



Perception and Its Modalities

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Distinguishing the Commonsense Senses

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This chapter proposes a methodological strategy to investigate the individuation of the senses from both a commonsensical and a scientific point of view. It starts by discussing some traditional and recent criteria for distinguishing the senses, and argues that none of them taken in isolation seems able to handle both points of view. It then pays close attention to the faculty of hearing, which offers promising examples of the strategy of combining common sense and science. The argument is made in favor of a distinction between two kinds of modes of presentation associated with sound perception: a mechanical mode of presentation that makes sounds perceptible by other modalities than audition such as touch, and a tonal mode of presentation that makes people conceive of sounds as the proper objects of auditory perception.

Keywords: distinction of the senses, sound perception, sensory content, qualia, mode of presentation

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