

# Eliminativism about Phenomenology

Graham Peebles

University of Osaka

According to illusionism, our awareness of the qualitative properties of experience is illusory. It merely seems to us in introspection that our experiences have qualitative properties—but they no more exemplify these properties than the objects of perceptual illusion exemplify the properties we illusorily experience them to have. There are a number of ways of elaborating on this view, specifically on how the “illusion” in question should be understood. While illusionism is correct that conscious experiences do in fact have no phenomenology, it is misleading to characterize experiences even as merely seeming to have a phenomenology. Proponents of illusionism tend to hold that we are in some way aware, albeit erroneously, of some qualitative aspect of experience, or that we automatically come to conceive of experience in this way. This should be denied. There is neither any illusory awareness of a qualitative aspect to experience, nor any disposition or other psychological mechanism that causes us to conceive of experience in this way. The notion of phenomenology is not sourced directly from experience or introspection but is a purely theoretical notion whose introduction is erroneous and often based on a fallacy regarding a merely epistemological contrast between perception and thought. We ought, therefore, not to accept that there is something to the notion of phenomenology but categorize it as merely illusory, but to eliminate it.