

# Animals & Objectivity

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## Abstract

Starting from the assumption that Kant allows for the possible existence of conscious sensory states in non-rational animals, I examine the textual and philosophical grounds for his acceptance of the possibility that such states are also ‘objective’. I elucidate different senses of what might be meant in crediting a cognitive state as objective. I then put forward and defend an interpretation according to which the cognitive states of animals, though extremely limited on Kant’s view, are nevertheless minimally objective.

## 1 The Problem of Objectivity

Observation of the behavior of non-rational animals (hereafter “animals”) reveals a rich and varied world. Whilst the natural philosophers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were well aware of this fact, there was a tendency to downplay the level of sophistication inherent in animal behavior, or to the extent that it was acknowledged, to credit it to the amazing powers of nature in yielding mechanisms with such complexity.<sup>1</sup>

Kant, along with other figures in the German rationalist tradition, is laudable for not falling into the error of construing animals as mere machines.<sup>2</sup> Kant is on record in various places as saying that animals have sensory representations of their environment (CPJ 5:464; LM 28:449; cf. An 7:212), that they have intuitions (LL 24:702), and that they are acquainted with objects though they do not cognize them (JL 9:64–5).<sup>3</sup>

Without further argument I am simply going to assume that Kant holds, at the least, the position that seems apparent from these texts—viz. that animals enjoy mental representations, and that the postulation of their existence is required to explain the rich variety of behavior manifested by the denizens of the animal kingdom. The existence of such representations does not commit Kant to thinking that animals possess the faculties of reason or understanding, or that animals possess any power of mental combination beyond that of mere empirical association.

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<sup>1</sup> Descartes and his followers are perhaps the most famous figures here, though it is not entirely uncontroversial the extent to which Cartesianism was really committed to the view of animals as mere machines. See Cottingham (1978); Naragon (1990) for discussion.

<sup>2</sup> TODO: cite Leibniz, Baumgarten, Meier, and perhaps Wolff?

<sup>3</sup> For further discussion see Naragon (1990); Allais (2009); McLear (2011). For examples of positions that deny this possibility see McDowell (1996), chs. 3 & 6; Ginsborg (2006), Ginsborg (2008); Grüne (2009); McLear (2014). Note that though I use “representation” as the standard translation of “*Vorstellung*” there are some issues involved in how we should understand this notion and the conception of sensory experience as representational. I discuss these issues in §4 below.

However, there is a nagging worry. One might readily admit that Kant allows that animals have sensory states, and that these are necessary for animals to successfully register, navigate, and survive in their surroundings. But it seems that one could agree to all this and yet deny that such states deserve the moniker “objective”. This distinction between objective representation and sensory registration needs sharpening, but as a first pass we might simply use Kant’s terms and distinguish between representation of an object, and representation merely as modification of the subject (A320/B376-7). What, however, does this distinction come to?<sup>4</sup>

Take, for example, Gareth Evans’ discussion of objectivity in his 1980 essay “Things Without the Mind.” He says,

We can imagine a series of judgements “Warm now”, “Buzzing now”, made by a subject in response to changes in his sensory state, which have no objective significance at all. But we can imagine a similar series of judgements, prompted by the same changes in the subject’s sensory state, which do have such a significance: “now it’s warm”, “Now there’s a buzzing sound”—comments upon a changing world. What is involved in this change of significance? (Evans (1985), 249)

Though Evans is here talking about the objectivity of *judgment*, the same issue seems to arise for perceptual *experience* since, even at the level of experience, there seems to be a difference between a mere succession of sensory registrations and perception of *objects*.

While the details of Evans’s theory of the conditions of objective thought may be novel, a similar contrast was expressed by Condillac in 1754.<sup>5</sup> He presents us with a thought experiment in which we imagine a statue capable only of olfactory sensory states, which themselves are construed as purely subjective.

Our statue being limited to to the sense of smell its cognitions cannot extend beyond smells. It can no more have ideas of extension, shape or of anything outside itself, or outside its sensations, than it can have ideas of colour, sound or taste...The statue therefore will be rose smell, pink smell, jasmine smell, violet smell, according to the flower which stimulates its sense organ. In a word, in regard to itself smells are its modifications or modes. It cannot suppose itself to be anything else, since it is only susceptible to sensations. (Condillac (1930), 3).

<sup>4</sup> According to one prominent contemporary conception (Burge (2010a), 421-430, 492-518), the difference is between states that merely register proximal stimulation (e.g. a sensitivity to light) and those that exhibit perceptual constancies. While Kant does not discuss issues directly pertaining to perceptual constancy, he does seem to allow that there are basic principles operative in spatial representation that would do at least some of the work with respect to supplying the constancies necessary for objectification in Burge’s sense. Thanks to Tobias Rosefeldt for discussion on this point. I discuss some of the ways that Kant might allow for objectifying forms of cognitive processing, or principles of “unity”, in §3.2 below.

<sup>5</sup> See George (1981) for discussion of Condillac’s sensationism and its purported significance for Kant.

Like Evans, Condillac asks what might distinguish the statue's capacity for states such as mere olfactory sensation, from states which present to the subject some aspect of the physical world "beyond" the subject.<sup>6</sup> We can thus sharpen our original question a bit further. Why should we think that, on Kant's view, the mental representations that animals enjoy consist in anything more than those discussed by Evans and Condillac? Such states may well causally covary with the animal's environment in ways sufficiently complex to explain animals behavior. If so, then the warrant for crediting animals with psychological states needs not extend to characterizing those states as objective.

Given that Kant denies non-rational beings any capacity for judgment or reason, and thus any cognitive faculty beyond that of sensibility, the worry that animals might only enjoy a subjective play of sensations seems a real one. Unfortunately, Kant's exact views on these matters are difficult to ascertain, not least in part because his discussion of animal cognition is scattered and unsystematic. For this reason my discussion will be somewhat speculative, and examine what Kant could plausibly say given his various commitments regarding the nature of cognition and the cognitive faculties.

Despite these difficulties, there are two central reasons for being interested in Kant's views on the kinds of objective states (if any there be) attainable by animals. First, thinking about Kant's views concerning the cognitive lives of animals allows a view of the mind, as it were, "from below", whereas in contrast most of Kant's time is spent at a position "from above", dealing with the cognitive faculties of reason and the understanding. This alternative viewpoint gives us, among other things, a better sense of what is gained as one moves up the cognitive ladder to rational thought. Second, while I am rather pessimistic that Kant's views concerning the exact character and cognitive limitations of the animal mind are correct, they may nevertheless provide us with an interesting picture of the limits and underpinnings of objective cognition more generally.<sup>7</sup> Hence, even if it turns out that the denizens of the animal kingdom are far more cognitively sophisticated than Kant would admit, he could still offer us a baseline for understanding what is required to have a mind capable of grasping the world in any fashion at all.

With these two points in mind, I aim in this paper to examine more closely the question of whether animals could ever, on Kant's account, enjoy objective representational states of their environment. I pursue a reply to the nagging worry expressed above by addressing Kant's

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<sup>6</sup> In McLear (2011) I distinguished two different ways in which such representations might occur, one phenomenally conscious, one merely in terms of informational access. This is another way of putting the question I pose above – do animals have more than a mere informational sensitivity to the world? In that previous paper I also connect having phenomenal consciousness, having sensory intuition, and having a point of view on the world. The present paper can be seen as problematizing this last set of connections.

<sup>7</sup> One need only look at the work of contemporary cognitive ethologists to see that Kant's bright line separating rational (humans) from non-rational animals is rather implausible. The higher primates, whales, dolphins, dogs, and crows, all seem to have higher cognitive functioning than would readily be admitted on Kant's sparse model of the cognitive functions available to animals. For relevant discussion of some of the issues in contemporary cognitive ethology see Bermúdez (2003); Lurz (2009); Andrews (2014), as well as the papers in Lurz (2011).

discussion of the conditions under which a mental state can be said to enjoy a relation to an object. For example, in the B-deduction Kant says,

The understanding is, to speak generally, the faculty of cognitions. This consists in the determinate relation of given representations to an object. But an object is that in the concept of which the manifold of a given intuition is united.

The common reading of this passage has it that Kant here proposes a necessary condition—viz. possession of a faculty of understanding—on representing any feature of a mind-independent reality.<sup>8</sup>

If the standard reading of B137 is correct then either Kant is inconsistent in allowing that animals may represent objects, or, despite the textual evidence to the contrary, he never really meant to allow such a possibility in the first place. I argue that we need not accept either of these alternatives. I do this by first differentiating between ways in which a psychological state might count as objective. I then use this framework to locate the sense in which Kant might be conceiving of relation to an object. In brief, my position is that there are different grades of objectivity, and Kant's conception of a relation to an object concerns a fairly demanding notion, which allows the attribution to animals of other less demanding forms.

Section two articulates various kinds of objectivity that one might credit or deny to the representations of an animal mind. Section three considers the objection raised above, that "relation to an object" comes only with the presence of the faculties of understanding and reason, and thus with the capacity for conceptual representation and judgment. I examine the B137 argument for this position and present an alternative interpretation that emphasizes the importance of distinguishing between acquaintance [*Kenntnis*] and cognition [*Erkenntnis*]. Section four considers, in more detail, what kinds of objective states an animal mind might be capable of. I sketch a view according to which animal minds enjoy objective states but do not represent "objects" in the sense with which Kant is concerned. Finally, in section five, I summarize the argument of the paper.

## 2 Some Varieties of Objectivity

In calling a representation "objective" there are several things we might mean. It will be helpful for understanding Kant's own conception of objectivity that we have these other conceptions in hand.

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<sup>8</sup> Pereboom (2006), 160; cf. Bird (1962), 130-1; Guyer (1987), 11-24; Pereboom (2009). Longuenesse (1998), 20-1 argues that Kant distinguishes between two different relations to an object, both of which are "internal" to representation (i.e. are merely intentional objects) and only one of which is genuinely objective; cf. Okrent (2006), 95-7. There is more than a passing similarity between Longuenesse's position and that of Van Cleve's "virtual" phenomenalism, as outlined in Van Cleve (1999), ch. 1. Both Longuenesse and Van Cleve take phenomena to be nothing but constructions (in some sense) from mental states, and thereby assume that representation of a mind-independent reality requires the activity of synthesis.

Perhaps the most common notion of objectivity concerns what we might construe as the methodological underpinnings of inquiry and judgment.<sup>9</sup> Gideon Rosen provides a helpful characterization of this notion.

Methodological objectivity, as we may call it, is primarily a feature of inquiries or methods of inquiry, and derivatively of the people who conduct inquiries and the judgments they form as a result. To a first approximation, we call an inquiry “objective” when its trajectory is unaffected in relevant ways by the peculiar biases, preferences, ideological commitments, prejudices, personal loyalties, ambitions, and the like of the people who conduct it. (Rosen (1994), 283)

A judgment, and by extension, the representations that constitute it, is objective in this sense just in case it is free from bias, preference, or other subjective colorings. While this is, I think, the most common notion of objectivity in use, it is not wholly relevant to our current question. For example, the processes of the visual system of an animal are not going to be distorted by a faulty ideology or wishful thinking. Nevertheless, there is an important sense in which an animal’s cognitive system is skewed by its preferences and biological imperatives of various kinds. For Kant, an animal, unlike a rational being, is never free in the employment of its representations. It must instead employ them in the service of biological and contextual imperatives that may lead to unavoidable distortions in the animal’s cognitive relation to the world.<sup>10</sup> However, it seems implausible that methodological objectivity is something we need to consider (or could consider as achievable) at the basic level of the perceptual experience of the animal.

At work in the notion of methodological objectivity is that of a perspective. One’s methodological objectivity is jeopardized when one allows features of one’s perspective to inform or otherwise color one’s evaluations of how things are. This might provide us with the basis for a narrower conception of objectivity, one that is measured simply according to the degree to which the content of a representation reflects the subject’s perspective. We might further understand the notion of a “perspective” here in terms of context-dependence, and context-dependence in terms of the relationship between a token representation’s (i.e. a particular mental state or event) correctness conditions and the context in which that representation occurs.

Concomitant with the notion of context-dependence, a representation that is objective, in the sense of its correctness conditions being maximally independent of context, is also one that is non-parochial or in principle “shareable” or communicable with other beings who otherwise have radically different ways of obtaining and conceptualizing information about the world.

<sup>9</sup> See Feldman (1994) for extensive discussion of this notion.

<sup>10</sup> Kant is very clear that in animals lacking spontaneity, desire and inclination rules (CPI 5:432; ML 29:949; cf. ML 28:588, 594, 690). In this sense animals, unlike (rational) humans, are “spiritual automatons” with nothing more than the freedom of a turnspit. For relevant discussion see Frierson (2014), 16-17 and 172-3. Thus animals are paradigmatically unable to achieve methodological objectivity as a result of the way that they must employ their representations in the service of biological imperatives.

There are thus two distinguishable but linked conceptions of perspectival objectivity. The first is that of context-independence, and the second that of communicability.<sup>11</sup>

A representation is thus “perspectivally subjective” to the extent that its correctness conditions depend on the context of its occurrence, such that it is, to that extent, parochial and incommunicable. This is quite clear in the case of indexical representations such as “I”, “now”, “here”, and so forth. The correctness conditions for these representations of the world depend on the context in which they occur, which contrasts markedly with representations such as “Colin McLear”, “June 14, 1987 8:43 am”, “41.2833° N, 70.1000° W”, etc.<sup>12</sup> If objectivity in representation is something that is attained by moving from the sole employment of representations whose correctness conditions depend on their context of occurrence to the employment of representations which do not exhibit such context dependence, then one question we could ask is whether animals are capable of enjoying representational states or events whose content is context-independent, at least to some degree.

We can also articulate here a further and perhaps more basic notion of objectivity, one which prescind from the issue of context-dependence and instead focuses more generally on the relation between a correctness condition and its subject matter. According to what we might call “metaphysical objectivity” then, a representation is objective just in case merely being in a state with the relevant content, or enjoying the relevant event with that content, is not itself sufficient for the content of the event or state’s being correct.<sup>13</sup>

Finally, perhaps the most minimal notion of objectivity, presupposed even by the metaphysical notion just described, is that of a representation’s having correctness conditions at all. “Representational objectivity” is thus that by which a state or event could be assessed for accuracy or truth, regardless of whether or not its content has a constitutive relation to that which it represents. This is precisely that which differentiates the pure qualitative “feel” of a visual sensation of color from the notion of the color as representing the “look” of a thing under certain conditions.

These four notions of objectivity—methodological, perspectival, metaphysical, and representational—might each (or all) be subsumed under a more demanding fifth notion, which I’ll term “reflective objectivity.” According to this notion, a representational state is objective just in case it meets some condition C, one is in a position to articulate that condition, and one knows (or is in a position to know, tacitly or explicitly) that the representation or judgment meets that condition. This notion of objectivity is by far the most demanding, as it requires the subject to not only meet some condition, but be in a position to reflectively grasp that they so meet this condition.<sup>14</sup> Only very sophisticated cognitive beings are going to be able to do this,

<sup>11</sup> For a connection between the notion of perspective and objectivity in the early modern period see Williams (1978).

<sup>12</sup> For an elaboration of Williams’s notion of perspective and its connection to correctness conditions see Eilan (1997), 239. This is not the only way which Williams’s point has been understood, cf. Korsgaard (2003), 107.

<sup>13</sup> See Peacocke (2009) for discussion.

<sup>14</sup> For the expression of a position along these lines see Strawson (1966), 121.

and certainly no being of the kind that Kant considers to be a non-rational animal (and perhaps no being without a language) is going to be able to meet this condition.

With these five different varieties of objectivity in mind, I next move to Kant's discussion of objectivity, construed as a "relation to an object", and made possible by virtue of the deployment of conceptual categories by a subject with the capacity for reflective self-consciousness (i.e. Kant's "unity of apperception").

### 3 Objectivity & Relation to an Object

As I noted in §1, Kant's discussion of objective representation in §16 of the B-deduction presents a *prima facie* challenge to the possibility of objective representation in non-discursive beings. Let's look at the relevant passage in full.

The understanding is, to speak generally, the faculty of cognitions. This consists in the determinate relation of given representations to an object. But an object is that in the concept of which the manifold of a given intuition is united. Now, all unification of representations requires the unity of consciousness in the synthesis of the same [i.e. the representations]. It follows that the unity of consciousness alone establishes [*ausmacht*] the relation of representations to an object, their objective validity, and thus their becoming cognitions. (B137)

The argument consists of three premises and a conclusion:

1. Cognition consists in the determinate relation of a given representation to an object.
2. An object is that in the concept of which the manifold of a given intuition is united.
3. All unification of representations requires the unity of consciousness in the synthesis of those representations.
4. ∴ The unity of consciousness alone establishes the relation of representations to an object resulting in a cognition.

The validity of the argument has been disputed.<sup>15</sup> However, what interests me here is the sense in which Kant construes representation of an object in terms of cognition and the "unity" of intuition. To that end, in what follows I examine premises (1) and (2) and explain what I take Kant to mean by arguing that cognition requires the unity of consciousness in establishing the unity of the "manifold of a given intuition" of an object.<sup>16</sup> My main point is that it is compatible

<sup>15</sup> There is debate, which I won't discuss here, as to whether Kant intends the unity of consciousness in which an intuition (or its manifold) is conceptually united as a necessary or also as a *sufficient* condition for objective representation. See, for example, Allison (2004), 174-6. For criticism see Pereboom (1995), 20-5; cf. Pereboom (2006), 160. Guyer argues that even the claim of necessity here is problematic; See Guyer (1987), 117-18.

<sup>16</sup> Unfortunately, I lack the space here to discuss issues pertaining directly to the third premise and Kant's conception of the unity of consciousness. For a start on these issues see McLear (2015), §3. I hope to address these issues further in future work.

with a state's lacking "relation to an object", and so not qualifying as a "cognition" in the sense above, that it nevertheless possesses a degree of objectivity. While versions of this argument have been made elsewhere, unclarities and misunderstandings remain.<sup>17</sup> I address some of these below.

### 3.1 Premise One: Cognition vs. Acquaintance

In the *Jäsche Logic* Kant distinguishes different "degrees" of cognition. Of particular interest to us is his discussion of the difference between the third and fourth degree or step.

The third: to be acquainted with something (*noscere*), or to represent something in comparison with other things, both as to sameness and as to difference; The fourth: to be acquainted with something with consciousness, i.e., to cognize it (*cognoscere*). Animals are acquainted with objects too, but they do not cognize them (JL 9:64-5; see also 29:888).

Kant distinguishes here between two sorts of cognitive connection to an object, where the second builds on the first. He distinguishes cognition from mere "acquaintance" [*notitia*; *Kenntnis*], in which the subject is able to differentially discriminate between objects or their parts. Kant does not specify here what cognition comes to other than that it is acquaintance with the addition of consciousness. Given that the context of this discussion concerns the importance of clear and distinct consciousness to cognition and logic (9:61-4), it seems reasonable to seek clarification for the distinction Kant makes here by looking to other discussions he provides of the notion of consciousness and its connection to representation.

In the pre-critical work "The False Subtlety of the Four Syllogistic Figures" Kant argues for a distinction between

logical differentiation, which means to cognize that a thing is A and not B, and is always a negative judgment, and physical differentiation, which means being driven to different actions through [one's] different representations. (FS 2:60)

Kant argues that, e.g., a dog may physically differentiate but not logically differentiate (2:60). Moreover, it is, he says, one thing to differentiate (whether physically or logically), but "it is something else entirely" to *cognize* the difference between things (2:59). This distinction between differentiation and cognition appears to closely match the distinction between acquaintance and cognition in the *Jäsche Logic*.

In Kant's critical period, he makes a similar distinction between two different ways of discriminating with respect to similarity and difference and connects these ways with the degree of consciousness possessed by the representation. This distinction occurs in an important footnote to the Paralogisms discussion of the B-edition. Kant states that,

<sup>17</sup> For argument that Kant is concerned with cognition in judgment rather than intuition of a particular see Hanna (2005); cf. Allais (2009), 392-3; Allais (2011), 104.



Clarity is not, as the logicians say, the consciousness of a representation; for a certain degree of consciousness, which, however, is not sufficient for memory, must be met with even in some obscure representations, because without any consciousness we would make no distinction in the combination of obscure representations; yet we are capable of doing this with the marks of some concepts (such as those of right and equity, or those of a musician who, when improvising, hits many notes at the same time). Rather a representation is clear if the consciousness in it is sufficient for a consciousness of the difference between it and others. To be sure, if this consciousness suffices for a distinction, but not for a consciousness of the difference, then the representation must still be called obscure. So there are infinitely many degrees of consciousness down to its vanishing. (B414-15)

Kant makes two important points here. First, he argues that we should not equate consciousness with clarity, as we need to appeal to consciousness to explain an organism's discriminatory behavior even if that organism is incapable of having clear representations. Second, Kant says that clarity cannot consist simply in differential discrimination (as it does in Wolff's work). It must instead be correlated with an awareness of the basis of a correct discrimination. In other words, a being with clear representation has to represent not only that two (or more) things (or properties) are distinct or similar, but what it is about them that is the basis of that distinctness or similarity. This point corresponds very nicely to Kant's distinction between acquaintance and cognition in the *Jäsche Logic* and the pre-critical distinction between kinds of differentiation in "False Subtlety".

It is thus one thing, on Kant's view, to differentially discriminate. It is another thing to be able to articulate the basis of such discrimination.<sup>18</sup> If this is correct, then we can read Kant's use of "cognition" in premise (1) as claiming that a subject's awareness of the basis or ground of difference and similarity requires positing things—objects—that are the loci of these differences and similarities. Premises (2)–(3) claim that this sort of awareness requires the unity of apperception, resulting in the conclusion that the unity of apperception is required for awareness of the grounds of identity and difference amongst a subject's representations (or their contents)—i.e. cognition.

Kant's distinction between acquaintance and cognition might seem implausible, for the reason that it seems to construe acquaintance as involving an ability to brutally discriminate without any awareness of what it is that moves one to do so.<sup>19</sup> For example, Kant might seem to be say-

<sup>18</sup> See Wunderlich (2005); Kitcher (2010), 18-19; Dyck (2011), 47; McLear (2014), 771-2.

<sup>19</sup> Okrent (2006), 104 notes that animals can "note that two objects differ, but they can never note or notice how they differ, or the way in which those objects differ." This way of putting things is, I think, misleading. First, animals cannot note *that* one thing differs from another, because they cannot, according to Kant, enjoy propositional attitudes. So the extent to which an animal responds to identity and difference is not due to its having attitudes to propositions. On this point see Dummett (1993), ch. 12 and related discussion in Bermúdez (2003), ch. 3. Another difficulty with Okrent's discussion is that it encourages, without addressing, just the kind of notion of a brute discriminatory capacity that I discuss above.

ing that one could discriminate between red and green colored objects without being aware of their respective colors. However, Kant need not be taken as making such a claim, and is in fact indicating an important fact about ways in which a subject's sensitivities to incoming information might lead to knowledge.

Consider, for example, the famous "chicken sexer", whose ability to sort male from female chicks (a form of reliable differential discrimination) is done without the subject's ability to articulate the means by which they make these discriminations, or by which the discriminations hold. We need not deny to the sexer some phenomenal awareness of the bases of their discriminations, and we certainly cannot deny their sensitivity to the information upon which they are basing their choices. What chicken sexers lack is any further capacity to integrate that sensitivity (and thus the information to which they are sensitive) in the variety of ways that are constitutive of rational thought and action.<sup>20</sup> Specifically, the sexer's perceptual sensitivity lacks several features characteristic of those cognitive states which have a more explicit connection to propositional attitudes like belief and knowledge.<sup>21</sup> First, the sexer's sensitivity to the sex of a chicken is not something that comes to them by means of any inference.<sup>22</sup> The sexer "just knows" the sex. As it turns out there are certain perceptual cues that a sexer is picking up on, and to which they can be trained to be sensitive.<sup>23</sup> But their sensitivity to these cues far outruns their ability to articulate them as the basis to which they are responding in particular cases. This doesn't mean that those cues are not showing up in the subject's experience. It just means that they need not be able to explicitly articulate those features that *do* show up as the basis by which they render their selective verdicts as to the sex of the chicks.

It is also important to recognize that this account of the sexer's discriminatory capacities allows that in their exercise she is in genuine cognitive contact with her environment. She need not be construed as, e.g., merely aware of a succession of subjective feelings, which merely are causally connected to her environment in such a way as to drive her to actions. It thus seems reasonable to say that sexer's awareness is of the world, even if she is unable to adequately articulate what she is aware of in virtue of which she bases her verdicts.<sup>24</sup>

Thus far I've argued that Kant construes "relation to an object" in B137 in terms of *cognition*

<sup>20</sup> One way of putting this is that a chicken sexer has no "access consciousness", in the sense articulated by Ned Block, to those features by means of which they make their discriminations. See Block (1995); (2008).

<sup>21</sup> One might be tempted here to say that sexer's states are less "sophisticated" but this seems to me misleading. The cognitive machinery that goes into making such states possible may well be quite complex. The significant point, for my purposes, is that the states or mental events this machinery makes possible are importantly *different* from those of other cognitive states, of which propositional attitudes are a prime example.

<sup>22</sup> Though the fact that sexer is reliable in their judgments, and the fact that they have rendered a particular verdict on a particular occasion, might themselves be the basis of further inferences. See Roessler (2009); Roessler (2011), 113-14.

<sup>23</sup> See Biederman and Shiffrar (1987).

<sup>24</sup> If there were independent reason to think that, for Kant, psychological explanation must start with purely subjective states from which the theorist (or the subject) must work their way out to the external world, then the above argument might fail. For some argument that Kant does not start at this level see McLear (2011); (2016c), §5.

of it, where this in turn should be understood as representation of features which are the basis of discriminations of similarity and difference. I've suggested that, in contrast to cognition, acquaintance is the awareness of similarity and difference without the ability to recognize or articulate the basis by which one is so aware, or in accordance with which one behaves. I've argued that this need be construed neither as some sort of brute sensitivity to difference, nor as something purely subjective, but rather as an ability which is importantly different and more basic than the ability to articulate such differences. I suggested that an example of this is the chicken sexer's ability to sort male from female chicks on the basis of fine-grained perceptual discriminations that outrun the subject's capacity for explicit articulation.

Another example of sensitivity to similarity and difference that might also be relevant to Kant's distinction between cognition and acquaintance is the way in which a subject might be sensitive to features of an object without being sensitive to them as *properties* of the object. For example, one might be sensitive to color in the sense that it is used to discriminate an object from others (or an object from its background) without the subject thereby employing a representation of the object's color as the relevant feature by which it performs the discrimination. For example, John Campbell describes such a scenario in which a subject differentiates one object, a numeral "5" consisting of colored dots, from others and its background. He goes on to say that,

For anyone without colour vision, though, all that they can see is an array of variously shaded and variously sized dots. So an ability to identify that there is a number 5 in the array provides good evidence that the subject has ordinary colour vision. Someone who can see the figure 5 in this kind of display need not, however, be capable of visually attending to the colours of things; they may not realize that there is such a thing as colour at all...Such a person might, for all that I have said so far, be unable to report the colours of objects, or to match different objects which are the same colour. ... We can draw a distinction, then, between colour as an object-defining characteristic, in the sense in which it is only the colours of the blobs in the display that define the figure 5, and colour as a characteristic to which the subject attends.<sup>25</sup>

Campbell's discussion of the test for color vision presents us with an alternative explanation of a subject's ability to discriminate the number five from its background and from other figures. If the only available explanation of what is going on in such a case was one according to which the discrimination of the numeral from its background requires the attribution of the property *yellow* to a particular object in the dot array, then it wouldn't be clear how Kant could allow such a possibility for animals. What Campbell points out is that not all discrimination requires attribution/predication or the awareness of a feature as a property—i.e. as the kind of thing that one thing has while another lacks, and thus could be the kind of thing that could be instantiated

<sup>25</sup> Campbell (2006), 32; cf. Campbell (2002), 30-1; Roessler (2009), 1028.

by more than one object, or by different objects at different times, or by one object at one time but not at another.<sup>26</sup>

Hence the fact that a feature may be “object-defining” in Campbell’s sense is compatible with the subject’s being unable to identify the feature as one in virtue of which the object is so differentiated, nor even to represent that feature as a property of the object. This leaves space for the possibility that Kant’s notion of acquaintance (as distinct from cognition) aims to fill. A subject could be acquainted with an object, and so distinguish it from other things, while nevertheless not enjoying a mental state whose content consists of an attribution to the object of some feature *F* which it has and other things lack, and in virtue of which the thing is differentiated from others.

One might object here that even if an animal can discriminate between objects on the basis of an awareness of their features, if it does not also possess the capacity to articulate the feature of which it is aware as a feature of an *object*, then it cannot be credited with an objective representation. In reply to this, the objection confuses what I have called “reflective objectivity” with any one of the other notions (such as representational or perspectival objectivity). Perhaps there is some reason to tie the capacity for (e.g.) representational objectivity to that of reflective objectivity, but I don’t believe that we see in Kant a reason for thinking this. Kant may well think that *cognition* requires the capacity for reflective objectivity, but this is not equivalent to the former stronger claim concerning representation generally. Hence, it leaves open the possibility that a subject might have acquaintance with an object without possessing the requisite cognitive capacities for cognizing it.

The distinction between cognition and acquaintance also allows us to address one objection to the claim that, for Kant, animals could have intuitions of their environment. For example, Stefanie Grüne has argued that a necessary condition of enjoying intuitions, understood as objective sensory representations, is that they be conscious. Animals, according to Grüne’s interpretation, do not have conscious states, hence animals cannot have intuitions. Grüne cites three reasons for her position.<sup>27</sup> First, she argues that it is not clear that Kant allows animals inner sense (e.g. FS 2:60; LM 28:277), and possession of an inner sense is a necessary condition of having any intuition at all. Second, she argues that Kant’s letter to Herz of 1789 shows that “even though Kant [here] allows animals some kind of consciousness of sensible representations, this kind of consciousness is not sufficient for the having of intuitions.”<sup>28</sup> Finally, she argues that,

<sup>26</sup> One way of putting this is that animal cognition, on Kant’s view, does not satisfy the generality constraint (see Evans (1982), ch. 4.3). The constraint states that if thoughts are to have (conceptual) content, then they must be systematic in two particular senses. First, for any attributive concept, one be able to think of multiple different possible objects as having the attributed feature, and second, for any singular concept indicating an individual which could have that feature, that the individual so thought could have other features as well. Whether Kant endorses the generality constraint is not entirely clear. For some evidence that he does see Allais (2015), 264–5. Some recent work suggests that at least certain forms of animal thought do not obey the generality constraint. See Beck (2012). For a dissenting view see Carruthers (2009). I will discuss these issues in future work.

<sup>27</sup> See Grüne (2014), §2.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

even if an animal could be conscious of its sensory representations, they could not display the unity necessary for achieving the status of intuition. I take these points in turn.

The first point is easily dealt with. As Grüne herself admits, the relevant texts which seem to deny animals an inner sense are from Kant's pre-Critical period, at which time he appears to conflate inner sense with apperception. Once this distinction is made in the early 1780s it is not at all obvious that Kant wants to deny inner sense to animals, but rather only the capacity for self-reflection and self-reference.<sup>29</sup>

Concerning the second point, one should first recognize, as Grüne herself does, that in at least three places Kant allows for the existence of unconscious intuition (7:135; 16:88; 23:19.). Second, it isn't clear that Kant thinks of consciousness as an all or nothing property of a mental state. As we saw in the discussion above of acquaintance and cognition, Kant believes (at least by the 1787 edition of the *Critique*) that consciousness is necessary for any differential responsive differentiation. Given that Kant does think that animals have such discriminatory abilities, that these abilities are best explained by their having representations, and that he explicitly attributes a form of conscious representation to them—viz. acquaintance—there is nothing about Kant's account of consciousness per se that would require us to deny that animals have intuition that is to some degree conscious.

Finally, concerning the issue of unity, Grüne argues that the objective character of an intuition is understood in terms its being a kind of *intentional state* brought about via acts of (conceptually) rule-guided synthesis on non-intentional sensory states.<sup>30</sup> Grüne bases this claim in part on the canonical "*Stufenleiter*" passage in which Kant distinguishes different types of representation (A320/B376–7). Against this, note that the *Stufenleiter* passage is a passage concerning different kinds of "representation" [*Vorstellung*]. It says nothing of "intentionality" or the concomitant notion of a state's possessing correctness conditions.

Grüne also cites<sup>31</sup> an important note from Kant's *Nachlaß* where he says,

What is an object? That whose representation is a sum of several predicates belonging to it. The plate is round, warm, made of tin, etc. Warm, round, being made of tin, etc., are not objects, although the warmth, the tin, etc., indeed [are]. An object is that in the representation of which various others can be thought as synthetically combined... (R6350, 18:676)

According to Grüne, relation to an object thus consists in the representation of particular features as "unified" in one subject of inherence.

<sup>29</sup> For further discussion see McLear (2011), §§3–4.

<sup>30</sup> Grüne (2009), 40.

<sup>31</sup> Grüne (2009), 41.

I think it plausible to construe intuition as a complex representation, and that it is equally plausible that representation of a subject of a multiplicity of properties—in effect, a substance—is going to require, for Kant, apperception and synthesis. But I don't see why complex representation per se must depend on the understanding or the categories (and thus on synthesis). It is true that Kant construes a particular *kind* of unifying function – viz. “combination” [*Verbindung*] – as coming about solely via spontaneous mental acts of ‘synthesis’. However, this means of generating complexity can only be read in a narrow manner, since Kant does not include association in the category of synthetic acts, and association would seem to allow for the generation of representationally complex states. Nor is it either textually or philosophically obvious that the kind of representational capacities or “unifying” functions needed for the awareness of (e.g.) color and shape at a particular spatial region require synthesis, so long as we are careful to distinguish such mental states from acts of predication/attribution or the representation of some *thing* as the subject of properties, and which occupies the region (on this more below). I discuss these considerations further in the next subsection.

Finally, there is reason to wonder whether the notion of unification to which Grüne appeals in the generation of intuition is really tied to a faculty of spontaneity, and so a faculty which animals lack. Grüne seems willing to characterize possession of the primitive capacity for grasping the content of an intuition as a “unity” in “wholly non-intellectual terms.”<sup>32</sup> She also suggests that the possession of such a capacity should be understood as the cognitive analogue of the possession of the capacity to digest meat.<sup>33</sup> But if this is correct, then it would seem that we're no longer talking about spontaneity as Kant conceives of it, and thus no longer talking about the capacity that, according to Kant, is lacking in animals and which makes the grasp of higher cognitive unities—such as “relation to an object” in the sense relevant to the argument of the Transcendental Deduction—possible.

So much then for explanation of the first premise. Relation to an object is cognition of it, which is itself understood in terms of the recognition of the basis of similarity and difference in the object (and between it and other things). This does not, however, exhaust Kant's conception of objectivity, for he goes on, in the second premise, to argue that an object is that “in the concept of which a manifold is united”. This is directly related to the last of Grüne's concerns discussed above. The question is whether it makes sense to think of the sensory experiences of animals as intuitions when such states lack the kinds of “unity” characteristic of the categories. It is to this issue that we now turn.

### 3.2 Premise Two: The Unity of Intuition

Two examples of the kind of cognitive unity that Kant had in mind, and which are especially illustrative of the cognitive limitations facing a subject lacking the categories and the capacity

<sup>32</sup> Grüne (2009), 202 note 16.

<sup>33</sup> Grüne (2009), 41.

of judgment, are those of <cause> and <substance>.

Without the concept <substance>, a cognizer is unable to represent the relational property of *inherence*, and thus unable to represent a property instance as “belonging to” a subject of inherence. Such a cognizer could represent a particular property instance at a place or time (e.g. *redness there now*), but not as instanced *in some subject* which itself exists at that place or time.<sup>34</sup> Relatedly, without the concept <cause> a cognizer is limited in the extent to which she can identify or reidentify an object, because she cannot appeal to causal connections between a thing’s properties (or between the thing and its properties) in order to explain that (e.g.) a rose which blooms today is the same as the green vine which grew last week.<sup>35</sup>

The lack of such categorial concepts in animals is not just a lack of the ability to make particular kinds of *judgment*. It is plausible I think to read Kant as denying animals the ability to have particular kinds of *experiences* (in our contemporary sense of that term, not Kant’s technical sense). The reason for this denial is that Kant is clear, especially in the second edition of the first *Critique*, that imagination plays a role in relating intuitions (or the contents thereof) to one another, and that this is supposed to be governed, in adult rational humans, by a non-judgmental application of the categories (e.g. A101, A119, B151ff).<sup>36</sup>

If the above is correct, then the intuitive sensory representations of animals, and thus their perceptual experiences, are themselves going to be limited in the various ways related to the cognitive roles of the various respective categories. I have here elaborated what I take to be two absolutely central aspects of rational human experience as Kant conceived it—viz. (i) the perceptual awareness of the properties one perceives as inhering in a subject and (ii) the causal connectedness of such a subject, both to its ever-changing properties, and to other things and their properties.

If an animal lacks the ability to represent inherence relations, or even the causal relations necessary for representing the subject of inherence or its relation to other such entities, is there

<sup>34</sup> Perhaps one tempting way of thinking of this is in terms of Strawson’s notion of “feature placing” (Strawson (1959), 202-3). On this view, animals would have no experience of particulars (e.g. bodies), but rather only of “features” occurring at particular places in space and time. Compare the use of “it” in “it is raining” to pick out the occurrence of rain at a particular place, without introducing a particular *thing* into the subject of the sentence. However, there are significant hurdles to understanding exactly what Strawson’s account of feature placing comes to (cf. Laycock (1972), 12). Moreover, Strawson’s conception of a “feature” requires the representation of generality (at least of a sort), a capacity which Kant clearly denies to animals.

<sup>35</sup> See Campbell (1994) for a similar point. But I emphasize that though the animal is limited, it is not incapable of so tracking a particular. With the rose example one can appeal to spatial continuity (the blooming rose is in the same place as the green plant was yesterday), but this isn’t obviously sufficient for reidentification in all cases; cf. Rosefeldt (2003), 150-1; cf. Burge (2010a), 262-3. I discuss continuity further below.

<sup>36</sup> For one such articulation of how this should be understood see Land (2015b). It seems to me that Land errs in claiming that it is intuition per se that is generated by such acts, rather than intuition of a certain kind or complexity. Relatedly, I disagree with Land (2015a) insofar as he there construes so-called “nonconceptualist” positions as restricted to making claims about perceptual judgment rather than intuition or cognition (which is itself obviously a form of judgment per se). I don’t see that this is the case, so long as we can distinguish between different levels of complexity in one’s representations, and specifically in intuition. Nothing in the non-conceptualist position, or in Kant’s writings, seems to prohibit this.

anything left of the animal's capacity for objective representation? I believe there is. Certainly, the particulars given to animals in perception are only going to have the most basic continuity with those given to an adult rational human in perception. The principles which the animal's cognitive system will utilize to single out particulars in perception are going to be very basic, and in some ways, quite coarse-grained.<sup>37</sup> They will include, for example, spatio-temporal continuity—that a particular object trace a single spatio-temporal path, and spatial cohesion—that an object's surface and outer boundary be determined by the spatial proximity of its parts.<sup>38</sup>

Though principles like cohesion and continuity are in some ways coarse-grained, they nevertheless allow for the presentation of spatial particulars rather than serial arrays of qualities. For example, in being visually aware of a colored sphere an animal could do more than simply have sensations of redness and roundness.<sup>39</sup> It could sense the redness and roundness in a particular, albeit one which is not presented as a subject of properties, but rather simply as a continuous expanse of color at a specific location.<sup>40</sup>

Thus Kant need not be understood as denying that animals can perceptually “bind”, both inter and intra modally, the various qualities of which they are aware. But the principles by which such binding occurs are not always going to result in intuitions of particulars in the same sense in which we enjoy intuitions of particulars, since we can utilize much more sophisticated conceptual capacities, which may well affect our sensory experience (e.g. in the case of abstract art or atonal music).<sup>41</sup>

<sup>37</sup> See Golob (2011) for discussion of the “basic measure” with which intuition provides a cognizing subject; cf. Allais (2016). TODO: add page reference.

<sup>38</sup> The centrality of principles of continuity and cohesion to our representation of particulars has received a significant amount of empirical attention and confirmation. For representative discussion see Spelke (1990); Spelke, Vishton, and Von Hofsten (1995); Cheries et al. (2008). For discussion of these issues in the context of Kant's conception of intuition see Dunlop (2016). For discussion of the connection between such principles and basic referential abilities see Burge (2010b), 40-1. Note that the animal need not conceive of either continuity or cohesion as *epistemic criteria* for identity. This would be to confuse reflective objectivity with the more minimal sense I've articulated above. All that is necessary is that the animal be aware of properties governed by these principles in order for it to use them in individuation and tracking.

<sup>39</sup> While there are some similarities between the account I propose here and the account of animal representation discussed in Burge (2010a), one significant difference is that Burge conceives of animal representation as have predication structure while I take Kant to be denying such a possibility. However, since Burge seems only to think that “topological attributives” like *connected within a boundary* are necessary for representation of spatial objects (see Burge (2010b), 40), it is not clear to me that there is a deep difference here. A further issue is that Burge takes his discussion of animal minds to proceed entirely at the level of representation, where I take the issue ultimately to be one of what the animal is conscious of. These issues require further attention. See Eilan (2011); (2015) for discussion in a contemporary context.

<sup>40</sup> Note that this capacity would require the capacity for locating the distal source of a sensation. This is already perceptual constancy of a sort. Kant provides no explanation of how this would be achieved, but I take it that if what I have said above is correct, we need not think it could only be achieved in beings possessing the capacity for categorial synthesis.

<sup>41</sup> For further discussion of the issue of binding with regard to intuition see Allais (2016); Dunlop (2016). Dunlop seems to take it as problematic that such binding principles as cohesion and continuity may not yield “objects” as ordinarily conceived, but I take it that this is in fact a positive feature of the view I elaborate, since it allows space for genuine cognitive contributions by understanding and reason in beings capable of spontaneous synthesis.



There will thus be some inherent indeterminacy with respect to what intuitions an animal actually enjoys. For example, does it experience the rock and the plant growing from it as one particular or two? When it sees a cup placed on a table does it see two objects go out of existence and a new, complex object, come into existence?<sup>42</sup> It is not obvious that there are answers to these questions, or if there are, how we could know them. But there remains a genuine sense in which the intuitions of animals present “unified” entities—viz. entities whose integrity is based on principles of continuity and cohesion.

## 4 Objectivity & Correctness

So far I have argued that while animals may be acquainted with objects, they cannot cognize them, where this means that while they can represent features of things so as to reliably discriminate between objects that are similar or different, they cannot represent the bases of their discriminations of similarity and difference. I further claimed that without the concepts of <substance> and <cause> at their disposal, animals would be unable to engage in predicative acts, and so be unable to predicate properties as belonging to objects. Thus, they would be unable to utilize (unreflectively so) anything more than the most basic principles of cognitive unification, such as spatial and temporal continuity and cohesion, in making determinations as to the identity or difference of objects in their environment.

What then can be said of the objective status of sensory representation in such animals? According to one prominent account by Lucy Allais, with which I largely agree, animals may nevertheless be said to be perceptually aware of particulars in their environment. Allais puts things this way:

the non-human animal (assuming it lacks concepts but has some way of representing space) that perceives its environment represents the world in the sense that it has relational mental states that present it with parts of the world – it does not have an inner display of non-intentional, raw sensations. However, it does not represent an objective world in the sense that it does not represent the world as a law-governed complex that it thinks of at a detached level as existing unperceived/independently of it. In Kantian terms, this means that it cannot be self-conscious.<sup>43</sup>

Allais conceives of the perceptual states of animals as (according to Kant) objective in the sense that they are not “of”, and do not present, mere phenomenal qualitative states of the animal—akin to pains, tickles, or afterimages. Instead, animals are presented in outer sensory experience with spatially located particulars. While I agree with the basic idea expressed

<sup>42</sup> See Allais (2009), 406 for a similar point.

<sup>43</sup> Allais (2009), 406; cf. McLear (2011); McLear (2015), 98-101.

here, it leaves open two different ways of construing the issue of objectivity. According to the first, animal states are objective because they attain what I above termed “representational” objectivity—i.e. they have correctness conditions in virtue of representing particular sensory qualities as being present in particular spatial expanses at specific locations in space. This is in contrast with “raw” sensations, which entirely lack correctness conditions. There is no correctness condition integral to having the sensation of, e.g., pain—there is just the pain.<sup>44</sup>

According to the second way of construing Allais’ point, the sensory experiences of animals are objective in virtue of that which they immediately present to consciousness.<sup>45</sup> On this way of construing things, whether or not the sensory states of an animal possess correctness conditions, the key issue is what they immediately present to the consciousness of the animal. In terms then of *what is presented*, in the subjective case there is only a “raw” sensation, whose nature and existence depends entirely on the subject having it. In the objective case what is presented is a public spatial particular, whose nature and existence is (at least to some degree) independent of the subject enjoying the experience.<sup>46</sup> Call this notion of the objectivity “presentational” objectivity.

At this point I want to elaborate what I take to be a very tempting way of applying the framework for objectivity I articulated above in §2 with the line of thought introduced by Allis. However, attractive as this may be, I ultimately argue that we should not give into this temptation, for it depends on attributing to Kant a conception of the representational status of sensory experience that he does not plausibly endorse.

According to this tempting line of thought, we reconcile representational with presentational objectivity by positing that what explains presentational objectivity is precisely that one’s states are at least representationally objective, for (one might argue) it is the possession of correctness conditions that distinguishes purely qualitative phenomenal states from intentional states that are “directed at”, and so are able to present, the world. According to this line of thought, in the case of sense perception, it is plausible that it is at least partially in virtue of having spatial form that one’s sensory states take on their representational significance.<sup>47</sup> Given the framework for objectivity outlined above, one would then have the resources to explain the objectivity of animal perception as follows.

The sensory states of animals, let us assume, in virtue of having spatial form, thereby possess correctness conditions (e.g. representation of shape  $\phi$  at location  $\psi$ ), and thus have representational objectivity. Since what is represented by the subject in such an experience is itself a

<sup>44</sup> They may of course be correctness conditions associated with particular pains, e.g. that there is a pain in one’s toe, or that of two occurrent pains, one is closer to your elbow than the other. For discussion see Peacocke (2008), 13–14.

<sup>45</sup> Allais (2009), 389.

<sup>46</sup> Here I assume that we are restricting ourself to objects understood as empirically real. The extent to which these things are transcendentally ideal, and thus should be understood in terms of subject-dependence, I here leave to one side.

<sup>47</sup> The notion that spatial representation is fundamentally basic looms large in the work of Strawson and those influenced by him. See especially Strawson (1959), chs. 1–2; Strawson (1966), chs. 1–2; Evans (1982); Peacocke (1992), ch. 3.

public spatial particular, the experiential state also possesses at least some degree of metaphysical objectivity – the correctness conditions which specify the particular do not themselves make it the case that the particular is the way that it is (or possesses related spatial features, such as relative location, motion, etc.). Finally, because Kant regards spatial features as related to the form of intuition, and thus as independent of any specific sense modality by which they may be known, the properties which are experienced by an animal are not entirely parochial, and thus allow for at least some degree of perspectival objectivity. What animals fail to achieve, and on Kant's view could never achieve, is any measure of methodological or reflective objectivity. These come only with the capacity for judgment and reason.

This picture is attractive in that it allows that there is a difference between “raw” sensation and intuition, that intuition comes about via some kind of a priori imposition of spatial form on sensory matter (here we might speak in contemporary terms of cognitive processing), and that the resulting experience is one which explains the animal's (potentially very fine-grained and sophisticated) abilities to differentially discriminate between objects and track them over time for, among other things, the purposes of satisfying the animal's biological needs.

As attractive as this picture of perceptual objectivity is, I have doubts about its wholesale applicability to Kant's conception of animal representation. These doubts stem primarily from the difficulties that come with assuming that Kant construes the cognitive status of sensory representations in terms of their possessing correctness conditions, and thus as being representational states in our contemporary sense of the term. Call this assumption concerning the representational status of sensory experience the Content View.<sup>48</sup> This is an especially difficult view to sustain concerning beings lacking spontaneity. Kant's primary notion of a correctness condition is of a truth condition, and judgments, for Kant, are the sole vehicles of truth in virtue of being the product of “relating” representations in one consciousness.

The unification of representations in a consciousness is judgment...thinking is the same as judging or as relating representations to judgments in general (Pr §22 4:304; cf. JL §17 9:101; LL 24:928).

What kinds of representations are related in one consciousness? Kant specifically has concepts in mind here (cf. CJ §35 5:287; B146, B283; JL 9:101; LL 24:928). Judgments consist of concepts that, due to an act of the mind in which they are unified in one consciousness, are brought together to form truth-bearing contents (I leave open how exactly the transcendental unity of apperception accomplishes this). We may contrast the logical relations in which representations stand in an act of objective judgment to the manner in which representations are related in a sensory event or act. In sensory experience representations are related to each other non-logically, and merely as to their form in either space or time. Hence, their logical combination is not given, but rather made. This is, I think, Kant's point in §15 of the second edition version of the Transcendental Deduction. There Kant says,

<sup>48</sup> For discussion and criticism of this view as attributed to Kant see McLear (2016c).

a manifold's combination [*Verbindung*] as such can never come to us through the senses; nor, therefore, can it already be part of what is contained in the pure form of sensible intuition. For this combination is an act of spontaneity by the power of representation; and this power must be called understanding, in order to be distinguished from sensibility (B129–30).

If the vehicle of truth is judgment and judgment requires the combination of representations (concepts) in one consciousness, and such combination can never be given in or otherwise accomplished by sensibility, then it seems that sensibility alone could never yield representations which possess a truth value.<sup>49</sup>

However, even if the above argument is correct, one might nevertheless attempt to argue that intuition possesses correctness conditions of its own, e.g. accuracy conditions, which should not be assimilated to the kind of correctness conditions indicative of judgment (i.e. truth conditions).<sup>50</sup> Unfortunately, I do not see any positive textual basis upon which to hang such an assertion. Kant nowhere, to my knowledge, speaks of correctness conditions in any other terms than truth.<sup>51</sup> Moreover, if Kant did endorse such a view one would expect it to play a role in his explanation of perceptual illusion and hallucination, since it is precisely cases of illusion and hallucination that are often thought to demand explanation in terms of a mental state's possessing correctness conditions. Kant is, however, explicit in denying that perceptual illusion and hallucination be treated in terms of the correctness or incorrectness of sensory representation. Instead Kant endorses a doxastic theory of perceptual error. Error is a product of the relation of the object to the understanding – i.e. in the object as it is judged (A293–4/B350; An §11 7:146).<sup>52</sup>

At this point, however, one might voice the following objection. If intuition does not possess correctness conditions, then it can offer no constraint on determining what object an animal has in mind, for it is only in virtue of such conditions that we can answer the question as to whether an animal has in mind one thing as opposed to another. In particular, the cognitive state would need to offer some material condition for identifying the object of one's perceptions, and for attributing to it some determinate quality or set of qualities.<sup>53</sup> We can see our way to answering this worry if we return to Allais' distinction between subjective and objective.

<sup>49</sup> For further discussion of these issues see McLear (2016c) §4.2.

<sup>50</sup> See Grüne (2009); Grüne (2014) for an explicit version of this strategy. Land (2015a), §4 and Land (2015b) also attempt to articulate a non-judgmental basis for the representational content of intuition.

<sup>51</sup> One might appeal here to the notion of a cognition's "conformity with its object" (e.g. Bxvi–xvii, Bxx, A58/B83). But Kant uses this phrase explicitly with the notion of truth and falsity. Moreover, Kant is talking of cognition, and I have denied that animals cognize objects, being only acquainted with them.

<sup>52</sup> Kant is also recorded as asserting this in numerous texts from his logic lectures, cf. LL 24:83, 84, 87, 103, 146, 156, 720, 813, 825, 833. For further discussion of these points see McLear (2016a); McLear (2016c).

<sup>53</sup> Karl Schafer argues for just such constraints on cognition. According to Schafer (2015), what makes a representation objective is, in part, that it offer some "material constraint" or standard of correctness.

Recall that Allais distinguished between the subjective and objective aspects of a mental state in terms of what is presented. According to a representationalist reading of Kant, which ascribes to him the Content View, the notion of “what is presented” is best understood in terms of the state’s possession of a correctness condition. I have presented reasons for thinking this an ill-fitting characterization of Kant’s view. On the alternative I propose, we take the notion of what is presented as exactly that, i.e. as the specification of some element or aspect of the subject’s environment. On this view, individuation of an animal’s mental states in sensory experience, and specifically outer intuition, makes essential appeal to the particulars in its environment that are presented to it.<sup>54</sup> Intuition is thus an essentially relational state in which the subject is acquainted with some tract of their current environment.

With respect to the notion of a correctness condition, the intuited object to which the subject is related is what makes it the case that their state (e.g. in more cognitively sophisticated subjects, their beliefs) has a correctness condition. Thus rather than being correct or incorrect, intuition *supplies* a standard of correctness for cognition.<sup>55</sup> As I’ve indicated, exactly what the standard of correctness is may be difficult to determine in the case of an animal mind, given the coarse-grained character of the principles of individuation operative for the animal. The key point is to keep acquaintance and cognition distinct by distinguishing between that which supplies the standard of correctness—viz. the intuition of the object—and the correctness condition itself—viz. the proposition that the object is thus-and-so.<sup>56</sup>

Despite rejecting the Content View in favor of a form of environmental acquaintance, we can nevertheless maintain much of the framework of objectivity of which it makes use. On the representational way of framing things, I suggested that despite the cognitive limitations Kant places on animals that they could possess representational, metaphysical, and (to a limited degree) perspectival objectivity. However, even on an interpretation according to which Kant rejects the Content View, we could still see him as accepting that all three of these notions (could) hold for animals. In the case of representational objectivity, it will trivially be true that when an animal (e.g.) perceives a mossy rock, that that state is such as to be correct if and only if there is a rock there to be seen. Since the notion of representational objectivity does not specify what makes it the case that a given state has correctness conditions, nothing stops the Acquaintance View from helping itself to the notion.

It is also true that the subject could not be in a state of acquaintance with her environment unless there was something present to which she could be so acquainted. But the subject does not *generate* or otherwise make it the case that the acquaintance relation obtain. So there is a degree of metaphysical independence between subject and that with which she is acquainted.

<sup>54</sup> It may of course appeal to other things as well, such as the subject’s position, and the relevant sense modality.

<sup>55</sup> There are obvious issues here regarding hallucination and illusion. I discuss these issues in McLear (2016b). For further discussion of the notion of acquaintance see McLear (2016c); McLear (2016a).

<sup>56</sup> Though I lack space to elaborate this proposal, another way of thinking of it is in terms of the truthmaker-truthbearer relation. Intuition presents a truthmaker for judgment. Judgment is the bearer of truth.

While there may be a question as to the *ultimate* metaphysical independence of empirical reality from the intuiting subject, the intuitions of animals are in no way worse off with respect to metaphysical objectivity than those of rational (human) beings.

Finally, the acquaintance theory can accommodate perspectival objectivity as follows. The animal's state of acquaintance is determined in part by their standpoint with respect to the object of perception, as well as the sense modality involved. We can then assess the degree to which the animal's state achieves perspectival objectivity by looking to the parochial nature of either its sense modalities or standpoint. So, for example, to the extent that an animal shares our forms of intuition, it will achieve some level of objectivity.

In sum, the world which comes into view on Kant's conception of an animal is a world of particular qualities bundled or unified according to basic cognitive principles such as spatial continuity and cohesion or proximity. In the sense of "object" with which Kant is most concerned—viz. the object as a persisting real subject, or substance, of properties, with causal powers that put it in community with other such substances—animals lack any capacity for consciousness of such a thing. There is thus a relevant sense in which the animal's world is a world without objects. But, if the discussion above is correct, the contents of the animal mind do not merely consist of subjective sensory states. Animals, on Kant's view, can enjoy states (or events) that are minimally objective, even if the particulars so presented to them in perception are not the rich particulars of adult rational human experience.

This way of understanding Kant also has further benefits.<sup>57</sup> First, it respects the fact that Kant conceives of humans as radically different from animals, in virtue of their possessing spontaneous faculties of reason and understanding. This difference is one of kind and not merely degree (ML 28:276; cf. DWL 24:702). In one set of student lectures, Kant even goes so far as to differentiate between the kinds of imaginative faculty that might be possessed in animals as opposed to humans.

All three of these cognitive faculties [i.e., imagination, imagining, and anticipation, which have their source in the reproductive imagination] can be accompanied by apperception or not. When they are, then they belong only to human beings, when not - then animals also have them. We ought, therefore, to have two different name for these, but for this [faculty] there is only one, namely, the reproductive power of imagination" (ML 29:884).

If what I have argued for above is correct, then Kant can reasonably say that the integration of the spontaneous faculties of reason and understanding radically changes the nature and extent of an animal's cognitive life (amongst other things by changing the way the faculty of imagination

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<sup>57</sup> Thanks to Thomas Land and Samantha Matherne for discussion concerning the following two points.

may operate).<sup>58</sup> But we need not understand this addition as one which makes the difference between mere awareness of subjective states and awareness of one's environment.

Second, this manner of construing animal cognition presents an important challenge to readings of Kant which I have elsewhere called "Intellectualist"—viz. readings that assume or argue for a dependence of objective representation on the synthetic activity of the higher cognitive faculties.<sup>59</sup> The import of this challenge does not depend on whether Kant had animals in mind while, e.g., composing the Transcendental Deduction, but rather on the fact that Kant explicitly and consistently allows for the possibility of objective cognitive states (in the sense I've outlined above) in animals throughout his career. It is difficult to understand how Kant could have even considered this a logical, let alone real, possibility if he held the position that objective representation depends on the possession of a capacity for spontaneity and its concomitant faculties.<sup>60</sup> This point holds even if Kant recognizes, as I have argued he does, that animals are importantly different from human beings with respect to their cognitive powers, and that something is importantly lost when we move from rational to non-rational awareness of the world. This "something" however, is not the world itself. In being unable to recognize the grounds of similarity and difference of which they are aware, animals are blind to structural features of the natural world, and the awareness of which are necessary (among other things) for scientific understanding and knowledge. But Kant does not seem to take this blindness as cause for denying them the possibility of being aware of the world *überhaupt*.

## 5 Conclusion

For Kant, possession of the suite of capacities necessary for rational thought is an all or nothing affair. Either one has the capacity to reason and judge or one does not. Nevertheless, Kant denies that animals are mere mechanisms. The resulting position is one according to which Kant ascribes to animals a level of cognitive sophistication that allows them to enjoy, I have argued, minimally objective cognitive states. For Kant, the mental states of at least some animals reflect an awareness of inter- and intra-objectual similarity and difference. They are, in this sense, acquainted with the world. Animals lack an awareness of what makes it the case that two properties, or two objects, are similar or different. It is in this sense that they lack "relation to

<sup>58</sup> Note that radical change is compatible with there nevertheless being recognizable similarity or overlap in the cognitive experience of animals and (rational) humans. Thus I am not advocating an interpretation of Kant according to which the mind in general and sensibility in particular is literally "transformed" by the addition of the faculties of judgment and reason into something wholly different. For advocacy of this more extreme position see McDowell (1996), ch. 6 and Boyle (2012). I leave open here whether this means that Kant in fact adopts an "additive" conception of the mind, as Boyle understands it.

<sup>59</sup> See McLear (2015). Often such readings posit two extreme opposites, e.g. "raw" sensation or impression vs. full blown perceptual judgment (e.g. George (1981); Beck (1978); Pereboom (1988); Ginsborg (2006)). In contrast, if what I've argued above is correct then there a large spectrum of positions is available between such opposites.

<sup>60</sup> See (Gomes 2014), 14 for the expression of a similar worry.

an object”, in the terms of §17 of the Transcendental Deduction. More generally, animals are incapable of cognition of objects, but if what I have argued for above is correct, this does not preclude their being in cognitive contact with objects.

I argued for a variety of different ways that we might understand the objective status of such cognitive contact. If we interpret Kant as conceiving of experience along the lines of the Content View then we should interpret him as allowing that animals possess states with correctness conditions—they are “representationally objective”—in virtue of having spatial form. Such states are also metaphysically objective, at least to the extent that they are in rational beings (here it depends on what one thinks of Kant’s idealism). Moreover, since Kant is thinking of spatial form as independent of particular sense modalities, there is at least some perspectival objectivity available to animals as well.

I also voiced some worries about interpreting Kant along these lines. Instead, I argued for an interpretation of sensory experience in relational terms, where this requires that the individuation of mental states for Kant occurs along with, and not independent of, a specification of the objects to which the animal is related in its environment. This view of sensory experience is nevertheless compatible with much of the framework of objectivity made use of by the Content View.

Hence, if the mental life of animals is not a walled garden of mere sensation, it is not such as to present the world as we experience it either. Instead, according to Kant, animals experience a world which presents itself strictly in relation to the animal’s needs and interests, and is unified only according to coarse cognitive principles of (e.g.) continuity and cohesion. Recognizing Kant’s sensitivity to the subtle differences between degrees of cognitive contact with the world allows us a better appreciation of two of Kant’s most central insights. On the one hand, that our most basic cognitive contact with the world is via sensory experience. On the other hand, that there is something importantly special about the capacity for rational thought, which can affect, and perhaps even make possible, certain kinds of experiences of the world. While remaining true to these insights in our interpretation of Kant’s thought may be difficult, it need not and should not come at the cost of denying either the complexity and sophistication of the animal mind, or its position in occupying a rung on the cognitive ladder connecting mind and world.

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