different concepts $C_i$ and $C_j$ for each feature respectively.

(C₂) if a perceiver $S$ (i) possesses and (ii) deploys distinct concepts $C_i$ and $C_j$ for two features $f_i$ and $f_j$ presented in experience, these features are represented as different.

In this context, (C₂) provides a link between (A) and the Incoherent Consequence. According to (A), sample $b$ falls *simultaneously* under (at least) two distinct DCCs: $THUS_a$ and $THUS_c$. Given (C₂), it appears to follow that, if a subject $S$ has an experience of $b$, she must experience it as having two different colours *simultaneously, because* $b$ falls under two distinct colour concepts.

But not so fast! Something is still missing in the inference from (A) and (C₂) to the Incoherent Consequence. Consider the antecedent of (C₂): unless Dokic and Pacherie can establish that the perceiver, not only possesses, but also deploys the demonstrative concepts $THUS_a$ and $THUS_c$ for $b$ *at the same time*, (C₂) provides no reason to think that her experience represents $b$ as having two distinct colours *simultaneously*. Here, Dokic and Pacherie seem to conflate (i) the fact that a subject possesses concepts which apply to a given object, with (ii) the fact that she might deploy these concepts while experiencing such an object.

Insofar as familiar objects are concerned, we possess a varied stock of distinct concepts for such objects. For instance, there are many ways in which to think of a red kangaroo: as a *kangaroo*, as a *marsupial*, as a *funny-looking animal*, as *Skippy*, as the kind *macropus rufus*, or just as *this*. Yet, surely, Conceptualists are not
suggesting that when one sees a kangaroo in the bush, one must identify it as falling under all the relevant concepts in one’s possession. One might perceive the kangaroo as \textit{Skippy}, though one also possesses many other concepts applicable to Skippy. Likewise, the mere fact that a sample of red falls under two DCCs doesn’t entail that a perceiver who sees such a sample must experience it as having distinct colours at the same time. Assuming that she does indeed possess both demonstrative concepts $\text{THUS}_a$ and $\text{THUS}_c$, she need not deploy them both for $b$.

At this point, Dokic and Pacherie could insist that, for Conceptualists, when a perceiver simultaneously experiences samples $a$, $b$, and $c$, she both possesses and deploys the DCCs, $\text{THUS}_a$, $\text{THUS}_b$, and $\text{THUS}_c$, at the very same time. This follows from the Conceptualists’ claim that a perceiver must deploy a concept for every object she experiences at the time. Even so, there is still a \textit{non-sequitur} in Dokic and Pacherie’s argument. Granting that the perceiver deploys the three DCCs $\text{THUS}_a$, $\text{THUS}_b$ and $\text{THUS}_c$ simultaneously, it doesn’t follow that she applies any of these concepts to \textit{more than one sample} at the time. She might simultaneously apply $\text{THUS}_a$ to $a$, $\text{THUS}_b$ to $b$, and $\text{THUS}_c$ to $c$. But in order to obtain the Incoherent Consequence, Dokic and Pacherie must further assume that she also applies, still at the same time, $\text{THUS}_a$ and $\text{THUS}_c$ to $b$. Again, though, the mere fact that $b$ falls under both $\text{THUS}_a$ and $\text{THUS}_c$ isn’t sufficient to entail that a perceiver simultaneously applies all these concepts to $b$, while also applying them to $a$ and $c$.

In fact, there is a live possibility that the perceiver is incapable to apply both $\text{THUS}_a$ and $\text{THUS}_c$ to $b$ at exactly the same time. Presumably, in order to apply the demonstrative concept $\text{THUS}_a$ to sample $b$, she must find it indiscriminable from $a$—and so with $\text{THUS}_b$ and $c$. However, it seems unlikely that samples $a$ and $b$ appear indiscriminable to her at quite the same time as samples $b$ and $c$ appear indiscriminable. That’s because $b$ may be \textit{indiscriminable} from both $a$ and $c$, but not in the same \textit{perceptual conditions}, as some have pointed out (Jackson, 1977: 113-4; Graff, 2001: 913-4; Raffman, 2000). In particular, the experiences in question seem to involve different backgrounds.

Thus, whereas $b$ is indiscriminable from $a$ with $a$—but not $c$—in its background, $b$ is indiscriminable from $c$ against the background of $c$—but not $a$. If this is correct, there is no way the combination of implication (A) with (C2) could entail the Incoherent Consequence. The problem with Dokic and Pacherie’s argument is
not only that a claim like (A) about the extension of concepts doesn’t have the phenomenological consequence they allege it to have. But Dokic and Pacherie also fail to pay attention to the conditions in which colour samples are perceived.

Note that a similar point applies to implication (A) itself. It might be that sample \( b \) cannot fall under the DCCs \( \text{THUS}_a \) and \( \text{THUS}_c \) in exactly the same conditions. Whereas (i) \( b \) falls under \( \text{THUS}_a \) in conditions where this sample is indiscriminable from \( a \), (ii) it falls under \( \text{THUS}_c \) where it is indiscriminable from \( c \). Accordingly, if \( b \) isn’t indiscriminable from both \( a \) and \( c \) in the same conditions, then (A) is true but harmless. Although a given object might fall under distinct and incompatible DCCs, it never does so in the same conditions.

2.2. Demonstrative Concepts & Attention

Now, even if implication (A) is harmless, Conceptualists still have to face the second implication:

(B) \quad \text{any given DCC has in its extension things that are discriminable in colour.}

And we have seen how problematic such an implication is. Note that the problem, here, doesn’t just concern Conceptualists. It threatens any account of DCCs—regardless of the role such concepts may play in experience.\(^\text{12}\)

There is at least one avenue open to Conceptualists to block such an implication. They could insist that \( (E^*) \) provides only a necessary condition for the extension of DCCs, not a sufficient one. As a result, neither (A) nor (B) would ensue. Even if samples \( a \) and \( c \) are indiscriminable in colour from \( b \), this would not suffice to entail that they fall under \( \text{THUS}_b \) too—likewise, \( b \) might not fall under either \( \text{THUS}_a \) or \( \text{THUS}_c \).

But what could justify such a move? Here, it is important to see that Conceptualists might in fact have independent reasons to reject \( (E^*) \) as it stands. The problem, in fact, is a general one. Despite their initial plausibility, neither \( E \) nor \( (E^*) \) will do to determine the extension of specific colour concepts. This is because the requirement of chromatic indiscriminability—even when restricted as

\(^{12}\) After all, one doesn’t have to be a Conceptualist to think it is possible to conceptualise shades of colour demonstratively. Of course, the problem is more pressing for Conceptualists, given the emphasis they lay on demonstrative concepts in their account of perceptual content.
in \((E^*)\)—fails to ensure that only objects with the very same shade fall under the same specific colour concepts.

Here is why. In the previous section, we saw how perceptual indiscriminability is sensitive to background conditions: these include what figures in the background of the indiscriminable objects, but also lighting conditions, and perhaps other factors. For instance, two distinct shades of red, though discriminable in many contexts, might become visually indiscriminable when presented against certain backgrounds, or when one of them is lit in a peculiar way (say it is shaded, or cleverly lit to disguise its difference from the other shade).\(^3\) In such contexts, \((E^*)\) entails that two distinct shades fall under the same DCC—obviously, the wrong result.

Likewise, we know that in typical cases of Intransitive Indiscriminability, samples like \(a\) and \(b\) are, by hypothesis, chromatically distinct—despite their perceptual indiscriminability. Yet, another undesirable consequence of \((E^*)\) is that such samples fall under the very same demonstrative colour concept. The problem goes further than implication (B). It’s not just that discriminable shades can fall under the same colour concept (after all, samples of the same shade can be discriminable in some contexts—this isn’t the problem). The problem is that distinct shades can fall under the same specific colour concepts.

So, it seems, \((E^*)\) must be modified in some way to avoid consequences of this kind. The question is: what else can be added to \((E^*)\) to ensure that, in such cases, demonstrative concepts for specific shades of colour don’t end up with differently coloured objects in their extension? One radical solution would call for a substantive modification of the semantics of demonstrative colour concepts, so that they stand for colour-appearances, not colours. Two objects would then fall under the same demonstrative colour-appearance concept in just those contexts in which they are indiscriminable. But, of course, this is unhelpful: demonstrative

\(^3\) For the same reason, it seems, chromatic indiscriminability tout court cannot be necessary for two things to fall under the same colour concepts. Two distinct parts of a uniformly white wall might be chromatically discriminable when one of them is shaded. In which case, \((E^*)\) entails that they don’t fall under the same concept. Perhaps, it is only necessary that instances of the same specific colour be sometimes indiscriminable, or that they’d be indiscriminable in normal conditions (i.e., conditions excluding distorting backgrounds and lighting effects).
colour concepts are supposed to be concepts of *colours*, not of colour-appearances.\footnote{Though such a solution could be of some use to Conceptualists if they were tempted by the claim that, in fact, concepts of colour-appearances—not colour-concepts—are deployed in experience.}

Another approach might restrict the conditions under which two indiscriminable shades can fall under the same demonstrative colour concept. After all, indiscriminability is dispositional: not all undiscriminated samples need to count as indiscriminable. Perhaps, one could say that two colour samples fall under the same DCC if they are chromatically indiscriminable in normal conditions. But specifying normal perceptual conditions is notoriously difficult. Is it really abnormal for a coloured object to be shaded, or to be seen at dusk in a glowing orange sunlight, or against a particular background? Yet, conditions of this kind are precisely those which make it possible for two samples of the same shade to look chromatically different.

A more promising approach, I suggest, is to keep in mind that we are here dealing with *demonstrative* concepts—concepts that are by definition highly context-sensitive. In this respect, demonstrative concepts are like disposable classificatory devices: they serve their purpose in a given context, and that’s it! Due to their context-dependence, *distinct* demonstrative concepts must be deployed in different contexts for the same objects or properties. Furthermore, demonstrative concepts are also perception-dependent. That is to say, the way in which a particular demonstrative concept is applied to a particular object depends crucially on the way in which that object is perceptually presented to the subject (in other words, the relevant contexts are perceptual scenes at a given time).

Following Gareth Evans (1982: 149, 170-5), Bill Brewer (1999: 185ff) has exploited the perception-dependence of demonstrative concepts by emphasising the role perceptual attention plays in the formation and deployment of such concepts.\footnote{This, presumably, is partly intended to address the *Differentiation Problem* (Raffman, 1995): suppose that a perceiver deploys two demonstrative concepts—expressed by her use of “this” and “that”—for two objects in her visual field. The question is: how is it that her uses of “this” and “that” express distinct concepts rather than the same one? And how is it that the concepts thus expressed lock onto the distinct particular objects that they do? The fact that the subject entertains different attentional relations with each object is supposed to provide the answer.} Roughly, on Brewer’s account, the demonstrative concepts *this* and *that* pick out
different objects—and so, are distinct—if they are associated with different “attentional relations” the subject entertains with such objects (Brewer, 1999: 172-3; 187ff). By different “attentional relations”, Brewer means that the perceiver directs her attention upon distinct objects, occupying distinct locations in her visual field. On this view, differences in the direction of attention—owing to the different spatial locations of the objects thus attended to—suffices for the subject to grasp that such objects are distinct.\footnote{The spatial information used in directing attention is also supposed to help the subject keep track of the different demonstrative colour concepts.}

If this account of the formation and application of demonstrative concepts captures something important about such concepts in general, it seems natural that perceptual attention should also play a role in the deployment of demonstrative concepts for particular shades of colour. Hence, on this view, which shade a DCC picks out in a given context is determined by which sample the subject directs her attention to when forming the concept. This is part of the context-sensitivity of DCCs: how and where the subject directs her attention is constitutive of the context. Demonstrative colour concepts, on this view, pick out shades of colour \textit{in particular contexts}, and the very same shade of colour might fall under distinct DCCs in different contexts.

The role perceptual attention plays in the deployment of demonstrative colour concepts also helps to solve the problematic cases alluded to above. It does so by restricting the application of a given DCC like \textit{this shade} to a particular sample—the one which the perceiver directs her attention to while forming such a concept. Thus, whether or not they are chromatically indiscriminable, two samples will \textit{not} fall under the same demonstrative colour concept, provided they occupy different locations in the subject’s visual field. When the samples \textit{are} in fact chromatically distinct, this account of DCCs ensures that they do not fall under the same demonstrative colour concept.

Now, Brewer’s account of the application of demonstrative concepts imposes additional constraints on (E*):

\begin{itemize}
\item [(E**)] \((\forall x) (\forall y) x \text{ and } y \text{ fall under the same demonstrative colour concept } \textit{thus}, \text{ if and only if } (i), \text{ while forming such a concept, the subject is experientially confronted with } x, \text{ so as to } (ii) \text{ direct her attention on } x, \text{ and } (iii) \text{ } y \text{ has the same}
\end{itemize}
location as \( x \) in the subject’s visual field, so that (iv), directing her attention on \( x \), she thereby attends to \( y \), and (v) \( y \) is indiscriminable in colour from \( x \).

According to (E**), even if \( x \) and \( y \) are chromatically indiscriminable—clause (v)—they may still not fall under the same DCC, unless the subject also entertains the same “attentional relation” with both samples—clauses (iii) and (iv).

Perhaps, (E**) might seem too restrictive. After all, it entails that two samples of the same shade, perceived in the same context, cannot fall under the same DCC, because of their distinct location in the subject’s visual field. But they have the same colour: shouldn’t they fall under the same DCC? Again, this is to forget the context-sensitivity of demonstrative concepts: distinct demonstrative concepts can refer to the very same shade of red in different contexts. In this respect, such DCCs apply to different instances of that shade.\(^7\) But now, the very same point is true of demonstrative colour concepts deployed for distinct samples of the same colour in the same context. The latter is a natural extension of the former, more intuitive, point.

One clear advantage of (E**) is that it can account for informative identity statements involving demonstrative colour concepts. Suppose that a subject has two samples—\( x \) and \( y \)—of the same shade in her visual field, and that she deploys the DCCs \( \text{THIS SHADE}_x \) and \( \text{THIS SHADE}_y \) for the shade of each sample. It seems possible that the subject could genuinely discover that the colour of such samples is the same. Thus, she might come to believe that \( \text{THIS SHADE}_x = \text{THIS SHADE}_y \). Presumably, the propositional content of her belief is informative, in the sense that it expresses the new information the subject has discovered. According to fregean orthodoxy, such a proposition must be of the form \( x = y \) (and not \( x = x \)) if it is to be informative. In which case, the two concepts \( \text{THIS SHADE}_x \) and \( \text{THIS SHADE}_y \) must be distinct, even though they refer to the same colour. According to (E**),

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\(^7\) A metaphysical caveat. Note that (E**) is metaphysically neutral. It is compatible with claims that demonstrative colour concepts pick out (i) tropes or property-instances, or (iii) universals (insofar as they pick out universals in a particular context, and as instantiated by a particular object at a given location).
such DCCs are distinct, because they apply to distinct samples of the shade in question.  

Back to our initial problem: if Conceptualists endorse (E**), they have the means to resist implications (A) and (B). Given the more stringent conditions on the extension of demonstrative colour concepts in (E**), there is no guarantee that, in Dokic and Pacherie’s example, samples a and b—or b and c—fall under the same DCC. Thus, just because they are chromatically indiscernible. Insofar as these samples have even a slightly distinct location in the perceiver’s visual field, they require a different direction of attention on her part. And so, they fall under distinct demonstrative colour concepts. This, it seems, is sufficient to block the entailment of implications (A) and (B).

Wrapping up: I have tried to show how Dokic and Pacherie’s Phenomenological Objection could be answered on the Conceptualists’ behalf. Such an objection unwarrantedly presupposes a certain number of claims, which Conceptualists may not accept. For one thing, even if a perceiver possesses more than one concept applicable to a particular object, it doesn’t generally follow that she deploys all these concepts whenever she has an experience of the object in question. For another, it seems that Conceptualists have the resources to resist implications (A) and (B): demonstrative colour concepts aren’t just like any colour concepts. Their context-dependence permits an alternative account—one which is available not just to Conceptualists, but to anyone facing the problems raised by implications (A) and (B).

3. The Representational Objection
I now turn Dokic and Pacherie’s second argument (2001: 196–7) against the Demonstrative Strategy. The argument is supposed to establish that DCCs are in fact too fine-grained to appropriately capture—or ‘match’—the fineness of grain of experience. To this extent, the Conceptualists’ Demonstrative Strategy is representationally inadequate, the argument concludes.

This time, Dokic and Pacherie draw upon what they deem a “plausible” criterion of conceptual difference, according to which two concepts are distinct if

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18 Likewise, (E**) can account for the logical form of propositions expressed by sentences like “this shade of red is to the left of that shade of red”.

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the subject “can rationally adopt different epistemic attitudes towards thoughts containing them” (2001: 196). Applied to DCCs, this ‘fregean’ Criterion reads:

(CD) \( \text{THUS}_a \) and \( \text{THUS}_b \) are distinct concepts if it is possible for a rational subject \( S \) to believe that everything which is \( \text{THUS}_a \) is \( \text{THUS}_a \), while not believing that everything that is \( \text{THUS}_b \) is \( \text{THUS}_b \).

The argument also exploits what Dokic and Pacherie regard as a natural assumption about colour experiences and colour concepts. The assumption can be rendered in terms of two conditionals. The first conditional makes a claim about the phenomenology of colour experience:

(i) if a subject \( S \) experiences two chromatically identical samples \( a_i \) and \( a_j \), her experience of the samples is such that they “seem to be coloured exactly alike” (Dokic and Pacherie, 2001: 197).

In other words, the same shade of colour should give rise to phenomenologically identical experiences, insofar as colour experience is concerned. The second—and more crucial—conditional concerns the DCCs the subject deploys for these two samples on the basis of such an experience:

(ii) If \( a_i \) and \( a_j \) appear chromatically the same and \( S \) deploys the DCCs \( \text{THUS}_{a_i} \) and \( \text{THUS}_{a_j} \) for each sample, it is “natural to suppose that the DCCs grounded on the perception of these samples are the same” (ibid.).

In short: same phenomenology of colour experience, same colour concept.

Together, (i) and (ii) entail that chromatically identical samples ought to fall under the same demonstrative colour concept.

But, the argument goes:

[...], it seems always possible for a rational subject to believe that everything which is \( \text{thus}_{a_i} \) is \( \text{thus}_{a_i} \), while doubting whether everything which is \( \text{thus}_{a_i} \) is \( \text{thus}_{a_i} \). For all she knows on the basis of perceptual appearance, there might be a sample that is indistinguishable from \( a_i \) but discriminable from \( a_i \). Such a sample would fall under \( \text{thus}_{a_i} \) but not under \( \text{thus}_{a_i} \). This is a coherent epistemic possibility, which implies, according to the Criterion, that ‘\( \text{thus}_{a_i} \)’ and ‘\( \text{thus}_{a_i} \)’ express different concepts (in this context). (Dokic & Pacherie, 2001: 197)

That is, if \( S \) can coherently entertain the thought that there is a third sample indistinguishable from \( a_i \) but not \( a_i \), then, according to (CD), the DCCs \( S \) deploys
for these samples aren’t identical. Yet, this directly contradicts the second conditional (ii) of Dokic and Pacherie’s natural assumption.

The argument continues:

If we accept the Criterion of Difference for concepts, then, it seems impossible to grasp the same DCC through the perception of numerically distinct objects that look exactly the same as far as their most specific colour is concerned. In fact, there is an infinite number of DCCs for a given shade, since they are necessarily tied to particular samples. So either conceptualists admit that there are conceptual differences in the contents of perception which do not correspond to any phenomenological differences, or they slice the phenomenal world too finely. (Dokic & Pacherie, 2001: 197)

To paraphrase briefly, the thought appears to be that, given (CD), the possibility described above entails that DCCs can be deployed only once, for just one sample, and not repeatedly across different perceptual encounters (of different samples) of the same shade.²⁰

On this ground, Dokic and Pacherie conclude, Conceptualists have to face the following dilemma. Either (a) they must reject the second conditional (ii) of the natural assumption. In which case, they are led to the view that “there are conceptual differences in the contents of perception which do not correspond to any phenomenological differences” (ibid.). Or, (b) Conceptualists must argue that the phenomenology of experience is more complex than it might at first seem, so that an experience of the colour of \( a_1 \) and \( a_2 \) can in fact differ phenomenologically—contra the first conditional (i) of the natural assumption. According to Dokic and Pacherie, neither option is “intrinsically plausible” (ibid.).

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²⁰ A similar consequence follows from (E**) above (§2.2), as we have seen. Against this, Dokic and Pacherie also argue that, as a result, Conceptualists cannot account for the “common experience of perceiving internal relations between different shades presented at a given time (for instance, perceiving that two samples have exactly the same shade)” (ibid.). But there is no reason to think that perception of an internal relation between two samples requires that the samples are subsumed under the same concept, as Dokic and Pacherie seem to assume. Again, the representational content of an experience of such an internal relation might have the form \( a = b \)—in which case, the concepts on each side of the identity sign must be distinct.
On the contrary, I shall suggest that Conceptualists have good reasons to embrace either option. For the sake of argument, I shall grant to Dokic and Pacherie that Conceptualists do endorse (CD), and that they are indeed committed to the view that DCCs are “tied to particular samples.” Even so, I argue that both options are plausible, once certain assumptions behind Dokic and Pacherie’s argument are seen for what they really are.

3.1. The First Horn of the Dilemma
Suppose, for the sake of argument, that the first conditional (i) of Dokic and Pacherie’s natural assumption is correct, so that samples $a_1$ and $a_2$—due to their having the same shade—do indeed look the same, in the sense that visual presentations of the shade of these samples are phenomenologically identical. Yet, (CD) entails that the DCCs $\text{THUS}_1$ and $\text{THUS}_2$ are distinct, according to Dokic and Pacherie’s argument. It follows that there is a mismatch between the phenomenology of experience and the concepts the subject deploys in that experience—same phenomenology, but different concepts. Why should this be a problem for the advocates of Conceptualism? Obviously, it will be, if they assume that a perceiver must deploy the same DCCs for samples she experiences in the same way (with the same phenomenology)—conditional (ii) in Dokic and Pacherie’s natural assumption. But why should they assume that?

Presumably, the second conditional (ii) of Dokic and Pacherie’s natural assumption rests on the idea that there is some sort of connection between the phenomenology of experience and its representational—or conceptual—content. In the literature on the phenomenal character of experience, one can find at least two putative connections of this kind. Both can be phrased in terms of a supervenience thesis, according to which a variation in one dimension of experience is necessarily correlated with a variation in the other dimension:

(INT) for any phenomenological difference, there must be a difference in the representational content of experience.

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21 It is worth point out that Dokic and Pacherie—not Conceptualists—introduce (CD) as a plausible criterion. Throughout the argument, they assume (without any explicit reason) that Conceptualists do endorse such a criterion.
(PDC) for any representational difference, there must be a difference in the phenomenology of experience.  

It is the second thesis, which seems to support conditional (ii) in Dokic and Pacherie’s natural assumption. Thus, conditional (i) has it that visual presentations of the colour of samples \(a_1\) and \(a_2\) are phenomenologically identical. Given (PDC), it follows by modus tollens that an experience of such samples ought to represent their colour in the same way, not differently. Add the conceptualist thesis (C₂):

\[(C₂) \text{ if a perceiver } S \text{ (i) possesses and (ii) deploys distinct concepts } C_1 \text{ and } C_2 \text{ for two features } f_1 \text{ and } f_2 \text{ presented in experience, these features are represented as different.}\]

And the second conditional (ii) of the natural assumption ensues—again, by modus tollens: if \(a_1\) and \(a_2\) seem (phenomenologically speaking) chromatically identical, and are represented as being so, the perceiver should be deploying the same DCC for both.

Conceptualists, it seems, cannot account for this sameness in content. Since, by (CD), \(\text{THUS}_a\) and \(\text{THUS}_{a_2}\) are distinct, (C₂) entails that the perceiver’s experience of \(a_1\) and \(a_2\) must represent their colour differently. And so, they must reject the second conditional (ii). Conceptualists are thus committed to a mismatch between the phenomenology of colour experience and the concepts the perceiver deploys for such shades. This is what Dokic and Pacherie find implausible in this first option, I suppose.

But why think that (PDC) is true, let alone that Conceptualists should endorse it? Admittedly, Conceptualists like McDowell and Brewer sometimes say things like “all phenomenology is a matter of the mode of presentation of certain states of affairs to a person” (Brewer, 1999: 156; and also McDowell, 1998: 441). But, if anything, this sounds very much like a statement of (INT), according to which the

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22 Whereas (INT) captures the Intentionalist Thesis that the phenomenal character of experience supervenes upon (and is determined by) the representational content of experience, (PDC) renders the converse—and more controversial—claim that the content of experience is itself determined by phenomenology. Both claims can be interpreted to range over different experiences (of different subjects), as well as covering phenomenological and representational differences within a single experience of a given subject. For recent discussions: see, for instance, Byrne (2001), Chalmers (2004), Siewert (1998), Tye (1995, 2000), as well as some of the essays in Villanueva (1996) and Jokic & Smith (2003).
phenomenology of experience is determined by (and supervenes upon) what the experience represents, and the way in which it is represented. On such a view, differences in phenomenology necessarily come with differences in content, but not vice versa. Phenomenology can be ‘multiply realised’, as it were, such that experiences with the same phenomenology may or may not have the same content.

In fact, Conceptualists might have independent reasons not to commit themselves to (PDC). Here is one: imagine two perceivers with different cultural backgrounds who, as a result of their cultural differences, possess distinct concepts for kangaroos: kangaroo and schkangaroo. Suppose further that both subjects are visually presented with the same kangaroo in exactly the same conditions. If Conceptualism is true, it seems reasonable to assume that each subject will deploy her own distinct concept in her own experience of the kangaroo. After all, we can assume, each subject will perceptually identify the marsupial in terms of her respective concept. And this means, given the conceptualist thesis (C₂), that the representational content of their respective experiences must differ. In turn, (PDC) entails that the phenomenology of their experiences is different too.

This consequence seems extreme, since both perceivers experience the same kangaroo in the same conditions. A natural assumption about the phenomenology of experience is that it has to do with the subject’s physiology, together with her environment. Thus, assuming that the two perceivers are physiologically alike in all crucial respects, it seems plausible that the phenomenology of their respective experience of the kangaroo ought to be the same. Yet, Conceptualists are forced to deny this point, if they endorse (PDC).

This example would put Conceptualists in a quandary, as they would be committed to incompatible claims. Some of these claims, of course, rely on pre-theoretical intuitions about the phenomenology of experience (and Conceptualists might well reject them). Others are clearly endorsed by Conceptualists. And then, there is (PDC). In any case, examples of this sort seem to supply Conceptualists with some motivation for not endorsing (PDC). The point here isn’t that (PDC) is false, only that Conceptualists might have reasons not to accept such a claim—whatever position they ultimately adopt on this issue.²³

²³ They could of course reject the phenomenal intuition: compare Brewer (1999: 174). Alternatively, they might reject (C₂).
Without (PDC), experiences of identically coloured samples which are phenomenologically identical might nonetheless have a different conceptual—and hence, representational—content. In which case, the denial of Dokic and Pacherie’s second conditional (ii) is not as implausible as they suggest—at least, not from a conceptualist perspective. In any event, this part of Dokic and Pacherie’s argument appears to exploit a particularly controversial theoretical commitment about the phenomenology of experience—one which Dokic and Pacherie do not even try to justify, let alone pin on the advocates of Conceptualism. Therefore, their criticism of Conceptualism on this point seems unwarranted.

3.2. The Second Horn
The second horn of Dokic and Pacherie’s dilemma, recall, concerns the first conditional (i) of the natural assumption: the idea that samples of the same shade must give rise to phenomenologically identical experiences. Conceptualists, the argument goes, must reject such an assumption. Here is how Dokic and Pacherie seem to reason.

Let’s assume—again, for the sake of argument—that Conceptualists in fact accept (PDC). Dokic and Pacherie’s conclusion that the DCCs THUS, and THUS_2 are distinct concepts, when combined with (C_2), entails that the subject’s experience of a₁ and a₂ represents these two samples differently. (PDC) then forces Conceptualists to acknowledge that visual presentations of a₁ and a₂ ought to be phenomenologically distinct. And this contradicts conditional (i) of Dokic and Pacherie’s natural assumption—namely, that an experience of two chromatically identical samples presents their colour in a way that is phenomenologically identical. I suppose that this is what Dokic and Pacherie have in mind, when they say that Conceptualists are forced to “slice the phenomenal world too finely” (ibid.). In other words, Conceptualists must find phenomenal differences where, according to Dokic and Pacherie, there are none.

But are there really no such phenomenological differences? In fact, it looks as though Dokic and Pacherie’s first conditional (i) ignores the phenomenological complexity of colour experiences. For consider the case of a uniformly white wall with one of its parts in the sunlight (looking orange) and another in the shade (looking grey). The two parts of the wall look different: a visual presentation of one
part of the wall differs phenomenologically from the presentation of the other part, and does so in a way that seems chromatically significant. Still, by hypothesis, both parts have the same shade of white. A similar phenomenon occurs when a uniformly grey rectangle is seen against different backgrounds, as in the familiar figure below:

![Rectangle Figure]

Due to such different backgrounds, the small grey rectangle looks different (brighter on the right, where the background is darker). These are familiar colour-contrast effects.

Likewise, $a_1$ and $a_2$ might be perceived in different lighting conditions, or against different backgrounds, so that visual presentations of these two samples might differ phenomenologically, if only slightly—contra the first conditional (i). The point is that the mere fact that samples $a_1$ and $a_2$ have the very same colour isn’t sufficient to ensure that experiences of their colour will be phenomenologically identical—though, in some contexts, they might well be. And even in those contexts where the two samples can be experienced in exactly the same conditions (same lighting and background, etc.), there are further phenomenological differences to be taken into account.

For one thing, samples $a_1$ and $a_2$ occupy different locations in the perceiver’s visual field. And surely, spatial differences are phenomenologically salient. Thus, insofar as the phenomenology of the whole experience is concerned, the two samples $a_1$ and $a_2$ are likely to be perceived in a way that is phenomenologically (and representationally) distinct. Yet, Dokić and Pacherie’s argument seems to abstract away from the phenomenology of the whole experience, and focus solely

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24 Conceptualists can thus retain a perfect match between the phenomenology of experiences of colour samples like $a_1$ and $a_2$, and the demonstrative colour concepts a subject deploys for such samples. Recall how demonstrative colour concepts, on the account put forward in (§2.2), will be sensitive, not just to the way in which the colour of these samples appear, but also to the broader phenomenological differences in the experience of such samples.
upon the actual colour of such samples. This seems to be a mistake: like (INT), (PDC) is sensitive only to the phenomenology of the whole experience—its contrapositive, for instance, requires that experiences with no phenomenological difference of any kind are representationally the same.

Wrapping up: Again, Dokic and Pacherie’s “Representational Objection” seems unwarranted, since it relies on additional assumptions like (PDC), which Conceptualists might rightly deny. This takes care of the first horn of the dilemma. And as I’ve tried to suggest, there are reasons to think that the phenomenology of colour experience is more complex than Dokic and Pacherie would like to think—in which case the second horn is unproblematic too.

4. Conclusion
The Intransitivity of Indiscriminability, I have argued, poses no threat to Conceptualism. In particular, Dokic and Pacherie’s Phenomenological and Representational objections don’t withstand careful scrutiny. Once the individuation-conditions of demonstrative colour concepts are properly laid down, no version of Peacocke’s objection succeeds to undermine the role such concepts play on the Conceptualists’ account of perceptual experience.  

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