

## Chapter 4

- According to Stephens and Graham, Ralph Hoffman has the best developed AHM account of voices:

He [Hoffman] offers what may be described as an honest-error or understandable-mistake account of verbal hallucinations. As Hoffman describes them, verbal hallucinations involve false beliefs on the part of the hallucinator, particularly the conviction that she is hearing someone else speak. However, although it is erroneous, Hoffman contends that this belief is reasonable for the subject in view of her subjective data or evidence. By this Hoffman does not mean that it is justified or warranted. He means merely that the belief has a rational basis sufficient to account for its acceptance by the subject. (50)

- Here are two alternative hypotheses regarding the acquisition of the belief in alien voices:
  1. Motivated dissociation: The subject has a desire to disown certain unacceptable thoughts.
  2. Massive cognitive breakdown: The subject's logical/reasoning skills are seriously impaired.

Stephens and Graham admit that the former might provide a bias toward this belief, but that it cannot be the entire story. They claim that the latter is simply wrong — schizophrenics do not have major logical/reasoning deficiencies.

- Hoffman denies that the experience of hearing alien voices is phenomenologically like our normal perception of external voices. But, why then are they mistakenly identified as alien?

◦ One hypothesis is that they are made more vivid by special attention. Stephens and Graham quickly dismiss this possibility. Another hypothesis is that alien voices are distorted perceptions of genuine sounds in the external environment. Stephens and Graham call this the “Input Account” and give it careful attention.

◦ The Input Account would nicely explain the alien quality of voices, as the sounds genuinely are external. But, schizophrenics often experience verbal hallucinations without any external stimulus. And even the deaf experience verbal hallucinations.

● Hoffman’s account:

1. Voices are self-produced.
2. The subject misidentifies the source of this speech. But why?
3. Apparent unintendedness.

According to Hoffman, the subject experiences voices as episodes whose occurrence is not intended by him. Voices appear to the subject as something that happens to him independent of (and, in many cases, even contrary to) his will or desire, and it impresses him that the speech is not under his control. (60)

But how does this lead to the alien hypothesis?

4. We normally externalize unintended images. So, this is an honest error.

We would all reach the same conclusion if we experienced what he experiences. (62)

◦ Objection: But don’t we experience unintended inner speech all the time (i.e., in clearly non-pathological cases)? And if such speech isn’t unintended, what exactly is meant by *unintended* inner speech?

◦ Hoffman distinguishes two varieties of intention:

Hoffman’s notion of the intended is taxonomically nuanced. He distinguishes between “strong” and “weak” senses of ‘intended’. Verbal imagery is strongly intended when it is “consciously decided upon” or “preceded by conscious decisions” (pp. 509–510). These are cases where a speaker explicitly considers or formulates at least the higher-level goals to be realized in a speech act. “Weakly intended” verbal imagery, by contrast, includes all cases in which the imagery produced is “consonant with consciously

accessible” goals, whether or not the speaker actually accesses those goals. (65)

- Most inner speech, Hoffman claims, is at least weakly intended.
- Schizophrenics do have problems generating speech output that matches their goals/expectations.

Citing a variety of studies, he claims that schizophrenic speech disorder reflects breakdowns in the planning processes that connect high-level communicative goals with specific output (pp. 506–507). (66)

Q: But why don't schizophrenics externalize their overt speech? Stephens and Graham argue that the kinesthetic evidence (typically) trumps in such cases.

- There are also strong and weak varieties of the *unintentional*. These correspond to true and pseudo verbal hallucinations.

Hoffman suggests that an inner-speech episode is *weakly unintended* just in case it fails to accord with cognitive goals of which the subject is or might become introspectively aware. Thus, an inner-speech episode counts as weakly unintended if it occurs in the absence of any accessible discourse goals or objectives. An episode is *strongly unintended* only if its occurrence conflicts with the subject's currently accessed cognitive goals. Thus, strongly unintended inner speech must occur in a context in which the subject takes himself to be actively pursuing some cognitive project other than the speech act in question. (69–70)

These notions connect to true and pseudo verbal hallucinations as follows:

True verbal hallucinations occur only when inner speech is strongly unintended, but borderline or pseudo-hallucinations may occur when inner speech is only weakly unintended. (69)

- Hoffman cites studies that seem to show that normal people often temporarily externalize verbal imagery. However, we have a “reality testing” system that normally leads us to give up the alien belief. Hoffman hypothesizes that this system is defective in schizophrenics. (74)

## Chapter 5

- The Akins-Dennett regress objection to Hoffman's account:

If we assume that an overt actions counts as intended (or as a “slip”) in virtue of its relation to the agent’s previous thoughts, then, presumably, a thought is intended (or is a “slip”) also relative to the agent’s previous thoughts. Obviously, this account of the intendedness of thoughts combined with the thesis that each and every thought is intended leads to a “never-beginning” regress. However, nowhere does Hoffman imply that every thought must be intended. (80)

And, one can intend inner speech, even if not all thoughts can be intended.

- Another regress:

Hoffman seems to face a dilemma. On the one hand, he can agree that the relation between T and IT offers grounds for self-attributing T only if IT is self-attributed, and that IT is self-attributed only if it is intended. In this case, sticking with his model, he will have to postulate a further intention, IIT, in order to explain the intendedness and self-attributedness of IT. However, IIT itself will have to be intended and self-attributed in order to account for the self-attribution of IT. And we’re off on a regress: IT, IIT, IIIT, and so on. On the other hand, Hoffman can allow that the concordance of T and IT provides grounds for self-attributing T only if IT is self-attributed, but attempt to account for the subject’s self-attribution of IT without supposing that IT is intended . . . However, this invites the following objection: If the self-attribution of IT can be explained without postulating intentions to intend, why not explain the self-attribution of T without postulating inner-speech-act intentions? (86)

- Q: How does Hoffman account for the self-attribution of thoughts besides inner speech?

- Stephens and Graham offer an extended account of how we self-attribute propositional attitudes.

- Hoffman’s 4 steps to verbal hallucination are nicely presented on p. 93.

- A problem concerning discourse planning:

Hoffman supposes that whenever unintended inner speech occurs in the context of either passive or active consciousness, it is unplanned (i.e., not specified by relevant discourse goals). This suggests that such inner speech should be unintelligent: disorganized, random, lacking salience for the subject (Rund 1986). However,

as numerous investigators have noted, voices seem both intelligible and intelligently directed to the subject, though it does not seem to the subject that he is intelligently directing them ... Doesn't all this suggest the presence of some sort of discourse planning — by Hoffman's own criteria — on the subject's part, though perhaps planning to which he enjoys no conscious access? (96)

- Q: Why do verbal hallucinators take their voices to be talking *to them*? (97)
- Stephens and Graham make a general objection against Hoffman and all AHM accounts. Verbal hallucinators often do not (claim to) literally hear their voices.

We shall argue that, in many cases standardly classified as verbal hallucinations, subjects do not take themselves to be *hearing* anything, nor do they have the impression that they hear someone (anyone) speak. We maintain that voices are not, in general, *auditory* hallucinations. (98)

Many schizophrenics describe these voices as vivid thoughts.

Thus, we need some other account of the alien quality of voices — an account that explains how voices can be experienced as alien without being experienced as auditory. (103)

- Stephens and Graham's take on the supposed reality testing component:

A more plausible version of the reality-testing hypothesis is that, rather than automatically canceling nonself inferences made during passive consciousness, reality testing merely induces the subject to withhold judgment on or reconsider such nonself inferences. (107)
- They also challenge the rationality of these hallucinators. (108)