perception
1. can computers think?
2. from dualism to functionalism
   a survey of theories of mind
3. externalism
   is the mind in the head?
4. perception
5. consciousness and the mind-body problem
first, we will examine this question

do we perceive mind-independent physical objects like roses and rubies?

‘My perception is not of the world, but of my brain’s model of the world’ (Frith, Making Up The Mind)

Image by MIT OpenCourseWare.
one can know some things without relying on perception or sense experience (or so it seems)

in other words: presumably some things are knowable a priori (logic, math, ‘analytic’ truths like ‘vixens are female foxes’)

but many important things we know (e.g. facts about our environment) are knowable only a posteriori (knowable only on the basis of perception)

and if we don’t perceive objects like roses and rubies, then how can perception give us knowledge of our environment?
recall Putnam on ‘methodological solipsism’

‘no psychological state, properly so-called, presupposes the existence of any individual other than the subject to whom that state is ascribed’ (note: Putnam is not endorsing m.s.)

m.s. is basically the view that internalism about all psychological states is true

if m.s. is right, then seeing Jones is not a psychological state, properly so-called

one can only see Jones if Jones is there in one’s environment, and this implies that the property of seeing Jones is extrinsic
the property of seeing Jones is extrinsic

Olivia₁ sees Jones

Olivia₂, a perfect duplicate of Olivia₁, sees Jones’ twin brother

Images by MIT OpenCourseWare.
another example

Olivia\textsubscript{1} sees Jones

Olivia\textsubscript{3}, a perfect duplicate of Olivia\textsubscript{1}, sees nothing

Images by MIT OpenCourseWare.

Olivia\textsubscript{3} hallucinating a Jones-ish person
perception and externalism

if seeing Jones (hearing a shot, smelling a skunk, etc.) are genuine psychological states, contra m.s., then externalism is true of states of this kind

Putnam, Burge, and Clark & Chalmers all argued (in different ways) that beliefs ain’t in the head

their arguments are controversial, but it seems much easier to argue that perceptions ain’t in the head
one way to resist externalism about perception

one could admit that we do see physical objects, and that seeing Jones (e.g.) is extrinsic, but deny that it is a genuine psychological state.

analogy: having a headache caused by Jones’s boring lecture is extrinsic, but it is not a genuine psychological state.

rather, the genuine psychological state is having a headache, which is (apparently) intrinsic.

maybe seeing Jones is like that: Olivia sees Jones iff Jones causes Olivia to be in an intrinsic psychological state of a certain kind.

but spelling out the details is very difficult.
one could deny that we ever see material objects

‘such great philosophers as Descartes, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, and Kant [believe] that we do not see the real world...In the past century philosophers usually put this point by saying ‘We do not perceive material objects, we perceive only sense data’” (Searle, 180)

as a historical claim about Descartes et al., there’s at least some truth to it

we have already (briefly) met ‘sense data’: see Smart, 65
we’ve already met Descartes (1596-1650)

Locke (1632-1704)
Berkeley (1685-1753)
Hume (1711-1776)
Kant (1724-1804)
recall: the identity theory and the object of experience

such-and-such brain process
= the experience of seeing something orange

the identity theory does not identify the object of the experience with a brain process
recall our discussion of afterimages

the identity theory identifies the experience of having an afterimage with a brain process

but what about the afterimages themselves—are they non-physical things?
‘There is, in a sense, no such thing as an after-image or a sense-datum, though there is such a thing as the experience of having such an image’
recall Place on the ‘phenomenological fallacy’

according to Place, ‘when we describe the after-image as green, we are not saying that there is something, the after-image, which is green’

to think otherwise is supposedly to commit the ‘phenomenological fallacy’

but is it really a fallacy?

not according to the ‘argument from illusion’
1. Consider a ordinary situation which we would naturally describe as one in which Olivia sees a material object, say a (grey, curvy) dagger.

2. Any such ordinary situation has an hallucinatory counterpart: a situation in which Olivia hallucinates a dagger

   ‘from the inside’, the two situations are the same.

3. In the hallucinatory situation Olivia sees something that is grey and curvy, but which is not a dagger (or any other material object)—call this thing Olivia sees a sense datum.
the hallucinatory situation, according to the first part

Olivia

a non-material object, a ‘dagger-ish’ sense datum
4. if Olivia sees a (grey, curvy) sense datum in the hallucinatory situation, she sees a (grey, curvy) sense datum in the ordinary situation

5. Olivia only sees one grey curvy object in the ordinary situation

6. hence, if Olivia sees a (grey, curvy) sense datum in the hallucinatory situation, in the ordinary situation she does not see the dagger
3. In the hallucinatory situation Olivia sees something that is grey and curvy, but which is not a dagger (or any other material object)—it is a (grey, curvy) sense datum.

6. If Olivia sees a (grey, curvy) sense datum in the hallucinatory situation, in the ordinary situation she does not see the dagger.

7. Hence, putting the two parts together, and generalizing the argument, we never see (or perceive) any material object.
the ordinary situation, according to the argument

Olivia

the real physical dagger (if indeed there is one), is not seen
Valberg sets out an antinomy: an apparently reasonable argument for some claim \( p \), and an apparently reasonable argument for \( \neg p \).

Incidentally, Kant was fond of antinomies.

The \( p \) in question is (near-enough) the claim that we do not perceive physical objects—for instance books (the same conclusion as the argument from illusion).

Concentrate on the argument for \( p \) (24-32), and the (very short!) argument for \( \neg p \) (33).