

**Phil CORKUM**  
**Aristotle on Consciousness**

Aristotle sometimes draws analogies between perceiving and thinking. In this paper, I'll argue that the role of the active intellect in thought is analogous to the role of perceiving that we see and hear in perception. The paper comes in two parts. In the first part, I'll rehearse an argument for the conclusion that perceiving that we see and hear isn't the office of a faculty separate from the special senses of seeing and hearing: rather, perceiving that we see and hear is a turning of one's attention to the affection of the sense organs. Drawing the analogy with perceiving that we see and hear, I'll argue in the second part of the essay that the agent intellect isn't a faculty separate from the passive intellect. Rather, the activity of the active intellect is a of turning of one's attention to the intelligible objects contained in the passive intellect. The activity of the agent intellect is, for Aristotle, a kind of consciousness. The picture of Aristotle's account of consciousness which emerges from the argument of this paper suggests comparison between Aristotle and a contemporary view of consciousness as a higher-order representation. I'll urge for caution in making this comparison.