IMAGINATION AND PERCEPTION

by

I.A. Bunting

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Australian National University

May, 1969
CHAPTER 1

IMAGINING AND PERCEIVING

I

My purpose in this thesis is to outline, and to examine, an influential doctrine of the nature of imagination, which is held by writers from at least two philosophical schools. This doctrine normally stems from the attacks made by its supporters on what they call image-theories of imagination. Image-theories of imagination assert that to imagine anything is to be aware of a private mental object (an image), which exists in its own right, which has its own properties and characteristics, and which can, as a result, be distinguished as a separate existent from the thing of which it is an image.

According to the doctrine I am examining, the basic mistake in image-theories of imagination is a metaphysical one. Image-theories, supporters of this doctrine argue, imply a "two-world" metaphysic - i.e. a metaphysic in which there is a "world of objects of imagination" as well as a "world of objects of perception". Because of this metaphysical notion, image-theories mistakenly postulate (a) that imagining is a form of perceiving a private mental object, and (b) that imagining
can, as a result, be distinguished from perceiving only by reference to the objects which these activities take.

Since there are, the critics of image-theories maintain, no objects other than existing public perceptual objects, acts of imagining can take only perceptual objects as objects. Imagining cannot, as is supposed in image-theories, be construed as a perceiving of a private mental object. A further important part of image-theories is mistaken. Since they take the same objects, imagining and perceiving must be two mutually exclusive activities, which are to be distinguished by reference to these activities themselves. No imagining can, therefore, be a perceiving.

The heart of the doctrine I am examining is this assertion that no imagining can be a perceiving. Its supporters maintain, however, that image-theories of imagination are correct in at least one respect. Because acts of imagining involve suspended, or negated, or false forms of the beliefs typically involved in perceiving, image-theories are correct in contending that imagining has close logical links with perceiving.

This doctrine of imagination has, therefore, a number of broad identifying marks. Its supporters, in rejecting image-theories of imagination, argue (1) that there can be no objects other than the objects of perception, (2) that no imagining can be a perceiving, and (3) that imagining has, nevertheless, close logical links with perceiving.
I will argue that Sartre and Ryle are the main contemporary proponents of this doctrine of imagination. Their accounts of imagination will provide the main source material for my outline, and examination, of this doctrine of imagination. Although I am, in this way, linking Sartre and Ryle together, I am not suggesting that their analyses of imagination are identical, or even similar in detail. I have linked them together for a number of reasons. Firstly, Sartre's problem is basically the same as Ryle's — viz., that of countering image-theories of imagination. Secondly, they make, in their analyses of imagination, similar broad philosophical claims about imagination and perception, and have in common certain broad assumptions about what is involved in acts of imagination.

II

Sartre says that the main aim of his analysis of imagination is to reject the "naive metaphysics of the image." This "naive metaphysics" is, he says, presupposed

1. My main texts will be:
   Imagination, Ann Arbor, 1962

2. Imagination, p.4
by a number of claims which are commonly made about imagining and the having of images.\(^1\)

1. It is often claimed that an image is inherently like the material thing it represents.\(^2\)

   The sheet of paper 'as image' is endowed with the same properties as the sheet of paper 'in person': inert, it no longer exists solely for consciousness, but exists in itself, appearing and disappearing of its own accord rather than at the beck and call of consciousness. When no longer perceived, it does not cease to exist, leading instead a thinglike existence outside consciousness.\(^3\)

2. The image is "an individual psychic content capable of assisting thought but also subject to its own laws".\(^4\)

   Since Sartre is opposed to both these claims, it is evident that what he wishes to reject are arguments to the effect that in imagining, and then later perceiving, a particular object, we are conscious first of a thing of one kind, and then of a thing of another kind. His basic objection is that such arguments mistakenly claim

---

1. I will not always distinguish between imagining and the having of images. Sartre argues that having an image of x and imagining x (or imagining that x) are both examples of imaginative acts of consciousness. Ryle argues that imaging (the having of images) is a species of imagining. So when I speak about "imagining" in this thesis, I will, generally, be referring to what writers like Sartre and Ryle take to be imaginings - i.e. to imagings as well as to make-believing and mistaken-believing.

2. The Psychology of Imagination, p.6

3. Imagination, p.4

4. Ibid, p.76
that there can be objects other than the objects of
perception. Sartre contends that imagining and
perceiving cannot be distinguished by reference to the
objects at which these activities are directed.

The mental image cannot be studied by
itself. There is not a world of images
and a world of objects. Every object,
whether it is present as an external
perception or appears to intimate sense,
can function as a present reality or as
an image, depending on what center of
reference has been chosen. The two
worlds, real and imaginary, are composed
of the same objects: only the grouping
and interpretation of these objects varies.
What defines the imaginary world and also
the world of the real is an attitude of
consciousness.  

Because imagining and perceiving are no more
than different modes in which we can be conscious of the
same objects the term "image", continues Sartre, cannot
be used to refer to an object of consciousness. It can
only be used to describe an attitude of consciousness.
The term "image" can

only indicate the relation of
consciousness to the object; in other
words, it means a certain manner in
which the object makes its appearance
to consciousness, or, if one prefers,
a certain way in which consciousness
presents an object to itself. The
fact of the matter is that the expression
'mental image' is confusing. It would
be better to say 'the consciousness of
Peter as an image' or 'the imaginative
consciousness of Peter'.

1. The Psychology of Imagination, p. 27
2. Ibid, p. 8
To Sartre, then, any statement to the effect that I have an image of Peter, or am imagining Peter, reports only the mode in which I am conscious of the actual Peter - i.e. the physical object. "The imaginative consciousness I have of Peter", he says, "is not a consciousness of the image of Peter: Peter is directly reached, my attention is not directed on an image, but on an object."¹ Such acts of imaginative consciousness, he argues further, also include an act of belief, or a positional act, which is "constitutive of the consciousness of the image".² This act can assume four forms and no more: it can posit the object as non-existent, or as absent, or as existing elsewhere; it can also 'neutralise' itself, that is, not posit its object as existing. ³

On Sartre's analysis, therefore, my statement "I am imagining Peter" has at least two important implications. Firstly, it implies that my act of consciousness is directed only at the real Peter and not at any private mental object such as an image. Secondly, since this act of imaginative consciousness is constituted either by an act of belief that Peter is non-existent, or absent, or existing elsewhere, or by an act of belief that does not posit the existence or non-existence of Peter, my statement also implies that Peter is not perceptually present to me. But, according to Sartre, "to say 'I have an image of Peter' is equivalent

1. loc.cit.
2. Ibid, p.16
3. loc.cit.
to saying not only 'I do not see Peter', but also 'I see nothing at all'". In other words, if any act of consciousness is described truly as "imagining Peter" (or "having an image of Peter"), we cannot at the same time say truly that this act of consciousness is (in any sense) perceptual.

The act of imagination, Sartre argues further, "is an incantation destined to produce the object of one's thought, the thing one desires, in a manner that one can take possession of it". The way in which we take possession of the object of any act of imagination is to make it appear - i.e., to make the object become present to us as if it were an object of perception. From this a vital point in Sartre's analysis follows. Even though he has argued that imagining and perceiving are two mutually exclusive activities, he maintains that if "we think imaginatively of some individual objects it will be these objects themselves that will appear to our consciousness. They will appear as they are, that is as spatial entities with determinations of form, color, etc". For example, the point of my conjuring up an image of Peter is that of trying to perceive Peter; of trying to make the real Peter appear to me as a spatial entity with his normal perceptual characteristics.

The importance of this can be brought out in another way. On Sartre's analysis, when I say that I am imagining Peter, I imply that Peter is in fact

1. Ibid, p.17; Cf also Ibid, p.179ff
2. Ibid, p.177
3. Ibid, pp.23, 25
4. Ibid, p.160
elsewhere, or more simply that he is absent. I imply, therefore, that I do not believe that Peter is present as an object of perception. This positing of absence or non-existence, which is an act constitutive of the act of imaginative consciousness, can occur, Sartre contends, only on the level of "quasi-observation"—i.e. only on the level at which we assume the attitude of observers. For it "is only in the realm of sensible intuition that the words 'absent', 'far from me', can have a meaning; it is only in this realm in which the idea of 'not having taken place' can occur."

A further vital point in Sartre's analysis now follows. He has argued above that the purpose of an act of imagination is to make an absent or non-existent object perceptually present, even though that object cannot itself at the time be brought before the subject as an object of perception. Since imagining, he now continues, is an intentional activity—i.e. since acts of imaginative consciousness must always be directed at some object, when I imagine anything, I must always have recourse to something perceptually present which can act as an analogue or equivalent of the absent or non-existent object. For example, when I try to

1. Ibid, p.16. Sartre expresses the "full principle of quasi-observation" as the claim that the image can teach us nothing. It contains nothing that we did not put in it, and thus nothing that we did not already know (Cf Ibid, p.13)
2. Ibid, p.13
3. Ibid, p.17
4. Ibid, p.23. This is true only because, to Sartre, all cases of imagining (whether dreams, hallucinations, hypnagogic images, make-believing) must be purposive.
imagine, or to conjure up an image of, my absent friend Peter,

I want the face of Peter to appear as a perception. I want 'to make him present' to me. And as I cannot bring him before me directly as a perception I have recourse to a certain material which acts as an analogue, as an equivalent, of the perception.¹

Reference to the analogue, Sartre argues, is the only way in which we can distinguish between the various ways in which an object may be imagined. I may, for example, imagine Peter by conjuring up a mental image of him, or by looking at a photograph or caricature.² These three cases are, he contends, "strictly parallel. They are three situations with the same form, but in which the material varies".³

The purpose of all three is the same: to make an object 'appear'. That object is not before us, and we know it is not. We thus find, in the first place, an intention directed on an absent object. But this intention is not empty, it is not directed on any content whatsoever, but on one which is to present some analogue to the object in question.⁴

Because of this, Sartre takes the crucial problem for any analysis of imagination to be that of identifying the analogue of acts of imagination - that content which is to stand for or represent the absent or non-existent object of the act.⁵

¹ loc.cit.
² Ibid, pp. 22-3
³ Ibid, p. 24
⁴ Ibid, pp. 25-6
⁵ loc.cit.
He argues further that an attempt to identify the analogue can begin with a consideration of the ways in which we imagine absent or non-existent objects. The analogue of any act of imagination must, he maintains, satisfy a vital condition. It must always be something which we do, or can, perceive at the time of the imagining - i.e. it must be something which is not just a constituting element of the imaginative consciousness. The formation, he argues, "of an imaginative consciousness is accompanied, ---, by an annihilation of a perceptual consciousness, and vice versa".

This condition, claims Sartre, is easily satisfied by the analogues of most acts of imagining. For example, I can imagine my friend Peter by looking at a photograph, caricature, portrait, or spot-on-wall, and each of these things is an object for consciousness. In the same way, he continues, entoptic lights (the analogue in hypnagogic visions) are things of which I can say truly "I am perceiving them".

The analogue of the mental image must satisfy the same condition. But, says Sartre,

1. Ibid, pp. 75-6
2. Ibid, pp. 171-2
3. Ibid, Chapter 2
4. Ibid, pp. 75-6
5. loc.cit.
6. Ibid, p.76
here we meet with a great difficulty: in the cases we have previously described, when the truly imaginative consciousness wanes, there remains a sensible residue which is describable; namely the painted canvas or the spot on the wall. In repeating certain movements or in permitting the lines and the colors of the painting to act upon us, we could at least reconstruct 'the analogue' without too much trouble, from this sensible residue, and do so without actually forming the imaginative consciousness over again. The material of my imaginative consciousness of the portrait was obviously this painted canvas. It must be admitted that reflective description does not tell us directly anything concerning the representative material of the mental image. This is due to the fact that when the imaginative consciousness is destroyed its transcendent content is destroyed with it; no describable residue remains, we are confronted by another synthetic consciousness which has nothing in common with the first. 

This problem, argues Sartre, forces us to "leave the sure ground of phenomenological description and turn to experimental psychology". Since we cannot discover an obvious analogue in cases of having mental images, the only way in which we could identify the perceptually present analogue, which must be involved in these cases of imaginative consciousness, would be to form "hypotheses and seek evidences in observation and experiment, just as is done in the experimental sciences". 

1. Ibid, pp. 76-7
2. Ibid, p. 77
3. loc.cit.
An examination of these results will reveal, he contends, that the perceptually present analogue of the mental image is basically a kinaesthetic impression. Since such impressions are transcendent objects - i.e., objects which we can and do perceive, they also satisfy the condition which must be met by the analogue of any act of imaginative consciousness.

Thus, Sartre's contention is that there is, in all cases of imagining an x, an object y which serves as a perceptually present analogue or equivalent of the absent or non-existent x. This object y must be something which I can, and do, perceive at the time of the imagining, and, thus, must be something "outside" consciousness - i.e. it must be either an external object or a transcendent object. When the analogue y is an external thing - e.g. a photograph or portrait, it may, in a sense, function as an image in itself. But y cannot exercise that function without an intention which interprets it as an analogue of something else. When it is perceived a photograph is nothing but a rectangle of paper with specific

1. Ibid, pp. 104-119
2. Ibid, pp. 8, 13, 131-2; Imagination, pp. vi, 1
3. Sartre makes a clear distinction between transcendent and external objects. Both are properly objects for consciousness - i.e. objects which are constituting elements of the imaginative consciousness, and which we can, and do, perceive. An external object is a material thing - such as photographs and spots on walls. A transcendent object is a "mental content" - such as feelings and kinaesthetic impressions. (Of The Psychology of Imagination, p. 76)
4. Ibid, p. 24
These statements can be accepted in the same way.

But even though the assertion that no impression can be a form of perception, no form of the impression is the actual event in the perception of the present sensation. However, it is not necessary to know the event of the perception is the event of the present sensation. It is only necessary to have an impression of the event of the perception as in other words, to see the direct impression of the event of the present sensation. Therefore, to believe in the present event of the perception is the event of the present perception as in other words, to see the direct impression of the event of the present sensation.

**********
perceiving, his arguments that the purpose of imagining anything is to make that object sensibly present, that vital parts of statements reporting acts of imagining have meaning only if reference is made to perceptual contexts, and that acts of imaginative consciousness are constituted by suspended or negated forms of the belief that what is imagined is perceptually present, commit him to the claim that there must still be close logical links between imagining and perceiving.

Thus, on Sartre's analysis, if it is to be true that I am imagining Peter, then (a) the statement "Peter can be perceived" must be true - i.e. Peter must be something which I could perceive if he were present or if he existed, and (b) I must either (i) believe that it is not the case that Peter is perceptually present or (ii) have no beliefs as to whether or not Peter is present.1

III

Ryle argues that we must make a distinction between perceiving and 'perceiving'. We normally say, he maintains, that we see trees and hear music, and that we 'see' and 'hear' the objects of imagination. For example, the "victim of delirium tremens is described by others, not as seeing snakes, but as 'seeing' snakes".2

2. The Concept of Mind, p. 246
This difference of idiom is reinforced by another. A person who says that he 'sees' the home of his childhood is often prepared to describe his vision as 'vivid', 'faithful' or 'lifelike', adjectives which he would never apply to the sight of what is in front of his nose. For while a doll can be called 'lifelike', a child cannot; or while a portrait of a face may be faithful, the face cannot be any such thing. In other words, when a person says that he 'sees' something which he is not seeing, he knows that what he is doing is something which is totally different in kind from seeing, just because the verb is inside inverted commas and the vision can be described as more or less faithful, or vivid. He may say 'I might be there now', but the word 'might' is suitable just because it declares that he is not there now. The fact that in certain conditions he fails to realise that he is not seeing, but only 'seeing', as in dreams, delirium, extreme thirst, hypnosis and conjuring-shows, does not in any degree tend to obliterate the distinction between the concept of seeing and that of 'seeing'... 1

Consider some further examples. The conjuror, says Ryle, "makes us 'see' (not see) rabbits coming out of the hat in his hand on the stage in front of our noses; he does not induce us to see (not 'see') shadow-rabbits coming out of a second spectral hat, which is not in his hand, but in a space of another kind". 2 "If a person who has recently been in a burning house reports that he

1. loc. cit.
2. Ibid, p. 248
can still 'smell' the smoke, he does not think that the
house in which he reports it is itself on fire. However
vividly he 'smells' the smoke, he knows that he smells
none ..."1 It is clear, Ryle maintains, "that to 'smell'
does not entail smelling and therefore that imaging is not
perceiving a likeness, since it is not perceiving at all".2

Ryle declares that the purpose of his analysis
of imagination is
to show that the concept of picturing,
visualising or 'seeing' is a proper and
useful concept, but that its use does
not entail the existence of pictures
which we contemplate or the existence of
a gallery in which such pictures are
ephemerally suspended. Roughly, imaging
occurs, but images are not seen.3

A crucial part of Ryle's analysis of imagination,
therefore, also is the assertion that image-theories of
imagination mistakenly postulate a "two-world" metaphysics.
He argues, like Sartre, that it is not true that imagining
and perceiving can be distinguished only by reference to
the objects at which these activities are directed. Any
attempt to distinguish them in this way implies mistakenly
that imagined sights and sounds are seeings and hearings
of some private mental object.

1. Ibid, p. 253
2. loc.cit.
3. Ibid, p. 247
As mock murders are not murders, so imagined sights and sounds are not sights or sounds. They are not, therefore, dim sights, or faint sounds. And they are not private sights or sounds either. There is no answer to the spurious question, 'Where have you deposited the victim of your mock murder?' since there was no victim. There is no answer to the spurious question, 'Where do the objects reside that we fancy we see?' since there are no such objects.

If, continues Ryle, someone does argue that reports of, for example, my having a tune running through my head are statements about my hearing something, then that person commits the error of trying to "convert into species concepts concepts which are designed, anyhow partly, to act as factual disclaimers". He argues further that:

To say that an action is a mock-murder is to say, not that a certain sort of mild or faint murder has been committed, but that no sort of murder has been committed; and to say that someone pictures a dragon is to say, not that he dimly sees a dragon of a peculiar kind, or something else very like a dragon, but that he does not see a dragon, or anything dragon-like at all.

We may begin an analysis of the exercises of imagination called "'perceiving'", says Ryle, by a consideration of the notion of pretending. Pretending, he argues, is partly constitutive of such notions as those of cheating, acting a part,
playing bears, shamming sick and hypochondria. It will be noticed
that in some varieties of make-believe,
the pretender is deliberately simulating
or dissimulating, in some varieties he
may not be quite sure to what extent,
if any, he is simulating or dissimulating,
and in other varieties he is completely
taken in by his own acting ... Make-believe
is compatible with all degrees of scepticism
and credulity ... The fact that people
can fancy that they see things, are pursued
by bears, or have a grumbling appendix,
without realising that it is nothing but
fancy, is simply a part of the unsurprising
general fact that not all people are, all
the time, at all ages and in all conditions,
as judicious or critical as could be wished.

To describe someone as pretending is
to say that he is playing a part, and to
play a part is to play the part, normally,
of someone who is not playing a part, but
doing or being something ingeniously or
naturally.

Ryle argues that he is concerned only with a
special kind of make-believe.

There is not much difference between
a child playing at being a pirate, and
one fancying that he is a pirate. So
far as there is a difference, it seems
to come to this, that we use words like
'play', 'pretend' and 'act the part',
when we think of spectators finding the
performance more or less convincing;
whereas we use words like 'fancy' and
'Imagine' when we are thinking of the
actor himself being half-convincing; and
we use words like 'play' and 'pretend'
for deliberate, concerted and rehearsed

1. Ibid, pp. 258-9
associated performances, whereas we are more ready to use words like 'fancy' and 'imagine' for those activities of make-believe into which people casually and even involuntarily drift. Underlying these two differences there is, perhaps, this more radical difference, that we apply the words 'pretend' and 'act the part', where an overt and muscular representation is given of whatever deed or condition is being put on, while we tend, with plenty of exceptions, to reserve 'imagine' and 'fancy' for some things that people do insaudibly and invisibly because 'in their heads', i.e. for their fancied perceptions and not for their mock-actions. It is with this special brand of make-believe that we are here chiefly concerned, namely what we call 'imaging', 'visualising', 'seeing in the mind's eye' and 'going through in one's head'.

There are, Ryle contends, two major problems associated with an analysis of these forms of make-believe. The first is to show that these 'perceivings' are not perceivings of some private mental object. This, he claims, his earlier argument has already established. The second problem is to show that these 'perceivings' (e.g. the having of a tune running through one's head) are not functions of sentience.2

We can admit, Ryle argues, that someone who has a tune running through his head is

1. Ibid, p. 264
2. Ibid, p. 265
using his knowledge of how the tune goes; he is in a certain way realising what he would be hearing, if he were listening to the tune being played. Somewhat as the boxer, when sparring, is hitting and parrying in a hypothetical manner, so the person with a tune running in his head may be described as following the tune in a hypothetical manner.\(^1\)

But this does not mean that his following the tune in this manner is a function of sentience. What this person is doing may, contends Ryle, be described as a form of make-believing in which no hearing takes place.\(^2\)

This implies, Ryle argues further, that what is described as "having a tune running through one's head" must be a form of knowing how to x, and at the same time a form of refraining from x-ing. The imaginative exercise of having a tune running through one's head is like that of following a heard tune in that both are utilisations of knowledge of how the tune goes.\(^3\)

But the purely imaginative exercise is more sophisticated than that of following the tune, when heard, or that of humming it; since it involves the thought of following or producing the tune, in the way in which sparring involves the thought of fighting in earnest, or the way in which uttering something at second hand involves the thought of its first hand utterance. Fancying one is listening to a known tune involves 'listening for' the notes which would be due to be heard.

---

1. Ibid, p.266
2. Ibid, p.267
3. Ibid, p.269
were the tune being really performed. It is to listen for those notes in a hypothetical manner. Similarly, fancying one is humming a known tune involves 'making ready' for the notes which would be due to be hummed, were the tune actually being hummed. It is to make ready for those notes in a hypothetical manner. It is not humming very, very quietly, but rather it is deliberately not doing those pieces of humming which would be due, if one were not trying to keep the peace. We may say that imagining oneself talking or humming is a series of abstentions from producing the noises which would be the due words or notes to produce, if one were talking or humming aloud.

This shows, Ryle concludes, that imagining cannot, as is supposed by image-theories, be construed as a form of perceiving a private mental object, or, indeed, as any form of sentience. Imagining is always a form of make-believing, and, as such, takes the form of either a sophisticated performance or a mistakenly-believing.

***********

Even though Ryle's attempted rebuttal of image-theories of imagination does not lead him to claim that all imaginings are seeings—as, he and Sartre make a similar

1. loc.cit.
general claim. This is that no imagining can be a perceiving, but that imagining has, nevertheless, close logical links with perceiving. To Ryle, acts of imagining are forms of 'perceiving' x, and, therefore, are in no sense perceiving. Since they are 'perceiving' and not perceiving, imaginings are make-believin~s. In imagining x, the subject is make-believing that x is the case, either in the sense of supposing falsely that his 'perceiving' x is perceiving x, or in the sense of engaging in a sophisticated performance which involves his knowing how x would appear if he were perceiving x and his refraining from doing anything which would result in his perceiving x. The range of what can be imagined is, therefore, severely restricted by Ryle. His analysis commits him to arguing that whatever is, or can be, imagined must be something of which it is true to say "It can be perceived".

IV

These outlines of their analyses show that Sartre's and Ryle's arguments against image-theories of imagination hinge primarily on their metaphysic and on their claim that no imagining can be a form of perceiving. But in rejecting image-theories, they both concede that these theories are at least correct in asserting that there are close logical links between imagining and perceiving. This concession arises from their arguments that any act of imagination either must
involve (must be constituted by) suspended or negated forms of the beliefs typically involved in perceiving (Sartre and Ryle) or must involve false forms of these beliefs (Ryle). In other words, their analyses are typical of the doctrine of imagination referred to at the beginning of this chapter.

**********

Sartre’s and Ryle’s analyses of imagination raise a number of important problems:

(1) Both Sartre and Ryle argue that if it is true that a person is imagining something, it can never be true that he is perceiving that thing, or perceiving at all. Under what conditions do we, and can we, say truly of anyone that he perceives something?

(2) Sartre argues that any act of imagination amounts to the seeing of some perceptually present x as an absent or non-existent object, and Ryle argues that any act of imagination is in fact either a sophisticated performance or a false supposal. Are these adequate accounts of imagination in general, and of the having of images in particular?

The discussion of these problems will form the main body of my thesis. The first part of it will be concerned with an examination of Sartre’s and Ryle’s assertion that no imagining can be a perceiving. I
will consider, first, a possible analysis of perceiving-statements, and, secondly, the viability of Sartre's analysis of imagining as a form of seeing-as. Since Ryle does not take the perceptual presence of some analogue to be essential for all imaginings, his analysis raises the problem of what can be made of imaginings in which there is no perceptually present analogue to be taken as an absent or non-existent object. This problem gives rise to a further one which is vital to any analysis of imagination, and, in particular, to any analysis of what it is to have an image. Must every true perceptual statement imply that what is perceived exists as a publicly perceptible thing in the subject's perceptual range? The answer I offer to this question will show that the doctrine of imagination, represented by Sartre's and Ryle's analyses, is mistaken in claiming that no form of imagining can be a form of perceiving.

My argument in this thesis will be, in essence, a negative one. I do not intend to present a positive account of imagining or of perceiving. I hope only to show that analyses such as those of Sartre and Ryle break down, and that the cause of this break down is a fundamental one. Sartre and Ryle, I will argue, place too narrow a limit on the range of contexts in which the concepts "imagine" and "perceive" can properly be used. This restriction leads them to argue that the distinctions between imagining and perceiving can be drawn in a precise way – Sartre to assert that imagining and perceiving are two mutually exclusive attitudes of consciousness, Ryle
to assert that there is no sense in which imagining is a perceiving, and both to assert that any act of imagining still has close logical links with perceiving.

I will argue, in Chapter 3, that a sharp distinction between "see" and "seeing-as" cannot be drawn in the way demanded by Sartre's analysis. I will conclude that there are contexts in which the boundaries between these concepts are blurred, and that, as a result, no one sense of "see" and "seeing-as" can be laid down to the exclusion of others. In this way, I hope to show that Sartre is mistaken in contending that he can "intuit" two different, and mutually exclusive, structures of consciousness; one to be called "imaginative" and one "perceptual". In a similar vein, I will argue in Chapter 4 that there is a wide range of contexts in which "see" can properly occur, and that there are no good, philosophical, grounds for calling any one sense primary and the others deviant. This, I hope, will establish that theories such as Ryle's are also mistaken in asserting that there are precise distinctions to be drawn between imagining and perceiving. But at no time will I, in my argument, pretend to be laying down a meaning of "imagine" and "perceive".

In the latter half of my thesis, I will argue that once the lines, which Sartre and Ryle have drawn between imagining and perceiving collapse, they can no longer argue successfully that imagining has close logical links with perceiving. They cannot assert either that
imaginings are always constituted by suspended or negated or false forms of the beliefs typically involved in perceiving, or that whatever is or can be imagined must be something of which it is true to say "It can be perceived".
CHAPTER 2

THE PERCEPTION OF THINGS

I

The concept of perceiving plays a vital role in Sartre's analysis of imagination. He argues that if anyone is imagining, or has an image of, an absent or non-existent object, then that person must have before him some perceptual object which can stand for, or represent, the imagined object. But he contends that even though any act of imagination involves the seeing of some perceptually present object as an absent or non-existent object, this seeing-as cannot itself be a seeing proper. As a preliminary to examining the viability of Sartre's analysis of imagination, we must, therefore, give some account of what, from an epistemological point of view, is involved in perceiving.

Since it is to be related to Sartre's analysis of imagination, this account of perceiving must be restricted to determining what is implied by statements to the effect that we perceive such things as spots on walls, pieces of paper, and kinaesthetic impressions - those items which Sartre claims can be the perceptually present analogue of acts of imagining. This restriction does not eliminate an immediate difficulty. Sartre's contention that we do, and can, perceive such things as
kinaesthetic impressions and entoptic lights is controversial.\(^1\) However, since he takes the main problem of the analogue to be that of showing how something normally non-representative in character can come to represent an absent or non-existent object, any one of the analogues can be chosen as an example. Sartre's main conclusions will not be affected if we choose to analyse statements reporting our perception of such things as spots on walls and pieces of paper, rather than such things as entoptic lights and kinaesthetic impressions.

Because examples have a unique position in general phenomenology, such a restriction is, of course, permissible in a phenomenological analysis.\(^2\) Since Sartre as a phenomenologist must claim that his method involves neither induction nor deduction, neither observation nor empirical generalisation, it cannot require a multiplication of examples. He must claim that one example is sufficient to establish any point in his analysis. So Sartre's task, as a phenomenologist examining acts of imagination, is merely that of describing his intuitions of the essence

\(^1\) The reasons for the controversial nature of Sartre’s contention are not important for my present argument. These reasons will emerge later in this chapter when I discuss accounts of perceiving which presume that all acts of perceiving require the presence of a physical object in the subject's perceptual range.

of an example. He must insist (as he in fact does)\(^1\) that an examination of any act of imaginative consciousness is sufficient to establish, or refute, his general claims about the nature of imagination.

I will, for the purposes of the argument which follows, restrict my analysis of perceptual statements to examples of what would universally be agreed to be perceptions. I will examine statements reporting the perceiving of such things as trees, pieces of paper, and spots on walls - i.e. my analysis will be restricted to statements reporting the perceiving of public perceptual objects.\(^2\)

II

Any analysis of what is involved in the perception of public perceptual objects is confronted by a vital problem. This problem, on which a number

---

1. The Psychology of Imagination, pp. 23-6
2. I will be using the term "public perceptual object" with increasing frequency in the discussion which follows. I intend it to refer to any particular thing of which it is true to say that more than one person does, or can, perceive it. Thus, because it is false to claim that more than one person can perceive any particular entoptic light or kinaesthetic impression, such things cannot be public perceptual objects. For example, in our perception of heat, the public perceptual object would be a hot object or warm air.
of others hang, is that of determining whether the perceived qualities of a public perceptual object must be actual, physical, qualities of it. Will my statement "I perceive an x which is F" be true, we must ask, only if F is an actual, physical, characteristic of x? If x is not F, will it be false that my statement is a report of a perceiving? Is my statement still in some sense a report of a perceiving, or is it now a report of (say) an imagining?

A number of different answers to these questions have been proposed. Some writers calling themselves "Direct Realists"¹, and others calling themselves "Naive Realists"², maintain that we can say truly that we are perceiving something only if what we claim to perceive is an actual, physical, quality of some public perceptual object in our perceptual range. For example, it will be true that I see a bent stick only if the public perceptual object I claim to be perceiving


Some writers have argued that Ryle's analysis of perception commits him to a position similar to that of Arthadeva. (Cf M. Mandelbaum, Philosophy, Science, and Perception, Baltimore, 1964, pp. 171-245; and J.S. Soltis, Seeing, Knowing, and Believing, London, 1966, pp. 25 - 31). I will not, however, consider Ryle's analysis in this context. I will examine his account of perception in a later section of this chapter.
is in fact a stick and bent. If this public perceptual object is a stick, but is not bent, then it is not true that I am perceiving a bent stick. But, according to Direct Realists and Naive Realists, it is also false that I am perceiving anything at all. I cannot say that despite believing mistakenly that the stick is bent, I am, nevertheless, at least perceiving the stick. My experience is in no sense a perceiving. I had, or am having, a sensory illusion.

In the discussion which follows, the main problem I will have in mind is that of determining whether we can say truly that we are perceiving something when what we are perceiving is not an actual, physical, characteristic of the public perceptual object in our perceptual range. In other words, my main purpose will be that of examining the validity of the argument that it is false that I, for example, see a bent stick when the stick is not bent. Since Direct, and Naive, Realist analyses adopt an extreme version of this argument — claiming that it is false that I see anything at all when the stick is not in fact bent, I will draw on these analyses, and in particular on Armstrong's, as examples. Through offering a critical examination of Armstrong's account of perception, I hope to establish the falsity not only of the extreme version, but also of the weaker

version of the argument that it is false that I see a bent stick when the stick is not in fact bent. I hope to show not only that it can be true that I at least see the stick, but also that it can be true that I see a bent stick, when the stick I claim to be seeing is not bent.

The main props of Armstrong's analysis of perception lie in the following claims:

1. The only possible objects of perception are physical objects.¹

2. In perceiving physical objects, we "have" sense-impressions.²

3. Sense-impressions are typically described by statements of the form "X looks, sounds, tastes, smells, F". For example, the statement "That object looks blue" is a report of a sense-impression.³

4. Descriptions or reports of sense-impressions are of something immediate and not of something mediate. They report an awareness or belief not suggested by anything else.⁴

¹ Perception and the Physical World, pp. 82-3, n83
² Ibid, pp. 8ff
³ Ibid, pp. 91-2, 8ff
⁴ Ibid, pp. 21, 88, 128
5. That which we have in perception - i.e. sense-impressions - cannot be grounds for either mediate or immediate beliefs.

If we claim, argues Armstrong, that "the immediate object of apprehension in perception is a sense-impression, then we must go on to accept some version of the Representative or the Phenomenalist account of perception". But, he adds, since both these theories are beset with fatal difficulties, we cannot maintain either that we have sense-impressions in perception, or that sense-impressions are the ground or basis for our beliefs that we are perceiving some physical state of affairs. If, contends Armstrong, "we distinguish between sense-impressions, on the one hand, and our beliefs or inclinations to believe that we are perceiving some state of affairs, on the other, and yet we make sense-impressions the ground or basis of the latter, we are led to untenable positions, viz. Representationalism or Phenomenalism".

This raises the problem of what, then, can be made of sense-impressions. They cannot, according to Armstrong, be objects of mediate or immediate perception, and they cannot be the ground or basis for beliefs that we are perceiving something in the physical world. "We may talk", says Armstrong, "about 'sense-impressions' or even

1. Ibid., p. 80, 90
2. loc. cit.
3. Ibid., Chapters, 3, 5, 6
4. Ibid., p. 89-90
5. Ibid., p. 90
about 'objects in our sensory field' but we must not be led into postulating substances to correspond to these substantive phrases."

There is one possibility left open, he contends. Sense-impressions must be identified "with beliefs, or inclinations to believe, that we are perceiving something ". Since, he continues, statements reporting sense-impressions are about something immediate, and since these statements report the acquiring of beliefs about the physical world, these beliefs must be immediate. They must be immediate in the sense of not being suggested by any other belief about the physical world which is acquired by means of the senses.

Armstrong sums up his account of sense-impressions in this way:

To speak of our sense-impressions, therefore, will be to speak of our conscious acquiring of immediate beliefs or inclinations to believe in particular propositions about the physical world, by means of our senses, without considering whether these propositions are true or false.

This analysis of sense-impressions has an important bearing on the analysis of perception which Armstrong offers. Perceiving, he maintains,

1. Ibid., p. 87
2. Ibid., p. 88
3. Ibid., p. 128
4. loc. cit.
is a way of learning about what goes on around us. To say of any organism that it can perceive is to imply that it can acquire a certain amount of knowledge of the world around it by means of certain organs called the senses. If the organism could not do this, we should not say that it could perceive.¹

This, when taken together with the account that must be given of sense-impressions, shows "that perception is nothing but the acquiring of knowledge of, or, on occasions, the acquiring of an inclination to believe in, particular facts about the physical world, by means of the senses".² ³

This definition of perception has two important consequences. Firstly, Armstrong must claim that there can be nothing neutral between veridical and non-veridical perception. This he does maintain when he argues that only physical objects are properly objects of perception. Secondly, he must put forward an unusual account of non-veridical perception, or - as he puts it - of "sensory illusion".⁴ He develops his analysis of sensory illusion in the following way:

1. Ibid, p. 105
2. loc. cit.
3. In "Max Deutscher and Perception", The Australasian Journal of Philosophy, Vol. XLI, 1963, p. 246, Armstrong changes this definition. He concedes that perceiving should be defined, not as the acquiring of up-to-the-moment knowledge of the physical world, but as the acquiring of up-to-the-moment true beliefs about the physical world.
4. Perception and the Physical World, Chapter 7
If, he says, "I go into a room and have an hallucinatory visual experience as of a cat on the mat, then, under normal circumstances, I shall have a false belief about the world, viz. that there is a cat on the mat now". This suggests, he continues, "that to undergo sensory illusion is simply to hold a false belief about our environment: to think that something exists in it, or that something has a certain property, when this is not so". Since there can be no objects of perception other than physical objects - i.e. since nothing like sense-impressions can be objects of perception, this suggestion must, Armstrong maintains, be correct. Thus, when (or in so far as) we suffer from sensory illusion there is no object at all, physical or non-physical, which we are perceiving in any possible sense of the word 'perceiving'. There is simply the (completely) false belief that ordinary perceiving is taking place.

There is, Armstrong admits, a difference between sensory illusion and the mere false belief that something is the case in our environment. But, he asks, is this difference anything more than an additional false belief?

---

1. *Ibid.*, p. 31
4. "Perceiving" here must, as is always the case in his account, be understood in what Armstrong calls its "normal sense" - that sense in which any perceiving-statement implies the physical existence of the perceived thing. (Cf n83)
Consider the example of an hallucination. When I have an hallucinatory vision as of a cat on a mat, I not only acquire (a) a false belief about the physical world - viz. that there is a cat on the mat, but also (b) a false belief that I am now seeing the cat. The occurrence of these two false beliefs, argues Armstrong,

constitutes sensory illusion, ... this is all sensory illusion is. In sensory illusion there is no 'perception' of a quasi-object, but simply a false belief that there is ordinary veridical perception of an ordinary physical object or ordinary state of affairs".¹

There is, Armstrong admits further, an obvious difficulty associated with this contention that statements about sensory illusions can be replaced without remainder by statements to the effect that I believe falsely that I am perceiving something or other.² Someone could point out that sensory illusion can occur without any false belief at all. Suppose I am regularly subject to hallucinations, such as those of seeming to see cats, under certain conditions which I know and can recognise. Under these circumstances, I may well come to recognise my hallucination for what it is, an hallucination. I will not believe that there is a cat on the mat, and, a fortiori, I will not believe that I am seeing a cat.³

1. Ibid, p. 83
2. Ibid, p. 84
3. loc.cit.
A more common example, he says, is our experience of mirror images. When I see my face in a mirror, I will not normally be deceived into thinking either that a physical thing exists behind the mirror or that I am seeing a physical object. Hence I will not have acquired any false beliefs by means of the senses.

The problem which these examples illustrate is not sufficient, Armstrong argues, to force the abandonment of his analysis of sensory illusion. All that these examples reveal, he contends, is that certain changes must be made within the analysis.

The first point to be made is that 'perception without belief' only occurs where we have independent information that runs counter to the 'evidence of the senses'. The man who has hallucinations of cats, but treats the hallucinations for what they are, can do this only because past experience has assured him that there can be no cat there. In default of this independent information he would 'believe his eyes'. When we look at a mirror we escape deception only because of a long familiarity with mirrors and their tricky ways. If we are ignorant of mirrors, or if we do not know that it is a mirror that is in front of us, we will be deceived by appearances...... In all cases of 'perception without belief', therefore, there would be belief that we are perceiving something, but for independently acquired information. Formally, we have a contrary-to-fact conditional statement 'If I did not know or believe X, then I would believe I was perceiving a Y.' Whenever 'perception without belief' occurs, such a statement will be true.2

1. Ibid, p. 85
2. Ibid, pp. 85-6
It follows from this, Armstrong argues further, that "perception without belief" is essentially "belief-inducing; in default of other, contradictory, beliefs it must issue in the belief that we are perceiving something in our environment". 1 If "perception without belief" is essentially belief-inducing,

then it seems to follow that it must involve the thought that we are perceiving something in the world, a thought held back from being a belief by other, contradictory, beliefs. As we may put it, it is a thought that presses towards being a belief. Such a thought I shall describe 2 as an 'inclination to believe'.

Thus, on Armstrong's analysis, sensory illusion may be defined as nothing but a false belief or inclination to a false belief that some physical state of affairs is being perceived. More specifically, to him sensory illusion consists in:

(i) the false belief, or inclination to a false belief, that some physical state of affairs is actually present - i.e. is in the subject's perceptual range;

(ii) The false belief, or inclination to a false belief, that this physical state of affairs is being perceived.

Armstrong goes on to argue that I must report my having of sensory illusions by means of statements such as "That looks like a bear" (when referring to a

1. loc.cit.
2. Ibid, pp. 86-7
bush which could be mistaken for a bear) and "That looks like a cat on the mat" (when reporting a visual hallucination).\footnote{1} Statements such as these, he says, make \textit{tentative} perceptual claims, and will, therefore, be reports of the having of sense-impressions.\footnote{2} In other words, these statements will only be reports to the effect that I have acquired, by means of the senses, a certain false belief, or an inclination to a false belief, that some physical state of affairs is the case.

Armstrong claims that his analysis of perception and sensory illusion demarcates in a precise way both the parallels and differences between veridical and non-veridical perception. In both veridical and non-veridical perception, a certain belief about the physical world is acquired by means of the senses, and in both, this belief is accompanied by the belief that some physical state of affairs is being perceived. In veridical perception, both these beliefs are true. In some non-veridical perception, both these beliefs are false, and in other non-veridical perception, the subject has only inclinations-to-false-belief that some physical state of affairs is the case and is being perceived.\footnote{3}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textbf{1.} To Armstrong, both these examples are clear cases of sensory illusion. The statements reporting them can be reduced without remainder to statements about false beliefs in, or inclinations to false belief in, some existential proposition of the form "There is an x such that \(Fx\) and \(Gx\)". The only difference between them is, he argues, that in the case of mistaking a physically present x for a y, the object x does exist, and in, for example, an hallucination x does not exist.
\item \textit{Ibid, p. 92}
\item \textit{Ibid, p. 127}
\end{itemize}
The answer which Armstrong would have to give to the question "Must we say that it is true that we are perceiving, for example, a bent stick and a blue mountain only if the stick is physically bent and the mountain physically blue?" can now be expressed. On Armstrong's analysis, the statements "I see a bent stick" and "I see a blue mountain" imply that I have acquired by means of the senses the following beliefs:

1 (a) that there is a physically bent stick before me;
and (b) that I am perceiving a physically bent stick.

2 (a) that there is a physically blue mountain before me;
and (b) that I am perceiving a physically blue mountain.

Since, to Armstrong, perceiving is the acquiring of knowledge about the physical world, the experiences reported by "I see a bent stick" and "I see a blue mountain" will be perceivings only if beliefs 1(a) and (b) and 2(a) and (b) are true. Suppose now that I, believing them to be true, utter these statements when looking at a straight stick immersed in water, and when looking at a distant green mountain. Because, in these circumstances, the stick is not physically bent and the mountain not physically blue, my beliefs 1(a) and (b), and 2(a) and (b), cannot all be true. Thus, since perceiving is, by Armstrong's definition, the acquiring of knowledge about the physical world, these experiences cannot be perceivings. That is, I am not
I am perceiving anything at all. I am having sensory illusions. I am, in such circumstances, mistakenly assigning to a physical object a property it does not possess. My statement must, therefore, be reducible, without remainder, to the following conjunction of statements:

i(a) "I believe falsely that there is a physically bent stick before me";
(b) "I believe falsely that I am perceiving a physically bent stick".

ii(a) "I believe falsely that there is a physically blue mountain before me";
(b) "I believe falsely that I am perceiving a physically blue mountain".

Now even if I do not believe that the stick is actually bent and that the mountain is actually blue when I say "I see a bent stick" and "I see a blue mountain", it will still not be true that I am perceiving something. In such circumstances, my statements can be reduced, without remainder, to the following conjunction of statements:

iii(a) "I am inclined to believe falsely that there is a physically bent stick before me";
and (b) "I am inclined to believe falsely that I am perceiving a physically bent stick".

iv(a) "I am inclined to believe falsely that there is a physically blue mountain before me";
and (b) "I am inclined to believe falsely that I am perceiving a physically blue mountain".
We must, once again, say that since perceiving is the acquiring of knowledge about the physical world, these statements cannot be reports of perceiving. In such contexts, argues Armstrong, I should report my experiences by means of the tentative perceptual statements "The stick looks bent" and "The mountain looks blue". These new statements will be reports of my having sense-impressions, and hence of my acquiring, by means of the senses, inclinations-to-false-belief that I am perceiving something.

**********

Armstrong's assertion that statements about "sensory illusions" can be reduced without remainder to statements about false beliefs or inclinations-to-false-beliefs depends on two main subsidiary claims. These are:

(A) Any perceptual statement implies the physical existence of what is said to be perceived;

and (B) statements such as "x looks, feels, etc, F" are, in their literal uses, reports of the having of sense-impressions.

Claims (A) and (B) are inter-related. Since by (A) the class of perceptual statements is limited to those which imply the physical existence of the perceived thing and its perceived qualities, statements such as "That stick looks bent" and "This ice feels hot" cannot be
reports of perceivings. Since these statements are, to Armstrong, tentative perceptual claims, they do not necessarily imply that the stick is physically bent, or that the ice is physically hot. It is for this reason that such statements cannot be reports of perceivings.

If, therefore, we wish to undermine Armstrong's analysis of perception, we need only show that (E) is false. If, in at least some contexts, statements of the form "x looks, feels, etc., F" are more than tentative perceptual claims, we may have good grounds for arguing that what we claim to perceive need not be actual, physical, qualities of some public perceptual object.

III

Armstrong's contention that verbs such as "looks" are normally used in statements which only make tentative perceptual claims does not receive support from an examination of the various contexts in which these verbs can occur. For example, "looks" can occur in any of the following constructions:

1. (The verb followed by an adjective or adjectival phrase)
   (a) "It looks blue (round, angular)"
   (b) "He looks a gentleman (a tramp, a sport)"
   (c) "She looks chic (a fright, a regular frump)"

1. The examples which follow are taken from J.L. Austin, Sense and Sensibility, Oxford, 1962, pp. 34ff
2. ("looks like" followed by a verb)
   (a) "It (a particular colour) looks like blue"
   (b) "It looks like a recorder"
   (c) "He looks like a gentleman (a sailor, a horse)"

3. (a) "It looks as if it is (were) raining"
   (b) "He looks as if he is (were) 60 (going to faint)"

4. (a) "It looks as though we shan't be able to go in"
   (b) "He looks as though he is worried about something"

If each of the constructions is such that it can be used only to make tentative perceptual claims, then "looks" must have a precisely defined relation to "is", "is not" and "seems". If the statement "That object looks blue" is only a tentative perceptual claim, then it cannot imply that what the speaker is referring to is or is not blue. All the statement can imply is that what is being referred to seems to be blue. This implication of his argument creates serious difficulties for Armstrong's analysis. For the relations between "looks", "seems", "is", and "is not" cannot be spelled out in the precise terms he demands.

Consider the following examples: 1

(i) We often say "x looks F" when the look of the thing referred to is wholly inconclusive evidence of

its actual characteristics. For example, it would be rash, in certain circumstances, to say that some stones are, or seem to be, diamonds because they \textit{look like} diamonds.

(ii) On the other hand, we often use "looks" when the look of a thing is conclusive evidence of its actual characteristics. What more must a woman do to be chic than \textit{look} chic? If I say "She looks chic", I cannot add "She seems to be chic" or "She is not chic".

(iii) There are also contexts in which uses of "looks" and "seems" are similar. For example, the fact that a person looks ill may be evidence for the remark "He seems ill", and that he seems ill may imply that he looks ill. A further important point to be noted is that the two statements "He seems ill" and "He looks ill" are compatible with the statement that he is ill, as well as with the statement that he is not ill.

These examples, when taken together with the range of contexts in which it can occur, show that there is not necessarily one normal use of "looks". Consequently, there may be no one general solution to the problem of how uses of "looks" and its constructions are related to uses of "is", "is not" and "seems". The above examples reveal that this relation depends on the full context or circumstances in which the looks-statement occurs.\footnote{\textit{loc.cit.}} For example, if I say "Petrol looks like water", I may
simply be commenting on how petrol looks, and may not be implying that I believe, or am inclined to believe, that petrol is water. On the other hand, the statement "This looks like water" could be different. For there are cases in which I may be taking the water-like look of what I see to be an indication that this is water. But in other circumstances, my statement may not imply that I believe, or am inclined to believe, that what I see is water.

**********

Consider now the consequences which this argument has for Armstrong's analysis of perception. Suppose that I say at time $T_1$ "I see a yellow ball", and that at time $T_2$ I say "No! I see an orange". Following Armstrong's account of perception, I must say the following about what happened at $T_1$ and $T_2$:

1. For further more detailed criticisms of Armstrong's analysis of perception see:

2. The examples used here, and some of the conclusions reached, are taken from M.J. Baker, "Perceiving, Imagining, and Being Mistaken", Philosophy and Phenomenological Research, Vol. XIV, 1953-4, pp. 520-37
(1) In claiming at T1 that I see a yellow ball, I imply that a yellow ball is present as a physical thing. Since there is in fact no yellow ball in the place where I say that I see one, my statement "I see a yellow ball" is false.

(2) Since my statement is false, I could not have seen a yellow ball at T1. At T1, I had a sensory illusion. That is, at T1 I acquired, by means of the senses, the false belief that there is a yellow ball in my line of vision, and the false belief that I am perceiving a yellow ball. Since perceiving is, by definition, the acquiring of knowledge of the physical world by means of the senses, the falsity of these two beliefs is sufficient to show that I did not perceive anything at all at T1.

(3) If my belief, at T2, that I am seeing an orange is true, then I can later say truly that I saw an orange at T2.

(4) Thus, I can say truly that I am seeing something only at T2. At T1, it is not true that I see anything in any legitimate sense of "see".

Suppose now that, at T3, I say "I thought that I saw a yellow ball at T1, because the orange looks like a yellow ball." If we follow Armstrong's analysis, we will have to rewrite this statement to read "At T1, I believed falsely that I saw a yellow ball, because I acquired, at that time, the inclination to believe falsely that what I was seeing is a yellow ball". The above examination of the constructions in which "looks" can occur shows that it is not always the case that the original
statement can be reduced to this particular form. The Armstrong-type reduction depends on an assumption that any statement of the form "The orange looks like a yellow ball" is a tentative perceptual claim; a claim to the effect that, but for certain knowledge or beliefs, the speaker would be inclined to believe (falsely) that the orange is a yellow ball. But since a statement such as "Petrol looks like water" could be comment on the looks of petrol — i.e. a comment on what anyone can see if they look at petrol in a certain way, a statement such as "The orange looks like a yellow ball" could well be a comment on the looks of the orange. It could be a statement to the effect that even though it is known that this is not a yellow ball, anyone with normal vision could see that the orange does in fact have a yellow-ball-look about it. In other words, in at least some contexts, statements about the yellow-ball-look of the orange could be references to a publicly perceptible look of the orange.

This argument has important consequences for Armstrong's analysis of perception. If the basis of the argument is correct, then the Armstrong-type analysis must be revised in a drastic way. This revision would have to run along the following lines:

If, at time T3, I say "I thought that I saw a yellow ball, because the orange looks like a yellow ball", then I am not implying that I did not see anything at all at T1. What I am implying is that because of a particular look of the orange, I was misled or deceived into taking what I saw to be a yellow ball. Because this yellow-ball-look of the orange is something which anyone can see in a
proper sense of "see", I must have seen the orange at T1, even though I did not know, or believe, at the time that I was seeing one. Consequently, what happened at T1 and T2 must be analysed in this way:

(i) In claiming at T1 that I see a yellow ball, I imply that I believe that a yellow ball is present as a public perceptual object. Since there is in fact no yellow ball where I say that I see one, my belief is false.

(ii) Even though my belief is false, I could have seen the orange at T1. For I thought that I saw a yellow ball because the orange does in fact look like a yellow ball. Thus, I can say truly that I perceived something at T1. I must have seen the orange at T1, even though I did not know at the time that I was seeing an orange.

(iii) If my belief that I am seeing an orange is true, then I can say truly that I am perceiving an orange.

(iv) Thus, I can say truly that I saw the orange at T1 and T2. But since I believed truly only at T2 that what I was seeing is an orange, only at T2 did I see that it is an orange.

**********

1. This account is supported by Warnock, ("Seeing", Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Vol. LV, 1954-5, pp. 201-18). Warnock argues that to say, for example, "I saw Lloyd George" does not imply:

(i) that I was then, or am now, able to describe Lloyd George's appearance correctly, or even at all;
(ii) that he appeared to me to be Lloyd George;
(iii) that he appeared as Lloyd George normally did.
Although it is by no means decisive, this discussion of Armstrong's analysis of perception is important. It shows what course the discussion of the problem of whether the perceived qualities of a thing must be actual, physical, qualities of it must now take.

Armstrong claims that any statement of the form "A perceives x" implies that x is a physical object or physical state of affairs, and also implies that all the beliefs about x which A acquires, by means of the senses, are true. On the other hand, the main contention of the revised argument is that we can say truly that A perceives x even if some of the beliefs A acquires about x are false. Armstrong argues further that any statement of the form "x looks F" is simply an assertion that someone (e.g. the speaker) is inclined to believe falsely that x is F. According to the revised analysis, we can say truly that we are perceiving an x looking F even though F is not an actual quality of x. In other words, on this new argument, any statement of the form "x looks F" either could be a report of a ground for a belief that x is F, or could simply be a comment on a publicly perceptible characteristic of x — viz. that x has an F-like look.

This shows that a vital part of Armstrong's analysis, as well as of the argument put forward in rebuttal of his analysis of perceiving, centres around the role played by belief in perceiving. Armstrong's argument depends basically on the assumption that all the beliefs about a physical object or physical state of
affairs, which the perceiver acquires at the time of the perceiving, must be true. The revised argument, on the other hand, depends on the assumption that not all these beliefs need be true. Thus, if we are to press further the analysis of what is involved in perceiving, and if we are to put forward a satisfactory solution to the problem of whether the perceived qualities of a public perceptual object must be actual qualities of it, we must examine in some detail the logical links between believing and perceiving.

IV

Before commencing this analysis of the links between perceiving and believing, an important preliminary point must be stressed. For reasons given earlier, the examples chosen so far in this chapter have been restricted to statements about the perceiving of public perceptual objects. Consequently, this analysis of the links between perceiving and believing must also be restricted to examples of statements reporting the perceiving of public perceptual objects.

The restriction determines immediately the course which the analysis must take. The first problem to be faced must be that of giving some account of "the part played" by these public perceptual objects in perceiving. My perceiving, for example, a tree has to be "dependent on" a public perceptual object in the sense that
I would not have perceived anything if no public perceptual object had been in my perceptual range. But the account given of this dependence must be such that it does not imply that the presence of (say) the tree in my line of vision is a sufficient condition for my seeing it. I do not see the tree simply because it is in my line of vision — I see it only if it is in my line of vision. The presence of a public perceptual object in my line of vision (in general, in my perceptual range) is only a necessary condition for my seeing (or, perceiving) that object.

To explain the dependence of perception on the physical presence of public perceptual objects, we could adopt part of Chisholm's analysis of perception.¹ My seeing a tree, we could say, depends on the tree being a "proper visual stimulus" for me.² We may say, argues Chisholm,

that x is a proper visual stimulus for S provided (i) that light transmitted from x stimulates a visual receptor of S and (ii) that this light, after being transmitted from x and before reaching the visual receptors of S, is not reflected. When we look at the moon at night, our eyes are stimulated by light from the sun; the proper stimulus, however, is the moon and neither the light nor the sun.³

1. Perceiving: A Philosophical Study, Ithaca, 1957
2. Ibid, p. 144
3. loc.cit.
According to Chisholm, then, it is the tree, and not the light rays, which is the proper visual stimulus for me.

A similar conclusion, Chisholm argues further, can be reached with respect to the other senses. In all perceiving, there must be some public perceptual object which is a proper stimulus for the perceiver. There must, in all perceiving, be something in the perceiver's perceptual range of which it is true (a) that others can perceive it, and (b) that, through some causal activity, it stimulates the perceiver's perceptual receptors.

We may say that \( x \) is a proper auditory stimulus for \( S \) provided that soundwaves transmitted from \( x \) stimulate an auditory receptor of \( S \). The proper auditory stimulus is thus neither the sound waves nor the medium through which they are transmitted, but the vibrating object that transmits them. The proper olfactory stimuli are oderiferous particles which stimulate the olfactory receptors; those of taste are the substances that enter and stimulate the taste buds; and those of touch are whatever, by pushing or pulling the skin, stimulates the touch spots.

This account of public perceptual objects as proper stimuli, Chisholm continues, is not complete.

1. loc.cit.
2. loc.cit.
We must find a way of ruling out those images which may be called up as the effect of some proper stimulus $x$ but which we do not wish to call appearances of $x$. A traveller, on looking out of a railroad car, sees something reminding him of an earlier trip and, in consequence, he visualizes a certain strip of land along the Pacific ocean. In so doing, he may 'sense bluely' despite the fact that none of the things he sees appears blue to him. The things he sees are proper stimuli, and it is because of them that he 'senses bluely'. Hence, according to our definition above, we may say, falsely, that the things that stimulate his eyes as he looks out the window appear blue.¹

We can avoid this problem, contends Chisholm, by saying that any statement of the form "$S$ perceives $x$" implies at least that as a consequence of $x$ being a proper stimulus for $S$, $S$ senses in a way that is functionally dependent upon the stimulus energy produced in $S$ by $x$.²

Although this part of Chisholm's proposes a possible account of the role played by public perceptual objects in perceiving, it is still only an account of a necessary condition for perceiving a public perceptual object. All that follows so far from his analysis is that I can say truly that I am perceiving, for example, a tree only if some public perceptual object (the tree)

1. Ibid, p. 145
2. Ibid, p. 149
is a proper visual stimulus for me. We are still left with the problem of determining what further conditions must be met before I can say truly that I am perceiving, or have perceived, the tree.

************

Consider, first, the Rylean account of these further conditions. Ryle argues that all seeing is an achievement; the conclusion of a task. Thus, to him, seeing cannot be wrong or erroneous. Seeing either happens or does not happen. He admits that seeing involves the having of visual sensations, but adds that while to "describe someone as finding a thimble is to say something about his having visual, tactual or auditory sensations", "it is also to say more than that". The extra involved is a "perception recipe" - i.e. a utilisation of knowledge of the appearances of things. A person who sees a thimble is, says Ryle,

1. Of The Concept of Mind, Chapter VIII
   Dilemmas, Cambridge, 1954, Chapter VIII
2. Ibid, pp. 151-2
3. Ibid, p. 200
4. Ibid, p. 224
5. loc. cit.
6. I am ignoring, for the purposes of this argument, the reservations which Ryle himself expresses about this notion of "visual sensations".
   Of "Afterthoughts", Ibid, pp. 240-4
   "Sensation", H.D. Lewis (ed), Contemporary British Philosophy (Third Series), London, 1936
recognising what he sees, and this certainly entails not only that he has a visual sensation, but also that he has already learned and not forgotten what thimbles look like. He has learned enough of the recipe for the looks of thimbles to recognise thimbles, when he sees them in ordinary lights and positions at ordinary distances and from ordinary angles. When he espies the thimble on this occasion, he is applying his lesson; he is actually doing what he has learned to do. Knowing how thimbles look, he is ready to anticipate, though he need not actually anticipate, how it will look, if he approaches it, or moves away from it; ... When the actual glimpses of it that he gets are got according to the thimble recipe, they satisfy his acquired expectation-propensities; and this is his espying the thimble. 1

Since he argues that all seeing (and, by extension all perceiving) involves the utilisation of knowledge and cannot be erroneous, it follows that there cannot be, on Ryle's analysis, a simple or basic sense of "perceive". There cannot be perceiving-statements which carry no implications as to the truth or falsity of the beliefs acquired by the perceiver about what he is perceiving. For example, if I say "I see a bent stick", then because seeing cannot be erroneous, this statement will be a report of a perceiving only if what I see is in fact a stick and is in fact bent. If what I claim to see is neither a stick nor bent, I will have utilised the wrong perception recipe (the wrong knowledge of the looks of things), and could, in no sense

1. The Concept of Mind, p. 230
of the word "see", have seen anything. No matter what I happened to do in these circumstances, concludes Ryle, this can never be described truly as a perceiving.

Ryle's analysis is compatible with Armstrong's in at least one important respect. To Ryle, as well as to Armstrong, mistaken perceiving cannot be perceiving. Ryle and Armstrong both argue that any perceiving-statement implies that all the beliefs the subject acquires about what he is perceiving are true. For example, my statement "I see a bent stick" implies that I believe truly that what I am perceiving is a stick, and that I believe truly that this stick is bent. Since in mistaken perceiving at least one of these beliefs is false - e.g. the belief that the stick is bent, such "perceivings" cannot be perceiving.

The unsatisfactory nature of such a claim becomes evident when we examine cases such as this: ¹

Suppose that a primitive Amazon Indian comes to the side of a modern super-highway. Suppose, too, that a car comes into the Indian's line of vision and that he says "I see a swift-moving, roaring, animal". Can we say truly that the Indian sees something - at least (say) the car? Ryle and Armstrong would both say that the Indian does not perceive anything in any sense of "perceive". Ryle's argument would be that since the Indian did not, and is unable to, apply a car-perception-recipe to the

¹ I am basing this example, and some of the inferences drawn from it, on Soltis, op.cit., p. 30
public perceptual object in his line of vision, it cannot be true that he sees the car. For he does not recognise the car in the sense of having learnt, and not forgotten, what cars look like in normal circumstances. Armstrong's argument would be that the Indian cannot be perceiving the car or anything at all, because at the specified time he does not acquire, by means of the senses, knowledge about the physical world. He only acquires false beliefs about the physical world - the false beliefs that there is an animal in his line of vision and that he is perceiving an animal.

The difficulty with these arguments is that we would normally say that the Indian does in fact see the car. That he mistakes it for something else is an indication, we might argue, that it is true that the Indian sees the car even though it is false that he sees an animal. This will become clear, we might continue, if we ask the Indian to describe in detail what he claims to see. He could say, for example, that he sees something which moves quickly in and out of his line of vision, which is blue, and which makes a roaring noise. Now even if most, if not all, these descriptions are false, if there is a car where he says that he sees something - i.e. where he says that he sees an animal, we could say that the car is, in Chisholm's sense, a proper stimulus for the Indian. The Indian would not, we might argue, claim that he sees an animal if the car had not been in his line of vision at that time and in that place. Furthermore, not only is there a public perceptual object in his line of vision which is a proper visual stimulus for him, but
he also takes this public perceptual object to have some characteristic. The car looks like something to the Indian - it has for him the look of a swift-moving animal. From this it must follow that it is true that the Indian sees the car, even though it is false that he sees that it is a car. We could say, in these circumstances, that the Indian sees something, even though he does not recognise this public perceptual object for what it is. Thus, his statement could be a report of a perceiving (of the car) in a sense of "perceive" not admitted by Armstrong or Ryle.

Chisholm calls the sense of "see" in which it is true that the Indian sees the car "non-propositional perceiving"¹, and Soltis calls it "simple seeing".² To them, a use of "see" is an example of the non-propositional or simple sense, if the statement "A sees x" is true even when the statement "A sees that this public perceptual object is x" is false. In other words, a seeing-statement is non-propositional or simple (a) if it implies that the perceiver takes the public perceptual object in his perceptual range to be something, and (b) if it implies that he may not have

¹. op.cit., pp. 142ff
². op.cit., pp. 57ff
taken this public perceptual object for what it actually is. Chisholm argues that we can say truly that A perceives x in this non-propositional sense of "perceive" if x is a proper stimulus for A, and if A takes x to have some characteristic. On his analysis, therefore, it is true that the Indian sees the car. Not only is some public perceptual object (the car) a proper visual stimulus for the Indian, but he also takes the public perceptual object to have some characteristic—viz. that of being blue, fast-moving, and animal-like.

Soltis argues that Chisholm's definition of non-propositional perceiving is ambiguous. Consider, he says, the following example:

Suppose that while I am out hunting my guide spots a deer in a thicket only 50 yards away. I focus on the thicket, pay particular attention to it, but refuse to say that I see the deer. Suppose, too, that there is in fact a deer in the thicket, and that I later come to believe that there is one there which I take to have the characteristic of being the same colour as the thicket.

The deer then meets Chisholm's requirements in that it is a proper visual stimulus, you sense in a way functionally dependent upon it (if light is reflecting from it, it would seem that you must) and you have taken it to have some characteristic (a correct one from your view-point at least) —

1. op.cit., pp. 149-50
2. op.cit., pp. 33
but you don't see it or do you? In Ryle's recognition-achievement sense, of course you don't, but in Chisholm's terms you do even though you cannot visually discriminate the deer. This seems to be an odd result."

But is it true, Soltis asks, that I see the deer even though I cannot discriminate it visually? He contends that the fact that it would normally be denied that I see this deer show that discrimination - the conscious picking out of things from the perceptual background - is a necessary requirement for simple or non-propositional perceivings. In the case of seeing, he claims, we would not say that it is true that A sees x if A could not at least pick out or discriminate x from other things in his line of vision.

If we alter Chisholm's analysis to meet this objection, then we can give an account of the least conditions which must be satisfied before we can say truly that A perceives x. It is true that A simply or non-propositionally perceives x if:

(i) x is, in Chisholm's sense, a proper stimulus for A;
(ii) A picks out, or discriminates, x from the perceptual background,
(iii) A takes x to have some characteristic,

1. Ibid, p. 34
2. Ibid, p. 62
3. loc.cit.
4. (ii) could, of course, be merged into (iii) if it were explicitly stated that in taking x to have some characteristic, A must be able to discriminate x.
(iv) nothing is implied at this stage about the truth or falsity of the beliefs A acquires, at the time of the perceiving, about x.

***********

This argument has important consequences. It shows that we can reject the accounts given by Ryle and Armstrong of the conditions of perceiving. We have concluded, contra Ryle and Armstrong, that we can say truly that A perceives x without necessarily implying that all the beliefs A acquires about what he is perceiving are true. From this it follows that the tentative analysis put forward in opposition to Armstrong's account of perception must be correct.

According to Armstrong, if I claimed at time T1 that I see a yellow ball, and if I correct myself at time T2 by admitting that I in fact see an orange, then I imply that I had a sensory illusion at T1, and that I perceived something only at T2. If I say at time T3 "I thought that I saw a yellow ball at T1, because the orange looks like a yellow ball", I will only be reporting that I acquired, by means of the senses, certain false beliefs. According to the argument now developed, it is true at T1 that I see the orange. For by saying "I see a yellow ball", I imply (a) that there is a public perceptual object in my line of vision which is a proper visual stimulus for me, and (b) that I have discriminated
this public perceptual object from others in my line of vision by taking it to have some characteristic. Since there is an orange in my line of vision where I claim to see a yellow ball, and since I did take this public perceptual object to have some characteristic — viz. that of being a yellow ball, I have satisfied the conditions for non-propositional perceiving. I must have seen the orange at time T1, even though I did not at T1 see that it is an orange. Consequently, Armstrong and Ryle are mistaken in claiming that any perceiving-statement of the form "A perceives x" implies that all the beliefs which A acquires about x, at the time of the perceiving, are true.

Another vital consequence follows. If it is true that I perceived an orange at T1 even though I believed falsely that it was a yellow ball, then the Armstrong-type claim that the perceived qualities of a thing must be actual, physical, qualities of it is false. For the above argument shows that there is an important sense in which "I see something which looks a yellow ball" can be a perceiving-statement even though what the subject sees is not a yellow ball. This statement implies (i) that there is some public perceptual object in the subject's line of vision, and (ii) that he has discriminated it from other public perceptual objects in his line of vision by taking it to have some characteristic. Since the subject could properly claim that what he sees looks like a yellow ball without implying either that it is or that it is not a yellow ball,
his statement could be an instance of a non-propositional-perceiving-statement. Thus, the yellow ball look of the orange could be a proper perceptual characteristic of it.

**********

This conclusion cannot complete this analysis of the relations between perceiving and believing. It is true, I have concluded, that the Indian (non-propositionally) sees the car. But since the statement "The Indian sees the car" does not, in this non-propositional sense, imply that the Indian's beliefs are true, or that they are false, we are clearly speaking about him seeing the car in a special sense of "see". That he takes the car to be an animal implies, we might argue, that he fails in his seeing - i.e. implies that his experience is an instance of misperceiving. If anyone else, in the same circumstances, claims to see a car, his experience would, in contrast to the Indian's, be an instance of veridical perception.

We must, therefore, attempt to give some account of this additional sense of "see"; that sense in which questions about the truth or falsity of perceptual claims do arise. When this is done, the main aim of this chapter - that of giving an account of what is involved in the perceiving of public perceptual objects - will be satisfied.
Questions about the truth or falsity of perceptual claims could arise in the same way as they do with respect to non-committal claims of the form "x looks F" and "x looks like y". A statement such as "That looks like a log" could, I argued, be a claim to the effect that the speaker is seeing something (a public perceptual object) which has the look of a log. This statement will, in these circumstances, satisfy the prerequisites for non-propositional-perceiving-statements. If there is a public perceptual object where I claim to be perceiving one, and if, by taking it to have some characteristic, I have discriminated it from other public perceptual objects in my perceptual range, then my statement must be a perceptual report. My statement must be a report of a perceiving even if it so happens that the public perceptual object is (say) a crocodile and not a log.

Let us suppose, then, that the statement "That looks like a log" (uttered, say, by John) is a report of a perceiving. We can determine the truth or falsity of this statement on a simple level. We could ask whether the public perceptual object John is referring to does in fact have the look of a log. If we agree that it does have this look, then we can say that his statement is true in the same sense as that in which the non-committal statements "That (a distant kite) has the look of a bird (looks like a bird)" and "This (a piece of wire in the
grass) looks like a snake" may be true. If, on the other hand, we object that this public perceptual object just does not look like a log, we will be claiming that John's statement is (in an analogous way) false. But in deciding whether a statement is true or false in this sense, we imply nothing about the actual, physical, characteristics of the public perceptual object referred to. All that we affirm or deny is that this public perceptual object (no matter what it may in fact be) has a certain look.

When we wish to examine the truth or falsity of statements about the actual nature or characteristics of public perceptual objects, we must presuppose a level different from the one outlined above. Vesey's assertion that all seeing is seeing-as illustrates what this level must be.¹

Vesey argues that if I say "I see x", the thing which I claim to be seeing must look like something to me.² In other words, I must see it as something. The look of a thing, he contends, "is something phenomenal, not intellectual".³ But this does not imply that experience and judgement are not connected. For "what an object looks like to a person is what he would judge that object to be if he had no reason to judge otherwise".⁴

---

2. Ibid, p. 123
3. Ibid, p. 124
4. loc. cit.; Cf also p. 110
If Vesey's argument is adapted to the present discussion, it amounts to this:

If some perceptual statements are to be more than just reports of simple or non-propositional perceiving, and if the conditions for the truth or falsity of these statements are to be different from those for the truth or falsity of non-committal perceiving-statements, these other perceptual statements must be treated as conjunctions of at least two statements. For example, if I say "I see a tree", then my statement must be unpacked into the two statements (a) "I am seeing something (a public perceptual object) which looks like a tree", and (b) "What I am seeing is what it looks like - i.e. is a tree".

From this it follows that if we are to speak about, for example, the Indian's perceptual statement being true or false (or, of his being either successful or unsuccessful in his seeing), then we must assume that he takes what he sees to actually be what it looks like. If, however, we know or believe that he has reason to think otherwise - i.e. if he does not take what he sees to be what it looks like, we must take his statement to be a non-committal one of the form "I see a public perceptual object which looks like an animal". This new statement must be different from the first, since its truth or falsity will hinge, not on whether the

---

1. Ibid, p. 110-1
public perceptual object referred to is an animal, but
on whether it happens to have the look referred to -
i.e. the look of an animal.

This shows that the utilisation of knowledge
of the looks of things is vital for non-propositional
or simple seeing, as well as for successful/unsuccessful
seeing. In general, it will not be true that A simply
or non-propositionally perceives x if A is unable to
utilise some knowledge of the appearances of things in
his discriminating x from other public perceptual objects
in his perceptual range. It will also not be true that
A is successful or unsuccessful in his perceiving x if
the knowledge of the appearances of things, which he
utilises in discriminating x, did not result in his
acquiring true or false beliefs about what he is perceiving.

In the Indian example, we say that he sees the car,
partly because by utilising some knowledge of the looks of
things, he succeeds in discriminating the car from other
public perceptual objects in his line of vision. But
we also say that he is unsuccessful, or fails, in his
seeing (that he misperceives), because the utilisation
of this knowledge leads him to acquire a false belief
about what he is seeing - viz. the false belief that he
is seeing an animal.

We can sum this up in the following way:

Talk about success or failure in perceiving, or
about the truth or falsity of a perceiving-statement,

1. Cf Soltis, op.cit., pp. 65ff
arises when we ask if the way in which a person discriminates a public perceptual object from others in his perceptual range results in his acquiring true or false beliefs about this public perceptual object.

Success or failure in perceiving, thus, depends upon the knowledge which is utilised in perceiving, and knowledge enters perceiving primarily at the level of knowing the appearances of things - i.e. at the level of knowing how things appear when we observe them. Some knowledge of this kind must be utilised by A before we can say truly that he perceives x, and the utilisation of this knowledge results in A being either successful or unsuccessful in his perceiving x.

Soltis argues that although knowledge of the looks of things is the primary level at which knowledge is utilised in seeing, successful seeing usually presupposes a level involving the utilisation of further cognitive elements.¹ These are, he says, knowing the name or label of the thing seen, and knowing something more about it - i.e. something other than its label or its looks. Much of this additional knowledge is, he claims, of the "expectation" kind. This knowledge is the sort whose utilisation leads to a set of expectations about the future actions and/or characteristics of the object. There is also, he argues further, knowledge of an "embellishment-producing" kind utilised in seeing. For example, if I know that the thermos which I see is a

¹. loc.cit.
present given to me earlier, my seeing of it would be enhanced. My seeing of the thermos would be given a broader meaning and significance.¹

Soltis' analysis, even if it is incorrect in detail, shows that there are various levels on which the utilisation of knowledge can lead to seeing in particular, and to perceiving in general, being correct or mistaken. Soltis argues that we can, by utilising various kinds of knowledge, acquire four basic types of belief about what we are seeing.² These are:

(1) true or false beliefs about the existence of x;
(2) true or false beliefs about the category or class of x;
(3) true or false beliefs about the physical characteristics of x;
(4) true or false beliefs with respect to utilised knowledge about x.

This four-fold division is sufficient for our purposes. For it brings out the main points which have arisen in the argument so far. Consider the following example:

1. Ibid, p. 88
2. Ibid, p. 118
Suppose, once more, that I say "I see a bent stick". This statement, I have argued, will be a perceptual report only if there is in my line of vision some public perceptual object, which I discriminate from other public perceptual objects in my line of vision by taking it to have some characteristic. Thus, we must reject Armstrong's claim that perceiving is the acquiring of knowledge about the physical world by means of the senses. However, for the purposes of the present argument, we must say that Armstrong is correct in so far as this statement will not be a perceptual report if there is nothing to be seen - i.e. no public perceptual object where the subject claims to be perceiving one. If there is no public perceptual object where I claim to see one, I must be having a sensory illusion - e.g. an hallucination. If these first conditions are satisfied, then it will be true that I at least (non-propositionally) perceived the stick. If it is to be a propositional-perceiving-statement, my statement must be one to the effect that I see that this public perceptual object is a stick and that I see that it is bent. If what I see is a stick, then I will have acquired a true belief about the class of what I see - i.e. a true belief of type (2). If the stick is in fact bent, I will have acquired a true belief about the physical characteristics of what I see - i.e. a true belief of type (3). If,

1. In Chapter 4, I will challenge this assumption. I will argue that a statement can be construed as a report of a perceiving even if beliefs of type (1) are false.
however, either of these last two beliefs is false, I
will, in Soltis' terms, have failed in my seeing. I
will have misperceived.

This example shows that if we are to speak of
A being either successful or unsuccessful in his perceiving
a public perceptual object, it must be true that A perceives
the public perceptual object in this simple or non-
propositional sense. We may say that A is successful in
perceiving x (a public perceptual object) if A non-
propositionally perceives x, and if all the beliefs which
A acquires about x, at the time of the perceiving, are
ture. On the other hand, we must say that A is
unsuccessful in his perceiving x if at least one of the
beliefs he acquires about x is false. 

**********

1. Soltis' account of successful/unsuccessful seeing
is much the same as Chisholm's account of
"propositional perceiving" (op.cit., Chapter 1).
Chisholm defines this use of "perceive" in the
following way:

"There is something which S perceives to be f"
means: there is an x which is f and which appears
in some way to S; S takes x to be f; and S has
adequate evidence for the proposition that x is f.
(Ibid, p. 3)

He says that the statement "S has adequate evidence
for the proposition that h" means in this context
"It would be unreasonable for S to accept non-h"
(Ibid, p. 5). Chisholm claims, like Soltis, that
this propositional sense of "perceive" is dependent
on the non-propositional sense. He argues that we
We can sum up this analysis of the relations between perceiving and believing by summarising the two fundamental ways in which statements of the form "A perceives x" can be used.

(1) The first is a basic, or non-propositional, use in which we can say truly that A perceives x (a) if x is a proper stimulus for A, (b) if A discriminates x from other public perceptual objects in his perceptual range, (c) if, in discriminating x, A takes what he is perceiving to have some characteristic. In this sense, the original statement implies nothing about the truth or falsity of the beliefs A acquires about what he is perceiving. In other words, the original statement "A perceives x" does not imply the statement "A perceives that it is x (an x)".

(2) The second is a secondary, or propositional, use in which a statement of the form "A perceives x" does imply that A's beliefs about what he is perceiving are all true. If there is no public perceptual object where A claims to be perceiving one, or if he fails to discriminate x from other public perceptual objects in his perceptual range, then A (in Soltis' sense) fails to perceive. If, however, it is true that A perceives x in sense (1), then A may be

can, in general, say that "S perceives that x is f" entails "S perceives x" and "S perceives f". However, the converse does not hold. For example, the statement "Jones saw that a boy was running away" entails that Jones saw a boy. But the statement "Jones saw the thief" does not entail the statement "Jones saw that there was an x which was a thief" (Ibid, pp. 164-5).
either successful or unsuccessful in his perceiving. If all the beliefs he acquires, at the time of the perceiving, about this public perceptual object are true, then he is successful in his seeing. If at least one of these beliefs is false, then A is unsuccessful in his seeing. In this sense, a statement of the form "A perceives x" does imply the statement "A perceives that it is x".

VI

This analysis of perception, even though it is sketchy, has offered a solution to the problems posed at the beginning of this chapter. It will, therefore, provide a sufficient basis for an examination of Sartre's assertion that no imagining can be a perceiving. This critical analysis will be the subject of the next chapter.
CHAPTER 3

ASPECTS AND PICTURES

I

Even though Sartre asserts that it is universally true that no imagining can be a perceiving, I will restrict my examination of his contention to a consideration of only two sorts of imagining.1 These are instances such as the seeing of Peter (a) in photographs, portraits, caricatures - i.e. cases where the elements of the analogue are obviously representative, and (b) in spots on walls, clouds, fires, heaps of stones - i.e. cases where the elements of the analogue are not obviously or explicitly representative.2

II

A major problem raised by Sartre's analysis of imagination concerns the logical status of seeing-as-statements. This does not make an examination of his account easy, for there is no clear-cut solution to the problem of what such statements imply, and of what conditions must obtain before they will be true.

---

1. This restriction on the choice of examples can be justified in the same way as the restriction applied at the beginning of Chapter 2 (pp. 27-29).
2. Cf. The Psychology of Imagination, Chapter 2
It is sometimes argued that statements such as "I see the cloud as an organist" report visual perceptions. But against this, it has also been argued that such statements can never be true reports of perceiving.

Vesey, for example, argues that "all seeing is seeing-as"¹, and draws from this the conclusion that the seeing of x as y must be phenomenal and not intellectual.² His argument is, basically, that in order for anyone to say truly that he sees something, that thing must look like something to the observer, or must look to have some quality.³ Whenever we see anything, Vesey contends, we must see it as something.⁴

We can maintain this for all cases of seeing, he says, even though the expressions "x looks like y" and "x looks F" are admittedly ambiguous. We often use these two expressions when we have some reason to believe that x is not y or is not F.⁵ For example, "we say 'It looks like a torpedo' when we have reason to believe that the object may not really be what it looks like. A reason to believe that an object which looked like a torpedo was not one would be that no one was at war".⁶ In this sense, contends Vesey, what "an object looks like to somebody is what, on looking at it, that person would take it to be, if he had no reason to think otherwise".⁷

¹. op.cit., p. 114
². Ibid, pp. 123-4
³. Ibid, pp. 110,123
⁴. Ibid, pp. 111-3
⁵. Ibid, p. 109
⁶. loc.cit.
⁷. Ibid, p. 110
On the other hand, we also say this when we know that $x$ is not $y$, or is not $F$. For example, we sometimes say of a formation of rocks, or of an inkblot, that it looks like, or that we see it as (say), an organist playing an organ. But in this sense, unlike the first, we do not suggest that the look of a thing could confuse anyone. When we say that the formation of rocks or the inkblot looks like an organist, "we do not wish to suggest that the appearance of the object might mislead people into thinking that it really was an organist playing an organ, or a picture of one". If I do see the inkblot as an organist, I know perfectly well that what I am seeing is not an organist or a picture of an organist. I am, argues Vesey, perfectly free to refrain from seeing the inkblot as something which I know it is not.

But, he argues further, even though I can refrain from engaging in seeing-as in this second sense, it is difficult, in the first sense, to understand what meaning could be given to a thing not looking like anything when it is seen.

What is true, then, is that it makes sense to say than an inkblot does not, in the sense of 'looks like' in which to somebody it looks like an organist, look like anything to somebody else, who nevertheless sees it clearly. In the other sense of 'looks like', however, it is hard to see what meaning could be given to talk of something not looking like anything.

1. Ibid, p. 111
2. Ibid, pp. 112-3
3. Ibid, p. 113
'I saw it, but I didn't see it as anything' seems to be self-contradictory, unless we choose to apply the expression 'not seeing it as anything' either (a) when what something is seen as is so indefinite as to be of negligible value in indicating what the object is, or (b) when what is seen is so strange as to defy description.

Stadler, on the other hand, argues that seeing-as-statements can be true only when used to report the experience of something visually ambiguous.2,3 The reason for this, she argues, is that the relationship between, for example, seeing a flower and seeing a flower as a violet is not (as Vesey-type analyses suggest) the same as that between seeing a trick-figure and seeing a trick-figure as a duck. The differences between these cases can be brought out in the following way:

---

1. loc.cit.
2. "On 'Seeing As'", Philosophical Review, Vol. LXVII, 1958, pp. 91-4
3. Stadler's paper is a discussion and criticism of an article by N. Fleming ("Recognising and Seeing As", Philosophical Review, Vol. LXVI, 1957, pp. 161-79). Fleming supports Vesey's conclusions about seeings-as. He also argues that seeing-as-statements need not be limited to reports of the experience of what is visually ambiguous. He claims that seeing-as-statements can be true reports of seeings. The visual experience of the observer changes, he argues, depending on how the object is seen; on whether the observer simply sees it, or sees it as something else.
When A saw the trick figure as a duck (or as a picture of a duck) one can say, and say truly, that a particular trick figure was seen by A; one cannot say truly that a particular duck (or picture of a duck) was seen by A. When A saw the configuration of lines on the Braque canvas as the form of a man one can say truly that a particular configuration of lines was seen by A, not that a particular form of a man was seen by A. When A saw the ink blot as the head of a dragon, one can say truly that a particular ink blot was seen by A, not that a particular head of a dragon was seen by A. But when A recognized the first flower held up by the quiz master as a violet, one can say truly both that a particular flower was seen by A and that a particular violet was seen by A; there was a flower to be seen and that flower was in fact a violet.

Stadler says that an analogy with a theme and its variation is one way of marking the distinction between these two different types of seeing-as.

That which can be truly said to have been seen by A ..... is the theme; that which cannot be truly said to have been seen by A ..... is the variation. When A recognized the first flower as a violet there were two themes - seeing the flower, seeing the violet; there was no variation. ..... Seeing as is 'restricted' to cases where there are visual alternatives that are related as is a theme to its variation.

So seeing a trick figure as a duck (or as a picture of a duck) will, to Stadler, be a proper case of seeing-as. There is, in such circumstances, a theme and a variation -

1. op.cit., p. 93
2. loc.cit.
it is true that the subject sees a trick figure but false
that he sees a duck or a picture of a duck.¹

These two analyses bring out some of the issues
involved in Sartre's claim that typical reports of acts of
imagining are seeing-as-statements, which cannot be true
if presumed to be reports of perceivings. Which of these
two accounts (if either) is correct?

**********

There is a problem involved in any attempt to
deal directly with these two arguments. This is that the
account of perception outlined in Chapter 2 appears to be
compatible with two analyses of seeing-as-statements, which
are as much opposed as are the accounts of Stadler and
Vesey. We can derive the first of these two opposed
preliminary analyses by reformulating Stadler's argument in
the light of the conclusions reached in Chapter 2.
The second can be drawn more directly from the distinction
made between propositional and non-propositional perceiving.

Suppose that we drop Stadler's notion that seeing
a flower as a violet involves two themes and no variation.
We might, then, argue that the statement that it is true
that A sees the flower implies that A's utilised knowledge
of the looks of things (the knowledge which A utilises in

1. This claim that it is not true that I see a picture of
a duck depends upon an assumption by Stadler that x
can be a picture of y only if someone explicitly
intended that x should be a picture of y.
discriminating this public perceptual object from others in his line of vision) results in his acquiring two true beliefs about what he sees. These are the true belief that the public perceptual object in his line of vision is a member of the class of flowers, and the true belief that it is a member of the class of violets. Since A believes truly that what he sees is a member of the class of flowers, it is true that he sees a flower. Furthermore, since A believes truly that what he sees is a member of the class of violets, it is true that he sees a violet. We might, on the other hand, argue that the statement "A sees the trick-figure as a duck (or a picture of a duck)" implies that if A had attempted to place what he perceives in more than one class of public perceptual objects, he would acquire only one true belief. He would be belief-successful only if he classified what he sees as a trick-figure, or as lines on paper. If he classified it either as a duck or as a picture of a duck, he would be belief-unsuccessful, and would fail in his seeing. That is, he would misperceive if he believed that what he is seeing is anything other than a trick-figure or lines on paper.

This reformulated version of Stadler's analysis depends on an implicit claim about the conditions which a statement of the form "A sees x as y" must satisfy, if it is to be a true report of a visual perception. If any statement of the form "A sees x as y" is to be a true report of a perceiving, it must be equivalent to the complex statement "A sees x and A sees y". A further implicit claim follows from this one. Such a conjunction will be true only if the statement "x is y" is true. If this
statement is false, one or other of the conjuncts must be false.

Consider again the earlier examples. The statement "A sees the flower as a violet" could, on this revised analysis, be a true perceiving-statement. But the statement "I see the trick-figure as a duck" cannot be. Since the flower is a violet — i.e. since it is true that this public perceptual object is a member of the class of flowers and a member of the class of violets, it is true that A sees a flower and true that A sees a violet. But since the trick-figure is not a member of both the class of trick-figures and the class of ducks (or the class of pictures of ducks), it is not true that A sees a trick-figure and a duck (or a picture of a duck). Since it is true that A sees a trick-figure, it must be false that A sees a duck (or a picture of a duck). Consequently, the statement "A sees the trick-figure as a duck" will be false if it is construed as a perceiving-statement.

The second preliminary analysis of seeing-as-statements could begin with the argument that A's statement "I see the trick-figure as a duck" implies that A is seeing a trick-figure which looks like a duck (or a picture of a duck). Since A is claiming that he sees a public perceptual object, which is a trick-figure, and which has the characteristic of looking like a duck (or a picture of a duck), his statement does not imply that A is perceiving something which can be classified in two distinct ways. We need no longer assume, then, that A is claiming that what he sees is a member of both the class of trick-figures and the class of ducks (or of pictures of ducks). A might
be claiming no more than that he is seeing a public perceptual object, which is a member of the class of trick-figures, and which has the characteristic (the publicly observable characteristic) of looking like a duck (or a picture of a duck). Consequently, the truth or falsity of this statement will now hinge not on whether the seen object is a member of two specific classes, but on whether it is a member of a specific class and has a specific characteristic. In Soltis' terms, we could say that if we did wish to query the truth or falsity of A's beliefs about what he sees, then we will be examining them on two levels and not just the one. We would have to decide whether A is belief-successful in taking what he sees to be a member of the class of trick-figures, and whether he is belief-successful in taking it to have the characteristic of looking like a duck (or a picture of a duck). Since it may be true that this object is a trick-figure, and true that it looks like a duck (or a picture of a duck), A may be successful in his seeing. Thus, it could, in this context, be true that the statement "I see the trick-figure as a duck" reports a perceiving.

The first of these two preliminary analyses offers some support for Sartre's account of imagination. Suppose that I conjure up an image of Peter and say "I see Peter". According to Sartre, this statement must be one to the effect that I am seeing (say) a spot on the wall as the absent Peter. According to the first preliminary analysis, we must say that it will be true that the statement "I see a spot on the wall as the absent Peter" reports a perceiving only if what the subject sees is both a spot on the wall and Peter. Since it is false that what I see is Peter, and
since it is true that what I see is a member of the class of spots on walls, it must be false that I see Peter. Hence, the statement "I see the spot on the wall as Peter" cannot be a true report of a perceiving. Furthermore, since this seeing the spot on the wall as Peter's face is not an instance of mistperceiving, this statement cannot, on Sartre's analysis, be in any sense a report of a perceiving.

The second preliminary analysis is opposed to such an argument. According to this analysis, we could say that my statement "I see the spot on the wall as Peter" implies no more than that I am seeing a public perceptual object, which is a member of the class of spots on walls, and which has the characteristic of looking like Peter. I could, therefore, be successful in my seeing if it is true that what I perceive is a member of the class I believe it to be, and if it is true that it has the characteristic I believe it has. In other words, this example is not, as Sartre claims it is, an obvious case of a non-perceptual experience.\(^1\) The conclusions of this second preliminary analysis can be summed up in this way: if seeing faces in spots on walls and in lines on paper are, as Sartre claims,

---

1. Even if one of the beliefs involved here was always false, and even if I was, as a result, unsuccessful in my seeing, Sartre would not accept this as a legitimate analysis of seeing-as. For these seeings-as would, then, be instances of mistaken perceiving, and mistaken perceiving are, to him, always forms of perceiving. (Cf The Psychology of Imagination, p. 239; Imagination, pp. 87, 97)
acts of imagining, then since these seeings—as are perceiving, imagining cannot be completely unlike, and opposed to, perceiving.

**********

Sartre would reject out of hand the objection implicit in this second preliminary analysis. He would, furthermore, also reject the defence implicit in the first preliminary analysis. He would argue that when I conjure up an image of a face by looking at a spot on a wall, I do not claim that I am seeing the spot on the wall as a face. I claim that I am seeing an absent or non-existent person's face. Because of this, I cannot, as is supposed by the objection implicit in the second preliminary analysis, be aware of the spot qua spot on wall. The inadequacy of this objection, and of the defence put up by the first preliminary analysis, Sartre might continue, is particularly obvious in the case of our seeing what is represented in a photograph or painting. When I look at a painting and say "I see Peter", I do not imply that I am aware of something such as a piece of coloured canvas, which has the additional characteristic of looking like Peter. I imply, in fact, that I am no longer aware of the paint-on-canvas qua paint-on-canvas. The objection and the defence are, he might conclude, invalid for this reason. The statement "I am seeing something which looks like Peter" might conceivably be true, but such a statement can only report my perception of the analogue. When I imagine, or conjure up an image of, Peter by means of this analogue, I see the real Peter who is absent, and, thus, I am conscious only of Peter-as-image.
This Sartrean counter-objection is highly significant. It displays forcefully that Sartre's account of seeing-as (and consequently his account of imagining) depends upon a claim about what is implied by true seeing-statements and true seeing-as-statements, and, as a result, upon a claim about the nature of the beliefs involved in seeing-as. According to Sartre, if I say "I am imagining y" ("I see x as y"), my statement can only (i) imply that I believe (a) that y is absent or (b) that y is non-existent or (c) that y is existing elsewhere, or (ii) imply that I have no beliefs about the existence or non-existence of y. It is for this reason that he would reject any argument that my statement "I see Peter" (used to report my seeing what a painting represents) implies that I see a public perceptual object (the paint-on-canvas), which has the publicly observable characteristic of looking like Peter. Such an argument, Sartre would contend, mistakenly asserts that statements of the form "I see x as y" imply that I am seeing an x which is y-like. Since the beliefs involved in acts of imagining must be restricted to the four referred to above, the belief-statement "I am seeing an x which is y-like" cannot be implied by a statement of the form "I see x as y".

A further vital point follows from this counter-objection. Sartre's analysis of imagination depends upon a particular account of seeing-as, and this counter-objection shows that his conclusions about the nature of seeing-as-statements depend, in part, upon a restricted account of the beliefs implied by such statements. Consequently, if
we wish to examine Sartre's analysis of imagination, we must consider whether such a restriction is legitimate.

III

Gombrich's account of what is involved in seeing what is represented in paintings contains an implicit rejection of the restrictions which Sartre places on the beliefs involved in seeings-as. Gombrich's main argument is that to see something, for example, as a representation of a lion is to be disposed to take that thing for an actual lion, and the degree to which we are disposed to take it for a lion, is an index of the worth of the thing as a representation. His chief conclusions are that any representation can be termed a partial or inhibited illusion, and that to see anything as a representation is to enter into this illusion. In other words, Gombrich concludes, contra Sartre, that seeings-as are typified by beliefs similar to those involved in seeings; more precisely, by beliefs similar to those involved in mistaken seeings.

Let us consider this argument in more detail. "To 'see'”, says Gombrich, "means to guess at something 'out there' …“ Perception, he continues,

1. Art and Illusion, Kingsport, 1960
2. Ibid, pp. 206-11, 260-5, 280
4. op.cit., p. 301
is a process in which the next phase of what will appear when we test our interpretation is all but anticipated. To experience the sight of a penny or a dinner plate and to read it as such is to experience the anticipation that the shape will become rounder in a predictable way if we crane our neck a little and look at it from higher up.¹

This shows, he argues, that:

All perceiving relates to expectations and therefore to comparisons. When we say that from the air houses appear like toys to us, or human beings like ants, we mean, I suggest, that we are startled by the unfamiliar sight of a house that compares to the familiar sight of a toy on the nursery floor. We feel that but for our knowledge we might have been deceived and have almost mistaken the one for the other.²

It follows from this, he continues, that the basis for perceptual illusions must lie "in the conviction that there is only one way of interpreting the visual pattern in front of us".³ This principle must, he says, be extended to images even though ambiguity "is clearly the key to the whole problem of image reading".⁴ It must be true of image-reading because the ambiguity, which is essential for images, can never be seen as such.⁵ For example, if I am to see an ink blot as a bat or a butterfly, the shape of the blot must be such that the visual pattern which it creates is ambiguous. It must be possible for me

1. Ibid, p. 303
2. Ibid, p. 301
3. Ibid, p. 249
4. Ibid, p. 238
5. Ibid, p. 249
to interpret the shape of the blot in more than one way. But, according to Gombrich, when I see the blot as a bat, I am not, and cannot be, aware of the ambiguity as such. What we read into these accidental shapes depends on our capacity to recognise in them things or images we find stored in our minds. To interpret such a blot as, say, a bat or a butterfly means some act of perceptual classification - in the filing system of my mind I pigeonhole it with butterflies I have seen or dreamed of.¹

This leads Gombrich to the central point of his analysis. Paintings must, he contends, be illusions, even though they are only occasionally illusions about our real environment.² Like all illusions, the illusions of paintings are due to the interaction of clues and to the absence of contradictory evidence.³ This partly explains, he argues further, why we still experience an illusion when we see a picture on a wall or in a book. When we see a picture in a book or on a wall, we first read the picture for consistency, and this consistency, the interaction of clues, is not wholly upset by our changing viewpoint. The painting may cease to be consistent with the world around it, but it remains closely knit within its own system of references. The frame sets off what Leonardo called a microcosm, and if this microcosm contains no jarring refutations of our attempted reading, we will read as if we saw it from where the artist stood.⁴

---

1. *Ibid*, pp. 182-3
2. *Ibid*, p. 277
4. *Ibid*, p. 277
Gombrich concludes that to see x as a picture of y is to see the object sometimes as x, and sometimes as y. We can, for example, see a picture of a battle horse both as a plane surface and as a battle horse.

But is it possible to 'see' both the plane surface and the battle horse at the same time? If we have been right so far, the demand is for the impossible. To understand the battle horse is for a moment to disregard the plane surface. We cannot have it both ways.

This conclusion - that we cannot at the same time see what is represented in a painting and see the object which amounts to Sartre's analogue - appears to make at least part of Gombrich's analysis of seeings-as compatible with Sartre's. But this would be the only point of agreement. For Gombrich argues that my claim that I see the battle horse is a statement to the effect that I have "entered into an illusion" by subverting my belief that I am not perceiving an actual battle horse. My statement implies that I am no longer aware of any ambiguity in what I see - viz. the ambiguity that it could be taken to be either a plane surface or a battle horse, and implies that, by a process of perceptual classification, I have come to believe that what I see is an actual battle horse. This shows, Gombrich concludes, that in some proper sense of "see", it is true that I see the battle horse. Consequently, the beliefs involved in this seeing-as cannot be limited to those referred to in Sartre's four-fold division. Gombrich's and Sartre's analyses are, therefore, incompatible. If Gombrich is

1. Ibid, p. 279
correct, then Sartre's account of seeing-as is mistaken, and, by extension, so is his account of imagining.

**********

This outline of Gombrich's analysis shows that the broad disagreement between Sartre-type and Gombrich-type analyses stems from different accounts of the sorts of belief which are involved in seeings-as. Sartre and Gombrich argue that seeings and seeings-as both involve certain typical beliefs. But they differ on the issue of whether the beliefs involved in seeings-as can be the same as those involved in some forms of seeing. In other words, they disagree in a fundamental way about what seeing-statements and seeing-as-statements imply.

Sartre and Gombrich both argue that there are two different ranges of contexts in which a verb such as "see" can be used. Since they disagree over what seeing-statements imply in these two types of context, the opposition between their analyses could be reframed in terms of this disagreement.

The first range of contexts is that in which propositional- and non-propositional-perceiving-statements occur. A statement of the form "A sees x" implies, in such contexts, (1) that the subject sees that the public perceptual object in his line of vision is x (or an x), or (2) that the subject, through utilising some knowledge of the looks of things (perhaps of y), has succeeded in
discriminating $x$ from other public perceptual objects in his line of vision. For example, the statement "I see Peter" implies either (i) that the subject sees that the public perceptual object in his line of vision is Peter – he believes truly that this object is Peter, or (ii) that the subject has, through utilising his knowledge of the looks of Peter, discriminated some public perceptual object (which need not be Peter) – he sees something even though he believes falsely that it is Peter.

The second range of contexts is that in which a statement of the form "A sees $x$" implies that the subject sees $x$ in, or by means of, some other public perceptual object. In these contexts, the statement "I see Peter" will not imply either (i) that the subject sees that some public perceptual object is Peter; that he believes truly that some public perceptual object in his line of vision is Peter, or (ii) that he sees some public perceptual object which he believes mistakenly is Peter. For example, if I say "I see Peter" when looking at a painting, I will normally not believe that what I see (the paint-on-canvas) is Peter. I may be noticing something in the paint-on-canvas, which leads me to say that I see something I may well believe this object is not. I may say that I see Peter, even though I believe that Peter is not present, at that time, as a public perceptual object in my line of vision.

Sartre and Gombrich both argue that it can be true that I see a painting in the sense of seeing that it is a plane surface covered with blobs of pigment. Gombrich,
however, adds that it can also be true that I see the object which the painting represents, since my seeing the paint-on-canvas and my seeing the represented object involve a utilisation of my knowledge of the looks of public perceptual objects. Thus, to Gombrich, seeing-statements from both ranges of contexts could constitute true perceiving-statements. Sartre's analysis is diametrically opposed to this. While agreeing that seeing-statements from the first range of contexts can be true perceiving-statements, he contends that seeing-statements from the second range can never be true if they are presumed to be perceptual reports. Such statements can only be about forms of imagining, and, therefore, can never be about perceivings.

Thus, we can resolve the main question in this dispute - the question of what beliefs are involved in seeings-as - to this:

Can statements reporting the seeing of something in, or by means of, a public perceptual object be true if they are construed as reports of perceivings?

**********

Gombrich's view that statements reporting our seeing something in, or by means of, public perceptual
objects can be true perceiving-statements could be defended in the following way: 1

It might be argued that even if the seeing of something in, or by means of, some public perceptual object is not a form of perceiving, I must, in such seeings, at least perceive, or have perceived, some public perceptual object which has specific observable characteristics. 2 If, on looking at a painting, I say "I see Peter's face" (which will be an example of a statement from the second range of contexts), then I must at least see, or have seen, a public perceptual object which I believe is of a certain kind and has specific characteristics. In these particular circumstances, I must at least have seen, for example, a piece of canvas whose observable characteristics are causal effects of the artist's use of brush and pigment. So in seeing an aspect of the paint-on-canvas - i.e. in seeing something which the public perceptual object in my line of vision is not, I must at least see a public perceptual object of a certain kind. Consequently, my statement that I am seeing Peter's face must be dependent in some way on

---

1. I am basing the discussion which follows on points raised by Wittgenstein (Philosophical Investigations, Oxford, 1958, Part II, xi), and Hide Ishiguro ("Imagination (II)" Aristotelian Society, Supp. Vol. XLI, 1967, pp. 37-56). This argument is not, however, intended to be an exposition of their views.

2. In the discussion which follows, I will use the word "aspect" to refer to that which is seen in, or by means of, some public perceptual object. For example, instead of saying that A can see something (say, an organist) in, or by means of, the ink blot, I will now say "A sees an aspect of the ink blot (viz. that it has the look of an organist)."
a statement to the effect that I am seeing (in either the propositional or non-propositional sense) a public perceptual object.

The first conclusion to be stressed is that any statement to the effect that a person is seeing an aspect of something cannot be true if the subject has not first seen all, or part of, some public perceptual object in his line of vision. From this it follows that when I say "I see Peter's face", I imply that there is something about the organisation, arrangement, or pattern, of the characteristics of the public perceptual object in my line of vision which enables me to utilise, in my seeing of it, my knowledge of the looks of Peter's face. In other words, there must be something about the paint-on-canvas which enables me to utilise my knowledge of the looks of Peter's face in discriminating all, or part, of the paint-on-canvas from other public perceptual objects in my line of vision.

We can now move to a further stage in this extension of Gombrich's argument. Suppose that I am asked to describe what I see when I am looking at a painting, and I reply "A piece of canvas". Such a reply will indicate that I have acquired, by the utilisation of knowledge of the looks of things, at least one true belief about the class of the public perceptual object in my line of vision. Suppose, too, that I am asked the further question "What more do you see?", and I reply "The canvas is coloured with such-and-such shades of paint". If the
canvas does in fact have this characteristic, then I will still be belief-successful in my seeing of it. My questioner might, however, feel that I have missed the point of his question. "What exactly is this?" he might ask. My reply "A painting" may indicate that I have once more interpreted his question as "To what further class does this public perceptual object belong?" Since I may be able to recognise that this public perceptual object is a member of the class of paintings without knowing anything about paintings - e.g. that they are often supposed to be representations, my reply could once more be on what Soltis calls the "label level". All three replies could, therefore, be what Sartre might call "Statements about my perception of the analogue".

But, the argument might now run, if I am asked "What can you see in, or by means of, the painting?" or more simply "What is this a painting of?", I cannot simply offer another classification of the public perceptual object in my line of vision. Any correct reply must presuppose a level different from that outlined by my previous replies. The question of what this level is marks the difference between Sartre's account and that of Gombrich. Sartre would hold that no true statement used as a reply to these questions can be construed as a report of a perceiving. If, in answer to this question, I had said "I see (or can see) Peter", this statement must, on Sartre's analysis, be a report of an imaginative consciousness of the absent Peter. However, a different solution can be reached if we press on with Gombrich's argument.

Suppose that I am asked why I say that I see Peter. I might well reply "Because this is obviously a
painting of Peter". If asked the further question "Why do you claim that this is a painting of Peter?", I could justify my original reply by saying "Because this - and I might point to certain areas of paint on the surface of the canvas - looks like Peter". This justification of my reply consists in a claim that the pattern of patches of colour on certain parts of the paint surface is such that I can utilise my knowledge of the looks of Peter's face in discriminating these parts of the paint surface from others. "I can see Peter", I might say, "because this part of the canvas has areas of paint arranged in such a way that it has the look of Peter's face. It looks the way Peter would look if he were seen at a distance against such a background." Because my statement "I see Peter" implies that part of the paint surface looks like Peter's face, it also implies that if I did not have good reasons for holding the contrary - such as knowing that what is represented in the painting is not consistent with the surroundings of the painting, I would take this look of the paint surface to be an indication that I am seeing the real Peter.¹ That is, but for these other beliefs, I would have believed that the public perceptual object I am seeing is the real Peter.

¹. This is what I take Gombrich to mean when he says that seeing what a painting represents is "entering into an illusion", and that, but for our knowledge to the contrary, we would, for example, take the toy-like look of houses seen from the air to be an indication that we are seeing real toy houses. (Cf Art and Illusion, p. 301)
An important conclusion has been reached. Since I would, but for good reasons for believing the contrary, have taken the look of the paint-on-canvas to be an indication that I am seeing the real Peter, it is only these beliefs which prevent me from taking this seeing what is represented in a painting to be seeing the real Peter. Thus, there can be nothing in the seeing of an aspect itself which could indicate that I am not seeing (in the propositional or non-propositional sense) some public perceptual object, or some characteristic of a public perceptual object. The seeing of an aspect of a public perceptual object, and, in particular, the seeing of what paintings represent, could be perceiving.

**********

The fact that Gombrich does not accept Sartre's four-fold division of the beliefs involved in seeings-as permits him to put forward the following analysis of my statement "I see Peter" (uttered when I am looking at a painting):

Since such a statement always implies that I see a public perceptual object having such-and-such characteristics, my statement implies that I see the paint-on-canvas - that I have at least discriminated the paint-on-canvas from other objects in my line of vision by taking it to have some characteristic. My statement also implies that but for knowing or believing that what is represented in the paint-on-canvas does not fit in with (is not
consistent with) its surroundings, I would have believed that I was in fact seeing the real Peter. My statement implies, that is, that there is a pattern, or organisation, in the patches of colour on the surface of the canvas which enables me to take this public perceptual object (the paint-on-canvas) to be something which I know it is not.

Thus, there can, on Gombrich's analysis, be no logical differences between statements drawn from the two ranges of contexts referred to earlier. The general conclusion of his objection to Sartre's account of seeing-as (and thus of imagining) must be that statements such as "I see Peter" (uttered when the subject is looking at a painting) can be true perceiving-statements.

IV

Sartre might employ one last line of defence against the conclusion that seeing what is represented in a painting is an instance of perceiving. Such a conclusion, he might object, typifies the "illusion of immanence". The illusion of immanence amounts to the same mistaken metaphysical claim as that made by image-theories of imagination - viz. the claim that there can be objects other than existing public perceptual objects. For any assertion that we perceive what is represented in a painting implies that an unreal object (viz. the aesthetic object) is an object of perception - something which is in fact perceived at the time of our looking at, and seeing, the paint-on-canvas. Such an assertion, contends Sartre, is as unsatisfactory as the claim that we see, hear, etc., our images.
The work of art\textsuperscript{1}, says Sartre, is an unreality\textsuperscript{2} - i.e. it is always an absent or non-existent object. Consider, for example, the portrait of Charles VIII. This Charles VIII, argues Sartre, is obviously an object.

But this, obviously, is not the same object as is the painting, the canvas, which are the real objects of the painting. As long as we observe the canvas and the frame for themselves the esthetic object 'Charles VIII' will not appear. It is not that it is hidden by the picture, but because it cannot present itself to a realizing consciousness. It will appear at the moment when consciousness, undergoing a radical change in which the world is negated, will itself become imaginative. ... This Charles VIII on the canvas is necessarily the correlative of the intentional act of an imaginative consciousness. And since this Charles VIII, who is an unreality so long as he is grasped on the canvas, is precisely the object of our aesthetic appreciations (it is he who 'moves' us, who is 'painted with intelligence, power, and grace', etc), we are led to recognize that, in a picture, the esthetic object is something unreal.\textsuperscript{3}

Sartre argues, in other words, that what is real - that which we do perceive when we look at a painting - are such things as the results of the brush-strokes on the canvas, the stickiness of the canvas, and its grain. But these things do not, he maintains, constitute the objects of aesthetic appreciation.\textsuperscript{4} The aesthetic object is not

\begin{enumerate}
  \item In this translation of The Psychology of Imagination, the terms "work of art" and "aesthetic object" are used synonymously.
  \item The Psychology of Imagination, p. 274
  \item loc. cit.
  \item Ibid, p. 275
\end{enumerate}
something which we can perceive now, and it must, therefore, by its very nature, be something unreal. So the artist constructs, concludes Sartre,

a material analogue of such a kind that everyone can grasp the image provided that he looks at the analogue. But the image thus provided with an external analogue remains an image. There is no realisation of the imaginary, nor can we speak of its objectification. Each stroke of the brush was not made for itself nor even for the constructing of a coherent real whole (in the sense in which it can be said that a certain lever in a machine was conceived in the interest of the whole and not for itself). It was given together with an unreal synthetic whole and the aim of the artist was to construct a whole of real colors which enable this unreal to manifest itself. The painting should then be conceived as a material thing visited from time to time (every time that the spectator assumes the imaginative attitude) by an unreal which is precisely the painted object.¹

This, claims Sartre, must be true even of Cubism, which introduced the notion that a painting should not represent or imitate reality but should constitute an object in itself.² Cubism, he concedes, is a defensible aesthetic doctrine. But to maintain, he argues,

that the painting, although altogether devoid of meaning nevertheless is a real object, would be a grave mistake. It is certainly not an object of nature. The real object no longer functions as an analogue of a bouquet of flowers or a glade. But when I 'contemplate' it, I

---

¹ loc. cit.
² Ibid, p. 276
nevertheless am not in a realistic
attitude. The painting is still an
analogue. Only what manifests itself
through it is an unreal collection of
new things, of objects I have never
seen or ever will see, but which are not
less unreal because of it, objects which
do not exist in the painting, nor anywhere
in the world, but which manifest themselves
by means of the canvas, and which have
gotten hold of it by some sort of possession.
And it is the configuration of these unreal
objects that I designate as beautiful.'

Sartre concludes that what happens in a Cubist
painting happens in all paintings. The aesthetic object
is constituted by an imaginative consciousness which posits
it as unreal - i.e. as absent or non-existent.2

**********

This counter-objection transforms the conflict
between Sartre's account of imagining and Gombrich's
account of seeing what paintings represent to a dispute
about the nature of the aesthetic object. Sartre and
Gombrich both argue that the aesthetic object cannot be
the paint-on-canvas - that thing which we see, for example,
hanging on a wall. Sartre maintains that the paint-on-
canvas is an analogue which the artist constructs. The
paint-on-canvas is, to him, a medium through which an unreal

1. Ibid, p. 277
2. For a more comprehensive account of Sartre's aesthetic
timey, see E.F. Kaelin, op.cit., Part I, Chapter III.
(an absent or non-existent) object can appear. Even though it is true that we perceive the analogue, it is never true that we perceive the thing which appears. Gombrich, on the other hand, argues that the artist constructs the conditions for an illusion. To him, the index of a good painting is the degree to which it subverts ordinary perceptual beliefs and enables the spectator to see what the painting represents. This is what is meant by his claim that we "enter into an illusion" when we see something in, or by means of, a painting. In other words, it is, to Gombrich, true that we perceive the aesthetic object.

These rival accounts of the nature of the aesthetic object raise the central issues of this chapter in a new way. We must, therefore, consider them in detail, for any conclusion reached on this subject must have an important bearing on the problem of whether Sartre's analysis of imagination is a viable one.

V

The equation of art and illusion is the part of Gombrich-type theses which is most commonly attacked. Ziff, for example, argues that a demonstration of what is normally meant by "illusion" is sufficient to show that an equation of art and illusion is quite mistaken. He claims that whether or not we say that a particular description is the report of an illusion "depends on whether the person who

---

gives the description of what he sees is likely to be deceived or not". But, he continues, in seeing paintings, we are likely to be deceived only if the paintings are specifically designed to create illusions. If the thesis that art is illusion is correct, then paintings which are intended to deceive would be indistinguishable from those not likely to deceive. Since we do, says Ziff, in fact make a distinction between these two sorts of painting, "one important characteristic of illusions is not applicable to paintings. This is the fact that we are deceived by illusions, but we are not deceived by any ordinary painting." 2, 3

Ziff admits, however, that there is something odd about what we say of paintings. It is this oddness, he says, which leads to talk about illusions in art. 4 There are times when we point to a painting and say "It has great depth", and other times when we point to the same painting and say "It is flat". 5 Descriptions such as

1. Ibid, p. 469
2. Ibid, p. 471
3. Wollheim puts forward a similar argument against illusion-theories of art ("On Drawing an Object", op.cit. See also "Art and Illusion", op.cit.) He argues, like Ziff, that the claim that the aesthetic object is an illusion - even an inhibited illusion - does not fit the facts of our experience ("On Drawing an Object", p. 24). To enter into an illusion - as opposed to seeing through it - depends by and large on a subversion of our perceptual beliefs. But seeing something as a representation does not, Wollheim argues, seem to necessitate this. (loc.cit.)
4. op.cit., p. 474-5
5. loc.cit.
these raise the problem of whether all the characteristics which we impute to a painting really belong to it. The basis of this problem is, he says, the apparent contradiction between, for example, the statement "The painting has great depth" and the statement "The painting is flat". Once this contradiction is granted, the argument that seeing what a painting represents is entering into an illusion becomes a natural one.¹

Ziff does not, however, agree that there is a contradiction involved here. He contends that:

There are many ways of describing a painting. We can say 'The painting is flat' and we can also say 'The painting has great depth'. We can say 'It is a painting of apples, all of which are about the same size, with some close up and others off in the distance'. We can also say 'It is a painting of apples, all of which are different sizes, some large and placed towards the bottom of the canvas, and others small at the top of the canvas'. ... Difficulties only arise if we suppose that all of these descriptions have the same use, only if we confuse the use of these various descriptions.²

What we must recognise, he continues, is that we have "families of descriptions" here.³ These families of descriptions are such that a carpenter's statement "The painting is flat" cannot imply what is implied by an art critic's statement "The painting is flat". Although the

1. Ibid, p. 475
2. loc.cit.
3. Ibid, p. 478
description from the carpenter-family and the description from the art-critic-family look alike, they in fact hardly ever associate.¹

When we say 'The painting is flat' and then in another breath add 'but the painting has great depth' we are mixing up these two, quite different, descriptions in a horribly confused manner so as to yield a dilemma. There is in fact no conflict between these two descriptions; thus there is no need to try to explain away one in favour of the other.²

The illusionist dilemma only arises, asserts Ziff, when these two families of description are mixed up and confused.

Ziff concludes that it is a mistake to claim that some illusory or imaginary object is the aesthetic object. He maintains, contra Sartre's and Gombrich's accounts, that the painting in the museum — i.e. the paint-on-canvas — is the aesthetic object.

There aren't two things referred to when we say, in the carpenter's shop, 'The painting is flat', and when we say, in the gallery, 'The painting has great depth'. There is just one, and it is the painting. There are two descriptions, not two objects.³

Bedford, like Ziff, admits that there appear to be contradictions in our talk about paintings.⁴ That we often say that we see not only paintings, but also — in the case of non-abstract paintings — what is represented in them is, he says, an example of such an apparent

¹ loc.cit.
² Ibid, p. 479
³ loc.cit.
contradiction. For example, if I look at Chardin's Vase of Flowers, I could say truly that I see a vase of flowers, some of which are carnations. "Yet, there is an obvious sense in which it is not true to say that I see a vase of flowers when I see the painting. I do, one is inclined to say, and yet I do not, see a vase of flowers."\(^1\) This apparent contradiction is commonly resolved, contends Bedford, by interpreting such remarks in terms of imagination, seeming to see, and illusion.\(^2\)

Bedford argues that such accounts involve a misunderstanding of the role which the paint surface has in our seeing, and in our discussions, of what pictures represent.\(^3\) The full extent of this misunderstanding will become evident, he claims, if we examine "'the visual and logical role of the paint surface' by examining some of the things which can be said about particular paintings."\(^4\)

When we see, for example, Verrochio's Baptism of Christ, we can, Bedford contends, identify certain things in the picture without knowing its title. For example,

---

1. Ibid, p. 47
2. loc. cit.
3. In his preliminary definitions, Bedford states that he will use "picture" in the sense in which it refers to physical objects. Other preliminary definitions he gives are:
   "Subject" will mean that which we see in the troublesome sense of "see" - e.g. the vase of flowers. The phrase "vase of flowers" is underlined to distinguish it as an item in iconographical discourse. (Of Ibid, p. 49)
4. Ibid, p. 49
we could well identify a figure as St John the Baptist. He can be so identified by his cross, for example. Such an identification can be expressed by saying 'The figure is St John' and one can then go on to describe him, to identify what he is doing, and so on. Such identification plainly presupposes another sort of identification. I cannot (logically) identify St John unless I can identify something as a figure (or a man), something else as a cross, etc.

This shows, Bedford argues, that secondary identification — i.e. the identification of subjects — depends upon a more primary identification. "What I identify as (not, of course, with) a cross in Verrochio's painting is a long thin area of paint at the right hand side."4

From this, he continues, certain vital points follow. Even though we often speak about the subjects of pictures without making any reference to things in physical space, it is impossible, he argues, "to secure any reference to a subject without at least presupposing some reference in physical space, although we can often talk about the subjects of pictures without actually making any such reference."5 "The truth or falsity of all iconographical assertions — however complex they may become in the higher levels of such discourse — therefore depends ultimately on

1. loc. cit.
2. loc. cit.
3. Ibid, p. 50
4. Ibid, p. 50
5. Ibid, p. 51
the truth or falsity of statements that express identifications." In other words, since subject identifications depend on primary identifications of areas on the paint surface, statements about subjects must depend logically on statements about paint surfaces. What all this means, contends Bedford, is that "subject identification is a form of visual identification, logically based on reference to a paint surface".

Certain other important consequences can now be expressed. We must, Bedford argues, distinguish between the visual identification of subjects and the visual identification of things. The main difference between these two modes of identification can be expressed in the following way:

When I identify an animal that I can see in the distance as a fox and go on to refer to it as 'that fox', what I am talking about is one and the same as what I referred to by using the word 'that' when I said 'that is a fox'. But when we talk about a figure in a picture we are no longer talking about the paint surface that we refer to in order to be able to talk about that figure. There is a distinction, and at the same time a relation, between discourse about paint surfaces and discourse about subjects of pictures.

This, continues Bedford, raises a further problem. When we look at a picture and see its subject, we are prepared to offer a description of what we see by using

1. loc.cit.
2. Ibid, p. 53
3. loc.cit.
a phrase such as "a man". Why do we use this phrase?

Let us consider the very simple case of a child's schematic painting of a man. The natural explanation of why we call it this is surely correct, namely that everybody agrees that it looks like a man. Moreover this seems to be a sufficient basis for calling what the child's painting depicts 'a man' for we are not dealing here with a question about the identification of a material thing. It needs, however, some interpretation. What is the 'it' that does look like a man to all who see the child's painting? Cases of failure to identify show that it cannot be the paint surface. Someone who fails to identify the subject in Picasso's L'Homme à la Pipe does, for this reason, fail to see any likeness between what he sees and a man. ... It is the subject of the child's painting that looks like a man and this is why we call it 'a man'. It looks, in other words, like any man you care to choose and the resemblance it bears to any given man is about as close as the resemblance it bears to any other. ¹

Bedford goes on to argue that certain important consequences do not follow from his claim that seeing a subject involves seeing, for example, a paint surface and identifying certain areas of it as the subject in question. ² For example, it does not follow that in order to see a subject we must first be aware of the character of the paint surface as a two-dimensional object. It is not, he says, even necessary that we should identify the paint surface as a paint surface at all. This is shown, he claims,

¹. Ibid, pp. 53-4
². Ibid, p. 58
by the possibility of illusion when looking at, say, Baroque ceilings. Let us consider a little more closely the case of someone who is momentarily taken in by, for instance, a painted pillar. Plainly he identifies the paint surface as a pillar, or he would not be subject to the illusion. Equally plainly he sees the paint surface, for if he did not, he would not see the pillar. Also he realises that he is seeing a material thing although he mistakes its character. The illusion consists in the fact that he mistakes a pillar for a pillar, and the reason for this must be that he does not realise that what he sees is a paint surface and not a piece of stone. The basis of such an illusion, then, consists in the fact that it is possible to see a paint surface and to see what it depicts, without identifying the paint surface as such or without recognizing that that is what it is.¹

This conclusion leads Bedford to make a claim radically opposed to that made by an illusionist theory such as Gombrich's. He claims, contra Gombrich, that we can at the same time see, for example, the battle horse and the paint surface. To Bedford, the connection between seeing the subject of a painting and identifying or noticing its paint surface is contingent, even though the relation between seeing the subject and seeing the paint surface is a logical one.

**********

1. loc.cit.
Ziff's and Bedford's arguments presuppose an analysis of seeing-as-statements similar to the first preliminary analysis. The two essential features of this preliminary analysis are the claims (a) that there is a sense in which it is false that we see anything in proper seeing-as situations, and (b) that our seeing an aspect of a public perceptual object depends logically on our seeing that public perceptual object. It is these two claims which make this analysis compatible with the accounts of Bedford and Ziff.

Ziff and Bedford both agree that there is something odd about my saying, for example, "I see a vase of flowers" when looking at a painting. This oddity, they say, stems from the fact that the public perceptual object I am seeing is not a vase of flowers, and from the fact that I may well believe that it is not a vase of flowers, Bedford goes further and argues that because the public perceptual object in my line of vision is not in fact a vase of flowers, there must be some sense in which it is false that I see a vase of flowers. In other words, he agrees with claim (a) above. However, both argue that it must be true that I see something even though my statement is odd (and false). What I see can only be the paint-on-canvas. From this it follows that we must, on their arguments, analyse the statement "I see a vase of flowers" in the way advocated by the first preliminary analysis. We must construe this statement as "I see the paint-on-canvas as a vase of flowers", and we must unpack this seeing-as-statement into the conjunction "I see the paint-on-canvas and I see a vase of flowers". We must, furthermore, argue that, since it is true that I see the
paint-on-canvas, but false that I see a vase of flowers, it cannot be true that my original statement reports a perceiving.

This compatibility cannot itself establish the validity of the first preliminary analysis of seeing-as-statements. For there is a serious difficulty implicit in Bedford's analysis. This can be brought out in the following way:

Suppose that I look at a man and say "I see a man", and that I look at a painting and say "I see a man" (using here Bedford's iconographical notation). What, we may now ask, leads me to use the phrase "a man" in the one case and the phrase "a man" in the other? According to the first preliminary analysis of seeing-as-statements, I could argue that I say "I see a man" because I take man-like-look of what I see (of the public perceptual object in my line of vision) to be an actual characteristic of this object. But Bedford cannot claim that I say "I see a man" because I take the looks of what I see to be an indication of the actual nature of the public perceptual object in my line of vision. If he did claim this, he would be committed either to asserting that seeing what a painting represents is always a case of misperceiving, or to the postulation of an illusionist-type thesis — i.e. to the postulation of a thesis that, in our seeing what paintings represent, only some knowledge or belief on our part prevents us from misperceiving. Thus, Bedford is forced to put forward a different solution to the problem of what leads me to call what I see "a man" in one case and "a man" in the other.
Since, on his analysis, the statement "I see a man" implies that I see the paint-on-canvas, the main problem which he faces is that of explaining how we move (logically) from statements about the paint surface to statements about the seeing of the subjects of paintings - i.e. statements about our seeing what paintings represent. Having rejected both Gombrich's and Sartre's explanations of this shift, Bedford assumes that the explanation must be that I say that I see a man because the subject looks like a man.

Such an explanation is unsatisfactory. Since the logical move which Bedford must explain is that from paint-surface-talk to subject-talk, he cannot, in giving this explanation, presuppose the notion of a subject. He must show what is involved in this logical shift from "A sees an x" to "A sees a y" without making explicit or implicit use of the notion of something being a representation. But since his explanation is that we say "A sees a y" because the subject looks like a y, he is in fact presupposing the notion of something being a representation. He has not explained what he himself takes to be a vital factor in our seeing what paintings represent. Consequently, his analysis cannot support, or receive support from, the first preliminary analysis of seeing-as-statements.

1. For further criticisms of Bedford's analysis see R.M. Meager's contribution to the same symposium (op.cit., pp. 63-84).
VI

Let us pause and draw together the threads of the argument. My argument in this chapter began with a restatement of the most important issue in Sartre's analysis of imagination. This issue concerns the logical status of seeing-as-statements. In the course of the discussion, I examined three different accounts of seeing-as-statements.

The first was based on a reformulation of Stadler's and Bedford's arguments. The crux of this reformulated argument is the claim that seeing-as-statements must be distinguished from perceiving-statements. The reason given is that if such statements are construed as ordinary perceiving-statements, they must always be reports of misperceivings. Consequently, seeing-as-statements can only be true if they are used to report our awareness of something ambiguous. On this argument, we must say that we see $x$ as $y$, when looking at a drawing or a painting, because what is represented in $x$ looks like $y$.

The second account offered was based on a reformulation of Gombrich's argument. The crux of this analysis is again the claim that seeing-as-statements must be false if they are treated as ordinary perceiving-statements. But on this argument, we say that we see $x$ as $y$ because $x$ has the look of $y$. When we say that we see $x$ as $y$, we imply that $x$ has the look of an actual member of the class of $y$-es, and we imply that all that prevents us from believing that $x$ is $y$ is some knowledge or belief on our part.

The third account of seeing-as-statements offered
is Sartre's. According to him, such statements report the positing of something perceptually present as something unreal (as something absent or non-existent). Consequently, seeing-as-statements can only be about imaginative acts of consciousness. From this it is supposed to follow that seeing-as-statements, and, thus, imagining-statements, cannot be reports of perceiving. Imagining-statements, Sartre argues, are about acts of consciousness which are completely different from, and exclude, acts of perceptual consciousness.

During the course of the argument in this chapter, I have raised objections to all three accounts of seeing-as-statements. Thus, on the basis of the argument so far, no solution to the problem of whether Sartre's analysis of imagination is satisfactory can be offered. These preliminary conclusions do, however, point to a way in which a decision on this problem can be reached.

VII

Let us approach the problem of the viability of Sartre's analysis on a new tack. The examples I have chosen so far show that typical statements about our seeing, for example, what is represented in paintings take the form "I can see x". We say, when looking at a painting, "I can see Peter" or "I can see a vase of flowers", and when looking at a spot on a wall or a cloud,
"I can see a lion". Why, we may now ask, do we more often say "I can see x", rather than "I see x", when reporting sightings of this sort?

Consider, first, a number of contexts in which we often say "I can see x":

(1) I may say "I can see x" when no one is in fact looking for x. In such circumstances, my statement implies that if anyone else looked in such-and-such a direction or looked carefully, he too would see x. For example, I may say "I can see Peter. Look! there he is - next to that woman in the red hat".

(2) Others may in fact be looking for x when I say "I can see x". Again, my statement implies that if anyone else looked in such-and-such a direction or looked carefully, he too would see x. For example, I may, while out hunting, say "I can see a rabbit. Look! There it is - next to that clump of bushes".

Examples such as (1) and (2) have an important feature in common. In both, I say "I can see x" when, in the circumstances in which I and my listeners find ourselves, x is not obviously perceptually present. Thus, my statements "I can see Peter" and "I can see a rabbit" may, or may not be, appropriate in a particular context. If at least one of my listeners responded by asking "Where is Peter?" and "Where is the rabbit?", then my statements would have been appropriate. In other circumstances, the reply "So can I" will also indicate
that my statements are not inappropriate. The speaker and I could argue that there is some point to my saying "I can see a rabbit" and "I can see Peter" since the rabbit and Peter are not obviously perceptually present. However, if someone had retorted "Of course, you can see a rabbit" and "Of course, you can see Peter", the implication would be that my statements are inappropriate. The speaker would now be implying that I am wrong in claiming that my seeing Peter and my seeing the rabbit are special successes, which were gained only by my looking in a direction in which no one else was looking or by my carefully looking in a particular direction.

The common feature in these two examples is the implication that "can" should be used in at least some statements of the form "A can see x" only (a) when x is not obviously perceptually present, and (b) when x will be seen only as a result of the seer going about his seeing in a specific way - e.g. only if the seer looks carefully in a direction in which others are also looking, or is looking in a direction in which no one else happens, at the time, to be looking. This cannot, however, be true of all statements of the form "A can see x", for there are other contexts in which we can say this.

(j) Suppose that when no one else is looking for Peter, I say "Look! There's Peter". Suppose, too, that someone objects to this. "Whoever you did see", the retort might be, "you certainly did not see Peter." I may be adamant, and may say either "I did see Peter" -
implying that he is no longer perceptually present, or "I can see Peter". In such a context, my statement "I can see Peter" implies that I believe, despite what others say, that Peter is where I say that I see him.

(4) When others are looking for rabbits, I may say "Look! There's a rabbit". Again, someone could object that I am mistaken if no one else sees a rabbit, or if no one else can see it after following my instructions, or if someone claims to know that a rabbit could not be where I say that I see one. Again, I may be adamant, and may say either "I did see a rabbit" - implying that a rabbit is no longer perceptually present, or "I can see a rabbit". My statement "I can see a rabbit" implies that I believe, despite what others say, that there is a rabbit in my line of vision.

These last two statements also have an important feature in common. In both, I say that I can see x when my claim that x is a public perceptual object in my line of vision is disputed, and when I wish to affirm, despite objections to the contrary, that there is a publicly perceptible x where I say that I am seeing one.

These four examples show that when "can" is linked with a verb of perception, the resultant statement is such that it cannot be treated as a straightforward perceptual report. Such statements are perceptual reports under certain conditions - they imply more than do normal propositional-perceiving-statements. These can-perceive-statements, if they are construed as propositional-
perceiving-statements, do imply that all the beliefs the subject acquires about what he is perceiving are true. But such statements imply further that the perceiving is, in these circumstances, a special success - one gained only by the perceiver engaging in certain special activities (carefully looking, etc). However, it does not follow that these can-perceive-statements imply that the perceiving itself is unusual. The main thing they imply is that the speaker believes that the circumstances in which he is perceiving are unusual or special.

These four examples contain uses of "see" from the range of contexts in which propositional- and non-propositional-perceiving-statements occur. The implications drawn need not, therefore, apply to can-see-statements from the context of our talk about seeing things in, or by means of, public perceptual objects. Thus, we must consider separately the implications of these other can-see-statements.

**********

Consider the following examples:

(5) Pointing to a heap of stones, I say "I can see a lion".

(6) Pointing to a coloured canvas, I say "I can see Peter".
We can say, without presupposing a Gombrich-type analysis, that these two statements imply that I see a public perceptual object. We can also say that they imply that I do not believe that what I see is the real Peter or a real lion. What, then, is the point of my use of "can" in these statements?

As with the first four examples, the question "Where?" would show that my statements are appropriate; that there was some point to my uttering them. Similarly, the retort "Of course, you can" would, perhaps, show that my statements were inappropriate. Thus, like the first four, these two statements imply that the speaker has scored some "special success". What sort of success will this be?

Since my statements "I can see Peter" and "I can see a lion" may be appropriate when the canvas and the heap of stones are in the direct line of my, and my listeners', line of vision - i.e. when the canvas and the stones are obviously perceptually present, the success I claim cannot be similar to that of examples (1) - (4). For to the objection that I am mistaken since neither Peter nor a lion are actually perceptually present, I would retort, not that they are (or were) in fact in my line of vision, but that I have been misunderstood. I was not, I might reply, claiming that what I see are in fact Peter and a lion. Thus, the special success I claim must be connected with my taking a public perceptual object to be something which it obviously is not.
The argument so far has shown that no matter what this special success is, it must still be connected with looking. This must be true even though the connection cannot be the same as it is in the first four examples. In the first four examples, the success gained results from someone looking for a public perceptual object which can be distinguished from other public perceptual objects in his line of vision. The success gained could also result from someone happening to look in a direction in which no one else was looking. In circumstances such as these, the object seen is, once again, a public perceptual one which can be distinguished from others in his line of vision. However, in cases such as those represented by examples (5)-(6), the success gained results from my looking at some public perceptual object, which may be an obvious one in my, and my listeners', lines of vision. But in these circumstances, what I claim to see is not a public perceptual object which can be distinguished either from the object I am looking at, or from other public perceptual objects in my line of vision. Nevertheless, there must be a logical connection between my seeing Peter and my seeing a lion, and my looking at these public perceptual objects (the coloured canvas and the heap of stones.)

From this it follows that any explanation of the success, which I claim to have scored, must in some way involve the notion of ambiguity. More specifically, my statements (5) and (6) must imply that what I am looking at, when I claim that I can see Peter and can see a lion, is in some way ambiguous. If what I see is in no way
ambiguous, there could be no logical connection between my seeing, for example, a lion and my looking at the heap of stones.

The problem of what this ambiguity could be becomes vital for an analysis such as Sartre's. If the ambiguity is, as Bedford and Sombrich argue, that more than one perceptual classification can be applied to the public perceptual object in my line of vision, then my seeing-as (reported by the statement "I can see a lion") cannot be completely opposed to, and exclude, my perceiving (reported by the statement "I see a heap of stones"). Let us, therefore, examine the nature of this ambiguity by considering in more detail examples (5) and (6).

According to the argument above, my statement "I can see a lion" implies that I am looking at some public perceptual object such as the heap of stones, and implies that I have scored some special success, which is in some way connected with an ambiguity in the heap of stones. Thus, my statement "I can see a lion" must be, in some sense, about the heap of stones. Suppose now that someone hearing my statement says "But I cannot see a lion. Is there really a lion in the vicinity?" The questioner has obviously taken me to be implying that the circumstances in which I am perceiving are unusual or odd - e.g. that a lion will only be seen by others if they look as carefully as I am, or look in the direction in which I happen to be looking. My reply must, therefore, be "There is no lion about. I was referring to what can be seen in that heap of stones. If you take that section to
be the head and mane, this to be the body, and this to be the legs and tail, you will see that the heap as a whole looks like a resting lion. I am saying, in my reply, that my questioner should have taken me to be claiming that even though what I am seeing looks like a heap of stones, the stones are in fact piled in such a way that the shape of the heap happens to look like the shape of a lion in a certain pose. My original statement has, therefore, a two-fold import. It implies, firstly, that what I see is in fact a heap of stones, since I know what heaps of stones look like in normal circumstances. It implies, secondly, that I have, at the same time, noticed that the heap of stones is configured in such a way that I can also use knowledge of the looks of lions in discriminating the heap of stones from other public perceptual objects in my line of vision.

Thus, the ambiguity involved here is a straightforward one. It is that this public perceptual object in my line of vision looks both like a heap of stones (which it is) and like a lion (which it is not). Consequently, the success which I claim when I say "I can see a lion" is that of recognising this ambiguity, as well as that of seeing both the heap-of-stones-look and the lion-look of the public perceptual object in my line of vision. In other words, what I am claiming is that I have, in Gombrich's sense, succeeded in applying more than one perceptual classification to the public perceptual object in my line of vision; that I have, in discriminating the heap of stones from other public perceptual objects in my line of vision, utilised some further knowledge of the looks of things. Since my statement "I can see a lion" must, as a
result, imply that this heap of stones is such that its shape has a lion-look which anyone can see for himself, it is in precisely this sense that my statement is about the heap of stones.

A similar analysis can be applied to example (6). When I say "I can see Peter", I imply that I have scored some special success which is connected with some ambiguity in the paint-on-canvas. As a result, my statement must, in some sense, be about the paint-on-canvas. My statement does not imply that the real Peter is perceptually present. All it implies is that something can be seen in the paint-on-canvas. "If you take", I must say, "this area of paint to be Peter's hair, this to be his distinctive nose, this to be his eyes, and this to be his chin, you will see that the configuration of colours as a whole looks like a full face view of Peter." Thus, the main thing I claim when I say "I can see Peter" is that the shape or pattern of the colours on the canvas looks like the shape of Peter's face seen from a particular angle. My statement implies, therefore, that I have scored a special success — that of recognising the ambiguity of the paint-on-canvas, and, as a result, that of utilising knowledge of the looks of Peter's face in discriminating parts of the surface of the paint-on-canvas from others. In Gombrich's terms, the special success which I claim is that of applying a further perceptual classification to the public perceptual object in my line of vision. I can say truly that I see something which looks like a configuration of colours on canvas (which it is), and say
truly that I see something whose shape looks like that shape of Peter's face (which it is not).

An important conclusion follows from this analysis of these last two examples. When "can" is linked with "see" in statements about the seeing of things in, or by means of, public perceptual objects, the resultant statement cannot be a straightforward perceiving-statement. But the sense in which such statements are not straightforward is not the same as that in which examples (1)-(4) are not. Examples (5) and (6), unlike the first four, do not just imply something more than ordinary propositional-perceiving-statements. For, in this context, the statements "I can see a lion" and "I can see Peter" are such that if they are taken to be qualified propositional-perceiving-statements, the subject then would be implying that he believes that the public perceptual objects in his line of vision are in fact Peter and a lion. These beliefs would, in this context, always be false. However, (5) and (6) do imply that the subject's perceiving is, in these circumstances, a special success. But since this special success cannot be gained solely by someone looking for some public perceptual object, these statements cannot imply that only the circumstances in which the subject happens to be perceiving are unusual or odd. That is, they cannot imply that this is a perceiving under conditions. Since the success gained is related to some ambiguity in the object looked at, these statements imply that the perceiving itself is unusual or odd. The subject is
applying the perceptual classifications "a lion" and "Pete" to public perceptual objects which are not, and which he knows are not, Pete and a lion.

The above argument allows us now to put forward a revised account of seeing-as-statements. We may begin by saying that any reference to what a painting represents must entail a reference to the seeing of the paint surface. The reason for this is that statements such as "I can see *Pete*" imply that the subject sees something (the configuration of colours on canvas) whose shape looks like the shape of (say) *Pete's* face. In other words, these statements imply that the subject has discriminated the paint-on-canvas from other public perceptual objects in his line of vision. Thus, the aesthetic object must be, as Ziff and Bedford claim, the paint-on-canvas and not an illusion or unreal object. However, my argument supports Gombrich's rather than Bedford's account of representation in paintings. In painting a portrait of *Pete*, the artist constructs on the canvas a look of *Pete's* face. He uses paints in such a way that a pattern of colours results which may be seen both as a configuration of colours and as a view of *Pete's* face. The end result of his work is something to which two distinct perceptual classifications may be applied. Yet, since the aesthetic object is not an illusion, Gombrich's account must be altered in some way.
We can make this change fairly easily by referring once more to Vesey's analysis of "seeing as"¹, and to Austin's analysis of "looks".² The main assumption in illusion-theories is that we must always take what we see to be what it looks like. In other words, the main assumption is that "looks like" and "see as" can be used in only one way. For example, when I say "That object looks like a lion" and "That object looks like Peter", I must, on illusion-theories, imply that I take what I see, because of their looks, to be the real Peter and an actual lion, even though these objects may in fact be a heap of stones and paint-on-canvas. Because of this assumption, our seeing what paintings represent can only be, on illusion-theories, forms of illusion.

Vesey and Austin argue that we can say truly that x looks like y (a) when we believe that x is what it looks like - i.e. is y, and (b) when we do not believe that x is y, and do not wish to imply that anyone is likely to be deceived by the y-look of x. Both these senses have been presupposed in the above argument. When I say "I can see Peter", I imply that I see something (a public perceptual object), which looks like, and is, a configuration of colours on canvas, and which also looks like, and is not, a view of Peter's face. Thus, I do not take the Peter's-face-look of what I see to be an indication of what it actually is. As a result, I do not imply that anyone is

1. op. cit.
2. op. cit.
likely to be deceived by this look of the paint-on-canvas. My use of the terms "looks like" and "see as" need not imply that I am, or am likely to be, deceived by what I see. I am, as Vossy says, free to either see or not see the configuration of colours in this way, even though I must see it as something - e.g., as paint-on-canvas.

Hence, our seeing what paintings represent is closer to the having of illusions than Bedford admits. Nevertheless, this account does permit us to reiterate some of Bedford's important points. My seeing Peter and seeing a lion entail that I see the paint-on-canvas and see the heap of stones. I cannot refer to, or identify, Peter and a lion without implying some reference to the paint-on-canvas and to the heap of stones. But it does not follow that on each occasion on which I see what a painting represents, I must also as a matter of fact see the paint-on-canvas. We can, and do, see what paintings represent without actually seeing the paint surface - i.e., we can say truly that we see Peter without implying at the same time that we see that it is the paint-on-canvas which is the representing medium. But even though I need not see that this is paint-on-canvas, I must (in the non-propositional sense) see the paint-on-canvas. For when I say, in such circumstances, that I see Peter, I imply that I have discriminated parts of the paint-on-canvas from other public perceptual objects in my line of vision.
VIII

The general conclusion of this chapter is that Sartre's analysis of imagination fails to establish that no imagining can be a perceiving; that there are clear-cut boundaries between the concepts "imagine" and "perceive". The main claim in his analysis is that in all instances of imagining, some perceptually present thing is seen-as an absent or non-existent object. As a result, typical examples of imaginings become the seeing of things in paintings and in spots on walls. But he argues that when we see Peter in a spot on a wall or in a painting, we perceive only the analogue - i.e. only the paint-on-canvas or the spot. Peter appears only as the object of an imaginative consciousness, and so he is not, and cannot be, perceived at that time. Sartre generalises this as the claim that imaginings are different from, and exclude, perceiving.

This argument presupposes a definite account of the logical status of seeing-as-statements and of the nature of the aesthetic object. I have, in the course of this chapter, considered various analyses of these statements and of the nature of the aesthetic object. The conclusions I reached amount to a rejection of the heart of Sartre's analysis of imagination. The aesthetic object is not, as Sartre claims, an unreal object — it is simply the paint-on-canvas. If I say "I see Peter", when looking at a painting, my statement cannot report a mode of consciousness which is completely different from, and which
perfectly free to return from seeing it as paper.

(2) even though he must see the part of the eye, he does from the utilization of the knowledge of the looks of paper, and is subject's time of vision will not result in the subject's time of vision to decree that these are the two sorts of statement.  

(1) to be better about the case of the public perception.  

Indeed the difference between these two sorts of statement.

Accordingly, in "see paper", I concluded, "from an ordinary state of the prejudice may be said to be, a statement such as have been shown that the

exceedes perceived, perceived.