

# Hallucination as perception of spatiotemporally gerrymandered object – the argument from hallucination debunked

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In contrast with a widespread belief, here I defend the view that in hallucination there is *always* a physical object. I aim to show *where, when and what such a physical object is*. Such an object is a *spatiotemporal gerrymandered object* that is *not unlike* everyday objects albeit being less accessible for practical purposes.

Recently, the argument from hallucination has been used to back up the *common kind assumption*, which is often split in two parts (Macpherson, 2013):

- Premise 1: In hallucination, there is no real object
- Premise 2: Introspectively, hallucination and perception are the same

Usually premise 1 goes undisputed. The real fight begins afterwards. Based on whether premise 2 is held true or false, various possibilities are considered. For instance, to save realism, disjunctivism denies premise 2. Or, one may accept premise 2 and embrace either sense-data, or representationalism, or indirect perception.

I take a different turn and questions whether premise 1 is false by challenging premise 1 – on both empirical and conceptual ground. The lynchpin of the proposal is that all alleged cases of hallucination are cases of perception, albeit unusual. In short, when one hallucinates  $x$ , one perceives  $x$ , although circumstances may be such that one feels the need to distinguish what is going on during hallucinations from other more mundane cases of perception. The difference is neither in existence of the perceptual object or in the kind of mental act. The difference is the spatiotemporal location of the object.

Briefly, in everyday perception, when S perceives  $x$ , it is easy to point to the spatiotemporal location occupied by  $x$ . When S hallucinates, say,  $y$ , it is not that easy. It is not impossible though - it is just more difficult. Here, I show how, where and when it is possible to do so. As a result, the layman believes that  $y$  is not there to be perceived while  $x$  is. I will show that  $x$  is neither more real nor more 'there' than  $y$ .

The crux of the matter is that it is possible to mount a sorite case that links perception and hallucination insofar *the building blocks of one's hallucinations are particulars with which one has had actual causal intercourse*. I will back up such a claim with empirical data (direct brain stimulation a la Penfield, TMS, drug induced hallucination, after images, super saturated red, Benham top, psychotic hallucinations, post traumatic disorder induce hallucinations, dreams, hypnopompic and hypnagogic hallucinations, day dreaming, Martian colors, greenish-red and yellowish-blues, impossible colors, mental imagery in congenitally blinds, synesthesia, aura in migraine, phantom limb, Charles Bonnet's syndrome, and more). In all such cases, without a previous actual causal intercourse, no corresponding hallucination ensues.

I will show how it is possible to stretch the notion of perception so to encompass objects that take place in an extended spatiotemporal span. Bottom-line: I propose to model hallucination as perception of reshuffled spatiotemporal gerrymandered objects.

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