1. Introduction

Many philosophers, especially in the wake of the 17th century, have endorsed an *inegalitarian* view of shape and color, according to which shape is objective or mind-independent while color is subjective or mind-dependent. I shall argue that the modal relations between shape and color make this combination of views untenable. We must instead embrace some form of *egalitarianism*, according to which shape and color are, in a sense to be clarified, either both objective or both subjective.

The plan for this paper is as follows: in §2, I introduce some terminology and give a more precise characterization of egalitarianism and its denial, inegalitarianism. In §3, I advance an argument against inegalitarianism, which begins with the following principle about the modal relations between shape and color: it is impossible for something to have a color without having a shape, i.e. without being spatially extended in some way. I then proceed to argue that, given reasonable assumptions, inegalitarianism contradicts this principle. Given the immense plausibility of the latter, I conclude that we should reject inegalitarianism.

2. Preliminaries

Some terminology: let *realism* about color be the thesis that colors are instantiated by ordinary objects. “Ordinary objects” include objects like carrots, cups, pencils, and planets — roughly, those things common sense takes to belong to the extra-mental world. Realism about color therefore rules out eliminativist views (Hardin 1988, Maund 1995, Chalmers 2006), according to which nothing at all is colored, as well as projectivist views, according to which the only things that are colored are non-ordinary things like sense-data, sensory experiences, or patches of the visual field (Boghossian & Velleman 1989, Jackson 1977). Likewise, let realism about shape be the thesis that shapes are instantiated by ordinary objects. I shall take for granted that all parties to the debate accept realism about both shape and color, but I shall not
make any assumptions about which version of realism is correct about either.

There are, broadly speaking, two ways to be a realist about a class of sensible qualities like color or shape. One may adopt either a subjectivist view, according to which the qualities in question are response-dependent properties, or an objectivist view, according to which the qualities in question are response-independent properties. A response-dependent property is a property the instantiation of which constitutively involves the subjective responses of perceivers. Our paradigms will include the disposition to produce reddish sensations in normal perceivers under normal conditions and the disposition to produce square-ish sensations in normal perceivers under normal conditions. By contrast, a response-independent property is a property whose instantiation does not constitutively depend on the subjective responses of perceivers. It is somewhat difficult in the present context to provide an uncontroversial example of a response-independent property. The standard examples are shapes, as well as other properties, such as being a rock or being a star, which seem partially to depend on shape. (Intuitively, no shapeless object could be a rock or a star.) But in the present context we are leaving open the possibility that shapes are response-dependent. However, without prejudging any issues under consideration, one can begin to grasp the notion of a response-independent property by considering how naïve common sense takes properties like being cubical, being a rock, or being a star to be. Among properties that are candidates to be identified with colors, surface reflectance properties (i.e. dispositions to reflect a certain percentage of the incident light at each wavelength within the visible spectrum), or the microphysical bases of such properties, are typically regarded as paradigmatic response-independent properties.¹

¹. See Armstrong (1968), Smart (1975), Jackson & Pargetter (1987), Matthen (1988), Tye (2000), Byrne & Hilbert (2003), and McLaughlin (2003) for defense of the view that colors are identical with properties of this sort.

Subjectivist views of color typically take the following form: any given color property (e.g. redness) is associated with a subjective response-type (undergoing reddish sensations, having a reddish quale, being aware of a red-prime patch of the visual field, or something of the sort). Each color property \( C \) is then identified with (something like) the disposition to produce responses of type \( R_C \) in normal perceivers under normal conditions, where \( R_C \) is the subjective response associated in the above manner with \( C \). In discussing subjectivism about color, I will, for simplicity, assume that the subjectivist’s view conforms at least roughly to this model.² Likewise, mutatis mutandis, for subjectivism about shape. However, the arguments given in this paper are largely independent of this assumption, and may be adapted to a wide range of possible subjectivist views.

I will use expressions like “subjective redness” (or “subjective squareness”) to denote the response-dependent property that the subjectivist about color (shape) identifies with redness (squareness). Subjective colors include subjective redness, subjective whiteness, and their ilk. Subjective shapes include subjective squareness, subjective roundness, and their ilk.

There is a minor technical complication worth mentioning here, if only to justify ignoring it in what follows. It is common for subjectivists to relativize color properties to kinds of perceivers (or sometimes to particular perceivers and viewing conditions). On such views, there is no such thing as the property of being red. Rather, there are many (kind-relative) properties of being red, whose analyses take the form: Redness-for-\( K \) = the disposition to produce responses of type \( R_{\text{red}} \) in normal members of \( K \) in circumstances which are normal for members of \( K \). (Or: Redness-for-S-in-\( C \) = the disposition to produce responses of

². Views which conform to this model are often called “dispositionalist” theories of color (Locke 1689/2009, McGinn 1983, McDowell 1985, Johnston 1992, Levin 2000, Cohen 2009). But this name is imperfect, for many objectivists about color also identify colors with dispositions of a certain kind, such as (response-independent) dispositions to alter light in certain ways (Byrne & Hilbert 2003, Tye 2000, Matthen 1988).
type $R_{red}$ in subject $S$ in condition $C$.) The commitment to the relativity of color in standard forms of subjectivism means that there are more color properties than we might initially have suspected. But, for our purposes, what is important to recognize is that, given subjectivism, this proliferation of relativized color properties just gives us more color properties. So whatever is necessarily true of color properties as such must, if subjectivism is true, be true of these kind-relative color properties as well. For example, suppose that (as I will claim in §3) it is necessarily true of color properties as such that they are instantiated only by things which have a shape, i.e. things which are spatially extended in some way. Then, by Leibniz’s Law, if color subjectivism is true, this must be necessarily true of the kind-relative response-dependent properties with which the subjectivist identifies color properties. Because my arguments depend only on claims about what is necessarily true about color properties as such, I will hereafter (harmlessly) ignore this technical complication about color relativity in the subjectivist view.

We are now in a position to define egalitarianism and inegalitarianism. Egalitarianism endorses the equal treatment of shape and color with respect to the question of subjectivism/objectivism. That is, the egalitarian endorses the following disjunction: either subjectivism is true about one and objectivism about the other. However, my arguments will not be affected if we interpret “having a color” broadly, so that point-sized objects count as having a color. Explicitly, color “modally depends” on shape, in the following sense:

**Modal Dependence (MD):** It is (metaphysically) impossible for something to have a color without having a shape.4

MD has been widely accepted, and indeed regarded as a truism, throughout the history of philosophy. Locke’s inegalitarianism, for example, is based on the claim that color “modally depends” on shape. However, my arguments will not be affected if we interpret “having a color” broadly, so that point-sized objects count as having a color.

3. Against Inegalitarianism

“Come then, let us try to tell you what shape is,” says Socrates to Meno. “Let us say that shape is that which alone of existing things always follows color” (Plato 2002, p. 64). Whatever the shortcomings of this as an analysis of shape, Socrates’s suggestion certainly seems to be correct in one respect: shape, as a matter of necessity, always follows color, in that whatever has a color must also have a shape. Equivalently, color “modally depends” on shape, in the following sense:

**Modal Dependence (MD):** It is (metaphysically) impossible for something to have a color without having a shape.4

MD has been widely accepted, and indeed regarded as a truism, throughout the history of philosophy. Locke’s inegalitarianism, for example, is based on the claim that color “modally depends” on shape. However, my arguments will not be affected if we interpret “having a color” broadly, so that point-sized objects count as having a color.

4. Two points: first, in saying that color “modally depends” on shape, I mean nothing more than is contained in the above formulation. I do not mean to suggest that shape properties are in any interesting sense “ontologically prior” to color properties, or that the former “metaphysically ground” the latter. Second, one might object to MD by claiming that it’s possible for a point-sized object to have a color, but that such an object is not correctly described as having a shape. However, my arguments will not be affected if we interpret “having a shape” broadly, so that point-sized objects count as having a shape.

5. Some of those cited here mention instead the non-modal proposition that all colored things are extended rather than the modal proposition MD as an
thing equivalent) is regularly used as a clear-cut, illustrative example of a necessary truth in service of more general philosophical discussions about metaphysical modality.6

MD is the key background assumption in my argument against inegalitarianism. I regard MD as a basic intuition regarding the nature of color and shape. It seems to be far more plausible than any specific theory about the nature of color and shape, and theoretical claims of the latter sort are to be tested in part by their ability to accommodate truisms like MD. At the very least, if a philosophical theory conflicts with MD, this should be regarded as a serious, if not decisive, cost for the theory.

From here, the argument against inegalitarianism appeals to one further premise:

Possibility: If inegalitarianism is true, then possibly, something has a subjective color without having a shape.

MD and Possibility jointly entail the falsity of inegalitarianism. For assume MD and Possibility are true, and now suppose for reductio that inegalitarianism is true. Inegalitarianism and Possibility jointly entail: (1) possibly, something has a subjective color without having a shape. But for the inegalitarian, subjective colors are colors. So inegalitarianism and (1) jointly entail: (2) possibly, something has a color without having a shape. But (2) contradicts MD. So (given MD and Possibility) inegalitarianism is false.

All that remains, then, is to establish the truth of Possibility. To do so, it will suffice to describe a scenario \(w\) such that (i) in \(w\), something has a subjective color without having a shape, and (ii) if inegalitarianism is true, then \(w\) is a genuine (metaphysical) possibility. These conditions seem to be satisfied by the following scenario, which I shall call \(W\).

\(W\) is an entirely non-spatial world inhabited by a vast host of non-spatial objects — objects that are neither spatially extended (though they possess other, non-spatial intrinsic properties), nor spatially related to one another (though they stand in various non-spatial relations, including causal relations, to one another). Among the inhabitants of \(W\) are minds — that is, subjects of mental states. We might suppose that these minds are mereologically simple, as Descartes held actual minds to be. Or we might instead suppose that these minds are mereologically complex, as materialists hold actual minds to be, built up from simpler parts which causally interact with one another in complex ways that structurally parallel the causal interactions among the parts of an actual human brain. The minds of \(W\), like ours, undergo a wide range of experiences, whose subjective characters co-vary in systematic ways with certain intrinsic features of the extra-mental objects which cause them, at least in normal circumstances. Some such extra-mental objects are disposed to produce reddish sensations in normal perceivers under normal conditions. Others are so disposed to produce greenish sensations, others blueish sensations, and so forth.

In other words, some objects in \(W\) possess subjective-colors. But because everything in \(W\) is entirely non-spatial, these objects are devoid of any shape. So \(W\) satisfies condition (i) above. What about condition (ii)? Is \(W\) a genuine metaphysical possibility? \(W\) seems to be a conceivable scenario. Conceivability may not entail possibility, but the conceivable scenario plausibly provides at least prima facie justification to believe the scenario is possible. In other words, given the conceivable \(W\), we ought to believe that \(W\) is possible unless there are sufficiently strong countervailing considerations. This principle of modal epistemology is plausibly a consequence of the more general principle of Phenomenal Conservatism: “If it seems to \(S\) as if \(P\), then \(S\) thereby has at least prima facie justification for believing that \(P\)” (Hue-
mer 2001, p. 99). As Yablo (1993) and Chalmers (2002) note, when one conceives $P$ (in the relevant sense of “conceives”), there is an appearance of possibility; that is, it appears to one that $P$ is possible. The Phenomenal Conservative principle, or something similar, is likely to be attractive to color subjectivists. Color subjectivists are generally color realists, and their rejection of the irrealist alternative is often justified on something like Phenomenal Conservative grounds. (See, e.g., Cohen 2009, p. 65.)

It’s also worth noting that similar scenarios familiar from discussions of external-world skepticism are widely regarded as possible. For example, the scenario Descartes imagines in Meditations I–II, in which his sensory impressions, including his color sensations, are produced in him by a non-spatial being (an immaterial demon) and in which “body, shape, extension, movement, and place are all chimeras” (p. 63), strikes most readers as possible. And indeed, some philosophers (e.g., Chalmers [2006, 2012]) hold that something like $W$ actually obtains. Nonetheless, I do not positively claim that $W$ is possible. For reasons to be discussed shortly, there may be grounds for denying its possibility. What I do claim, however, is that whatever grounds there may be for denying the possibility of $W$ are not available to the inegalitarian. For, as we’ll see, these grounds rely on assumptions about the nature of shape and the nature of experience that cannot be comfortably combined with the commitments of inegalitarianism.8

7. More precisely, Chalmers maintains that “Edenic” shapes — roughly speaking, the shape properties directly presented to us in experience, and others under the same determinable — are not instantiated in the actual world. If we restrict our attention to Edenic spatial properties, Chalmers would take my description of $W$ to be true of the actual world. However, he allows that “ordinary” or “imperfect” shapes — picked out as those properties, whatever they are, that serve as the normal causal basis of our experience as of Edenic shape—are instantiated in the actual world.

8. Some may find the idea of an entirely non-spatial world, or of non-spatial objects with causal powers, so bizarre that they are hesitant even to accept that there is a prima facie case for the possibility of $W$. For philosophers in this group, it’s worth noting that there is a somewhat less bizarre alternative scenario that would serve our purposes nearly as well as $W$, which I shall call $W'$: $W'$ is just like $W$ except that the entities that produce color experiences are point particles rather than non-spatial entities. (This scenario was suggested to me by Adam Pautz.) If we ran the argument with $W'$ instead of $W$, we would have to give a somewhat stronger interpretation to MD than that given in fn. 4 by taking the notion of “having a shape” in such a way as to exclude point-sized objects. The resulting interpretation of MD, though stronger than the official interpretation, is nonetheless very plausible. I rely on $W$ in this paper rather than $W'$ because I’m more certain of the official interpretation of MD than the stronger interpretation. But if one finds the two interpretations of MD about equally plausible, and one has significantly more confidence in the possibility of $W'$ than in the possibility of $W$, then one should keep this alternative version of the argument in mind in what follows.

There is one argument for denying the possibility of $W$ which is available to an egalitarian of a subjectivist stripe. $W$ is stipulated to be a world in which some things have subjective colors. But it’s somewhat plausible that there is a modal relation between subjective color and subjective shape analogous to the modal relation between color and shape. That is, arguably, the following modal-dependence principle is true:

**Subjective Modal Dependence (SMD):** It is impossible for something to have a subjective color without having a subjective shape.

This claim might be supported by arguing that nothing can produce the subjective response-type associated with any color without producing a subjective response-type associated with some shape. Perhaps it’s a “law of appearance” that one cannot have (say) an experience as of something red without having an experience as of something spatially extended in some way. If SMD is correct, then given subjectivism about shape, $W$ is impossible. For $W$ is stipulated to be a world in which things have subjective colors but lack shapes. If it’s impossible for something to have a subjective color without having a subjective shape, and shapes just are subjective shapes, then it’s impossible for something to have a subjective color without having a shape.

But of course, the inegalitarian does not identify shapes with subjective shapes. SMD may be true, in which case $W$ is a world where
everything with a subjective color also has a subjective shape. But, for the inegalitarian, having a shape is not simply a matter of having a subjective shape. So, for the inegalitarian, the fact (if it is a fact) that nothing can have a subjective color without having a subjective shape is no reason to think that nothing can have a subjective color without having a shape, and so provides no reason to think that W is impossible.

But perhaps SMD opens up another line of response for the inegalitarian. In particular, the inegalitarian might claim that MD is false and that it only seems plausible because we confuse it with SMD. I find this debunking strategy unconvincing for three reasons. First, it seems that the intuition that MD is true persists even when we are given this alternative explanation of why MD seems plausible. In this respect, the proposed debunking strategy differs from other successful cases of explaining away modal appearances through suggestions of “proposition confusion”, such as Kripke’s explanation of the appearance that water could have been distinct from H₂O, which claims (on one interpretation of Kripke) that we’re confusing the proposition that, possibly, water ≠ H₂O with (something like) the proposition that, possibly, the watery stuff around here ≠ H₂O (Kripke 1980). Second, we would not find analogous debunking strategies convincing for other intuitive modal claims, such as (i) it is impossible for something to be a bicycle without being spatially extended, or (ii) it is impossible for something to be both round and triangular. It’s plausible that nothing could appear bicycle-ish without appearing spatially extended, and it’s also plausible that nothing could appear both round and triangular. But these facts have no tendency to undermine the intuitive support for (i) and (ii). Why, then, should SMD undermine the intuitive support for MD? Third, it seems to me that we’re not generally prone to confusions of this kind. For example, arguably nothing could appear red to me without appearing to be before me, but this fact (if it is a fact) does not fool me into thinking that nothing could be red without being before me. It therefore seems doubtful that we would be subject to this sort of confusion in the case at hand.

A second reason for denying the possibility of W comes from phenomenal externalism (Dretske 1995, Tye 1995, Lycan 2001, Byrne & Tye 2006). According to phenomenal externalism, the subjective character of a sensory experience constitutively depends on the subject’s extrinsic relations to features of her environment. According to one common version of phenomenal externalism, the subjective character of one’s experience is determined by the properties represented by the experience, where one’s experience represents a property just in case, very roughly, one’s current internal state “tracks” or causally co-varies with instances of that property under normal conditions. Hence, according to this “tracking” externalist view, in order to have a square-ish sensation — i.e. an experience with the subjective character associated with our experiences as of squares — one must token an internal state which causally co-varies (under normal conditions) with instances of squareness. But in W, squareness is never instantiated, nor is any other shape property. So the internal states of the subjects in W don’t causally co-vary with instances of squareness or any other shape property. Given this version of phenomenal externalism, then, the subjects in W will not undergo shape phenomenology. If it is indeed a law of appearance that color experience entails shape experience, it follows that the subjects in W could not have color experiences. As W was stipulated to be a world in which subjects do have color experiences, it follows that W is not a possible world.

However, it is not clear that this line of reasoning is available to the inegalitarian, for the inegalitarian is committed to color subjectivism, and, as many others have pointed out, phenomenal externalism cannot be happily married with color subjectivism (Tye 1995, pp. 144–5; Dretske 1995, pp. 88–93). How, for example, could the color subjectivist give a phenomenal-externalist account of our color experience? The color subjectivist holds that for an object to have a given color property C is for it to be disposed to produce responses of type R_C in normal perceivers under normal conditions. If she proceeds to endorse a phenomenal externalist position, according to which what it is for one to token the subjective response-type R_C is for one to be
in an internal state which tracks instances of C, then she courts vicious circularity. The resulting view, on which C = the disposition to produce instantiations of the property of being in some state or other that tracks instances of C, has the absurd consequence that C is one of several constituents out of which C itself is constructed — that C is a constituent of itself. As Johnston (2001) remarks about a related view, the envisaged position “identif[i]es a property [...] with the relation to a holding of another relation that has that very property as a relatum. But a property cannot be contained within itself in this way” (p. 195, cf. Pautz 2010). Furthermore, it seems implausible to suppose that our internal states track properties of this sort. When I have an experience of red, perhaps I am in an internal state which, under normal conditions, is caused by a certain physical property, perhaps a surface reflectance type. But it is not plausible that my internal states are caused by objects’ dispositions to produce experiences of a certain type in normal perceivers under normal conditions (cf. Prior et al. 1982, Jackson & Pargetter 1987, McLaughlin 2003).

Granted, the phenomenal-externalist argument above for the impossibility of W requires only that the externalist “tracking” account of sensory experience apply to our shape experience; it does not require that such an account hold true for color experience. Perhaps, then, the inegalitarian can opt to retain just enough phenomenal externalism as is needed to deny the possibility of W, but not so much as to run her into the problems discussed above, perhaps by combining an externalist “tracking” account of shape experience with an internalist account of color experience. But there are three serious problems with this response. First, it is extremely ad hoc. Second, and more significantly, it apparently precludes any unified answer to the question of what determines the subjective character of experience, one which would apply to experiences of different sensory modalities or even experiences of different sensible qualities within the visual modality. To abandon hope of such a unified account is a theoretical cost that most will be unwilling to pay. Third, apart from these broadly theoretical considerations, in the present context there is a fatal problem with appealing to any view, such as the view under consideration, that combines an externalist account of shape phenomenology with an internalist account of color phenomenology. Imagine there is an isolated brain whose intrinsic physical state perfectly matches that of my own brain, but which, unlike my own brain, has never had any interesting causal commerce with shapes in its environment. Let us suppose further that it is not in a state that would be produced by an object with this or that shape if only such an object were to be placed before it, for, unlike my brain, it is not connected to the receptor cells needed to facilitate such world-to-brain exchanges. Nor, we may add, did it come about through any process, such as natural selection or intelligent design, that could have conferred on the brain’s present state the biological function of detecting this or that shape. Rather, we may suppose it came together in the manner of a Boltzmann brain, a result of random thermal fluctuations of particles in the void. Given any reasonable form of externalism about shape experience, this brain is not enjoying any shape phenomenology. But given internalism about color phenomenology, it must be enjoying rich color phenomenology. After all, it is an intrinsic duplicate of my brain, and I am enjoying rich color phenomenology.

So it is a consequence of the hybrid view that it’s possible for a subject to have color phenomenology without having shape phenomenol-
neurophysiological states are produced in them by immaterial objects that are intrinsically just like human brains and that the appropriate subjective responses could not be instantiated by a shapeless object. Such neurophysiological states are produced in them by immaterial objects under certain conditions, in accordance with fundamental laws governing the interaction of spatial and non-spatial objects.

I have considered three grounds for denying the possibility of $W$ — that is, three propositions (subjective egalitarianism, phenomenal externalism, and type-identity physicalism about color phenomenology) that a philosopher might reasonably endorse and which apparently have the consequence that $W$ is impossible. But as we’ve seen, the first two are unavailable to the inegalitarian, and the third is unhelpful to the inegalitarian. I am aware of no other grounds for denying the possibility of $W$. On the assumption that inegalitarianism is true, we should therefore conclude that there is a possible world — either $W$ or some variation on $W$ — in which things have subjective color but lack shape. In other words, Possibility, the key premise in the argument above, is true. But the inegalitarian holds that colors are subjective colors. So given inegalitarianism, we have not merely a possible world in which things have subjective color without shape, but a possible world in which things have color without shape. But it is not possible for something to have color without shape. So inegalitarianism is false.10

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10. An anonymous referee suggests that the argument above does not succeed against a version of inegalitarianism that accepts a “rigified subjectivism” about color. According to the latter, colors are identified as the properties that are actually disposed to cause such-and-such responses in normal perceivers. It’s plausible that the properties that are actually disposed to cause the appropriate subjective responses could not be instantiated by a shapeless object. Such a view is therefore not ruled out by my argument. But this so-called “rigified subjectivism” is not a version of subjectivism in my sense of the term, and so the combination of this view with objectivism about shape is not a form of inegalitarianism. Presumably, the properties that are actually disposed to cause the relevant subjective responses in us are (something like) surface reflectance properties, or perhaps the intrinsic microphysical properties underlying surface reflectance properties. But these are (paradigmatic) response-independent properties. So the view under consideration is (or at least plausibly entails, in conjunction with certain empirical facts) a form of objectivism. A version of color objectivism along these lines is defended by Jackson & Pargetter (1987) and McLaughlin (2003).
4. Conclusion

If the argument above is successful, we must reject inegalitarianism in favor of either objective or subjective egalitarianism. Those who are confident that subjectivism is true about color may take the argument in §3 to support subjectivism about shape, and therefore to support subjective egalitarianism. My own preference, which I shall not defend here, is to move in the opposite direction. I am reasonably confident that objectivism is true about shape. From this starting point, I take the argument in §3 to support objectivism about color, and therefore to support objective egalitarianism.

Inegalitarianism, as I’ve characterized it, may be regarded as a specific version of the following more general thesis:

Privileged Status Thesis (PST): Shapes have some sort of privileged metaphysical status vis-à-vis colors.

PST is very plausible, and the attraction some philosophers feel toward inegalitarianism may derive from an attraction to PST. In light of the conclusions of this paper, it is important to note that PST is consistent with the rejection of inegalitarianism. I shall conclude by describing three ways of upholding PST — three ways of according shapes a privileged metaphysical status relative to colors — which are untouched by the arguments of this paper. First, one might uphold PST by maintaining that shapes are more natural than colors in the sense of Lewis (1983), or that colors, unlike shapes, are highly disjunctive or gerrymandered properties (cf. Smart 1975, Jackson & Pargetter 1987, Tye 2000, Byrne & Hilbert 2003). Another way to uphold PST (consistent with the first) is by maintaining that shapes, or spatial properties more generally, have a “wide cosmological role”, figuring in causal laws with sweeping generality, whereas colors have very limited causal relevance (perhaps none beyond the explanation of color perception or facts closely related to color perception, such as sorting behavior) (Campbell 1993, p. 264). Finally, one might accept a more radical form of PST according to which realism is true about shape but not about color. Although the argument in §3 does not depend on the assumption, I have been presupposing that all parties to the debate accept realism about both shape and color. At this point it is worth noting that one can accept egalitarianism as I’ve characterized it while denying realism about color (or shape, for that matter). This is most naturally done with objective egalitarianism. Objective egalitarianism holds that colors and shapes are response-independent properties. But one can consistently combine this thesis with the view that colors (or shapes) nonetheless happen to be uninstantiated in our world. The conclusions of this paper are therefore consistent with a form of PST according to which ordinary objects in our environment, while spatially extended in various ways, simply lack color properties altogether.11

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