

## International Phenomenological Society

---

The Authority of Affect

Author(s): Mark Johnston

Reviewed work(s):

Source: *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, Vol. 63, No. 1 (Jul., 2001), pp. 181-214

Published by: [International Phenomenological Society](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3071094>

Accessed: 15/12/2011 17:53

---

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



*International Phenomenological Society* is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

## The Authority of Affect\*

MARK JOHNSTON

*Princeton University*

A while ago I pulled the short straw, and became chair of my department. One nice part of the job is to praise people I work with, which I can do sincerely because they are very praiseworthy. I also have to read a lot of praise by others; the familiar things—project evaluations, letters of recommendation, promotion dossiers, and so on and so forth. As a result, I have learnt to attend to praise a little more closely.

One characteristic way in which even sincere praise can be hollow is by being general and formulaic. Formulaic praise—saying only the sorts of things admirers generally say—fails to convince precisely because it does not draw out distinctive praiseworthy detail, the very aspects that a true admirer is well-placed to notice. Telling praise, on the other hand, sometimes displays what are naturally construed as subtle flaws in the admired one. Yet it presents these features in such detail as to show that the admirer has really considered and so is probably really *taken with* the admired one. Conversely, formulaic praise, by showing no evidence that its author has seen determinate details in the one who is being praised, leaves us wondering whether the author is really taken with his subject. There is then a reliable inference from the specificity of praise to the affective engagement with the admired one on the part of the admirer. New lovers sometimes ask “What do you love about me?” It is a dangerous question. For the answer can reveal whether they have really been seen, and hence whether they are really loved.

These observations serve to introduce a thesis that I would like to explore. Seeing the utterly specific ways in which a situation, animal or person is *appealing or repellent* requires an appropriate affective engagement with the situation, animal or person. Absence of appropriate affect makes us aspect-blind. The world then appears more neutral than it is, and our immediate evaluational thought and judgement becomes impoverished. Intrinsic motivation is lost, and eventually our own ongoing activity lacks a kind of ready intelligibility, which the giving of reasons to ourselves hardly makes up for.

---

\* Editor's note: This special symposium derives from the 1999 Brown Colloquium.

Something like this thesis is close to a platitude in empirical psychology, but I have deliberately made it philosophically controversial—many would say untenable—by using the realist language of seeing and of aspect blindness. Aren't these metaphors which I could discharge in favor of an innocuous subjective account of the role of affect, one which doesn't populate the world with patterns of appeal and repulsiveness, which so-called "appropriate" affect helps us to make out? I do not think so, and the interest, if any, of what I have to say will consist in explaining why.

(The rather dry word 'affect' will be coming up quite a bit. I suspect the word I really want is 'eros', at least when it is used to describe a direct experience of the appeal of things. But I cannot see how to effectively disavow the now conventional restriction of the erotic to the sexual, which would to some degree distort what I have to say. As with eros, the kind of affect in which I am interested includes both a pre-judgmental orientation towards the world, and occurrent 'crystallizations' of this orientation, understood as pre-predicative or pre-judgmental disclosures of sensuous values. My positive account will turn on the relation between certain affective orientations and corresponding affective episodes.<sup>1</sup>)

1. My focus will be on a certain class of values, which do not have good names in the languages I know. I mean the *utterly determinate* versions of such determinables as the beautiful, the charming, the erotic (in the narrower sense), the banal, the sublime, the horrific and the plain old appealing and the repellent. My unnamed targets are even more specific than J. L. Austin's favorites, the dainty and the dumpy. The particular way in which one is dumpy may make all the difference.

Within each determinable range, the determinate values in question would be inaccessible to beings without an appropriate sensibility. So these values might be called the inherently sensuous values. Thought and judgement directed at these determinate values could not be generated simply by the understanding. Something akin to sensing and sense-based imagination is required to make them available as topics for thought and judgement. While reason can include in its accounting judgements directed at such values, it cannot deliver the judgements themselves. Just as we need to sense cherry red to make a goodish range of judgements as to its nature, we need to encounter the determinate sensuous values in order to have them either as the topics or as the things predicated in our most basic evaluative judgements.

---

<sup>1</sup> In what follows I do not deal with the emotions, which typically arise after one is drawn to or repelled by something. Consciousness of one's position vis a vis the repellent and the appealing is crucial in the formation of the emotions. For a revival of this traditional picture of the emotions as further elaborations of affective desire in the light of the subject's beliefs about his relation to the appealing and the repellent, see Richard Wolheim *On The Emotions* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1999).

The sensory encounter with value required to make detailed evaluative judgements does not involve an appraisal-free survey. If one has never been moved or *affected* by the determinate ways in which things are beautiful or charming or erotic or banal or sublime or horrific or appealing, then one is ignorant of the relevant determinate values. That is not to say that one must be churned up whenever any such determinate sensuous value is presented. The determinate values in question come in ranges, and admit, as it were, of degree zero, so that a cool appraisal may be the appropriate affective response.<sup>2</sup>

Granting all that does not itself entail that we actually sense exemplifications of such determinate sensuous values. It does not entail that affectivity is a refinement of sensing as opposed to an erstwhile accompaniment. The sensuous values may still seem ripe for a Projectivist or Dispositionalist treatment.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> If we manage to get into focus the role of the fully determinate sensuous values in our practical life then the New Rationalism in value theory — I have in mind the very important work of Thomas Scanlon, Derek Parfit and Joseph Raz, which makes evaluative *belief* almost everywhere the starting point of our practical outlook—will seem about as tenable in ethics as it would in aesthetics. The New Rationalists tend to cordon off the aesthetic, as if it were something that happens mostly in museums and national parks. Indeed the peculiarly modern idea of ‘the aesthetic’ may be in part due to this quarantining of the value-disclosing role of affect. The present paper can be read as an argument that something akin to the aesthetic is a central part of the ethical life of a rational animal. The affective disclosure of value is the beginning of our ethical life. So our ethical life is already richly underway before some of affect’s disclosures are registered at the level of evaluative belief. Even if all goes perfectly downstream from evaluative belief, there may be nothing to compensate for an initial failure to be taken in the right way with the right things.

In his fine work, *What We Owe To Each Other* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1998), Thomas Scanlon introduces the notion of what he calls ‘desire-in-the-attention-directed sense’, thereby, I think corraling roughly the same territory as I do below with the label ‘affective desire’. Scanlon characterizes such desires in terms of their regular *effects* such as focussing attention, creating the expectation of enjoyment and being disposed to consider the desired object in ‘a favorable light’. We should ask what it is about the kind of desire in question that makes these effects go together. We should also try to explain why such desires frequently seem to provide reasons whose force can outlive the desires in question. I think that the relevant desires have an affective quality that is the disclosure of a certain sort of value. The value is there anyway, and so has force as a reason independently of its recognition. The affectively charged recognition of the value in question is the common source of the focussing of attention, the reasonable expectation of enjoyment, and the disposition to consider the valuable thing in a favorable light.

In his attack on desire-based theories of practical reason Scanlon emphasizes evaluative belief as the crucial form of registration of value. But this misses the way in which the sensuous values and the associated reasons for action and evaluation can often only be disclosed perceptually. This is most vivid in cases in which one can only effectively convey to another the considerations in favor of, say, a style, a song or a friend’s manner by having the other sense it, in part by feeling as one does.

<sup>3</sup> As will emerge below, the distinction here is not a deep one. The Projectivist says there are no sensuous values but simply our tendencies to project our affects onto a neutral

Perhaps David Hume went too far, both with respect to vice and virtue, and with respect to the secondary qualities in general, when he wrote in *The Treatise of Human Nature* that ‘vice and virtue therefore, may be compared to sound, taste and colour which, according to the modern philosophy, are not qualities in the object, but perceptions in the mind.’<sup>4</sup> But isn’t what Hume said in the *Enquiry*, namely that

the distinct offices of reason and of taste may be easily ascertained. The one, reason, discovers objects as they truly stand in nature, without addition or diminution. The other, taste, is a productive faculty and, gilding and staining with the colours borrowed from internal sentiment, raises in a manner a new creation.<sup>5</sup>

more or less irresistible when applied to the varieties of the erotic, the sublime, the appealing, the repellent and the other sensuous goods and ‘bads’?

2. No, it isn’t. Consider, for example, the disgusting along with the following schematic Projectivist account of how this negative feature of situations, people and animals might have become salient to us. Suppose our pre-historic ancestors’ common life with other animals was real and unprojected. Suppose that their incipient feelings of disgust at animal waste and decay—again real and unprojected waste and decay—conferred some minimal but significant advantage in making them and their small offspring less likely to suffer debilitating infections. Suppose—if you can—that all this conferred some survival advantage on those with the innate tendency to feelings of revulsion towards waste and rotting carcasses. Then we would have begun to account for our feelings of disgust toward waste and decay without understanding those feelings as adaptations to something antecedently disgusting. The Projectivist might add that our feelings of disgust are all the more useful in getting us to avoid infectious materials if they present to us as non-arbitrary assimilations of the disgusting itself in its various forms. So we are selected to project our arbitrary but useful feelings onto a world which is not in itself disgusting.

In this story our feelings of revulsion emerge not as ways to track significance but as mental effects of neutral worldly causes, mental effects which happen to serve a purpose—say, the avoidance of infection—but a purpose which they themselves do not make manifest.

The implications of this seemingly innocuous Projectivist parable can be resisted. First, it is very unclear how the hand-waving about survival value can be generalized to account for the determinate kinds of disgust that we feel,

---

world; the Dispositionalist points out that corresponding to such tendencies are dispositions of things to produce the relevant affective states in us.

<sup>4</sup> *Treatise of Human Nature* ed. Selby-Bigge (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1888), p. 469.

<sup>5</sup> *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (Oxford, Calendon Press, 1975), p. 230.

and feel to be appropriate, in response to different sorts of disgusting things; let alone our responses to determinate varieties of the beautiful, the banal and the sublime.

Moreover, in the absence of further refinements, the Projectivist explanation has no more empirical content than the alternative 'Detectivist' explanation, which has it that creatures like us had a better chance of survival because we happened to be attuned to the disgusting, and so were repelled, *inter alia*, by infectious animal corpses and waste, which are just disgusting anyway. The Projective as opposed to the Detective account of the disgusting is not necessarily better as an empirical explanation. What drives Projectivism about the sensuous values are very abstract considerations in epistemology and metaphysics.<sup>6</sup>

One consideration is a version of the argument from illusion to the effect that since an illusion of value can motivate as well as any putative revelation of value, what really explains why we act is the mental common component of the illusion and the alleged revelation. So invoking evaluative features of the world is idle, for psychology does all the explanatory work. However, this consideration is now widely, and I think properly, regarded as moot. For it implies a global mentalism, which in its turn is precisely what supports the most convincing sorts of skepticism that we find in early modern philosophy. It seems right to take this as a *reductio ad absurdum* of both the mentalism and the consideration that implies it.<sup>7</sup>

A second consideration supposed to favor Projectivism derives from the argument from variation, according to which the enormous range across different sorts of sentient beings of sensibilities or stable dispositions to feel cannot all be treated as potentially detective of sensuous goods. So, the argument from variation concludes that none can. But this just misses the possibility that an environment could be multi-qualified and multi-structured, allowing many richly qualified niches for many kinds of sentient beings to explore. To be sure, the vultures' sensuous goods are not *our* sensuous goods, but this sane relativization does not imply that all an environment can offer are neutral bases which dispose the vultures to feel one way and us another. The vultures may be on to something which, mercifully, we are not able to discern.

A third Projectivist consideration derives from thoughts about causal explanation. We don't need to invoke exemplifications of any sensuous goods to causally explain our psychological responses, so therefore we have no

---

<sup>6</sup> In a longer manuscript, *The Manifest*, an alternative metaphysical and epistemological picture is developed at some length and applied in detail against the familiar Projectivist arguments that follow.

<sup>7</sup> For this line of argument see John McDowell *Mind and World* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1994) and Hilary Putnam "Sense, Nonsense and The Senses" The Dewey Lectures, printed in the *Journal of Philosophy*, XCI, 9, 1994.

reason to believe that there are any such goods. The principle behind this argument is now recognized as much too strong. Consistently applied, it would force us to regard the real as the explanatorily fundamental, so that we would have to retract the very idea of our real and unprojected common life with other animals, and all similar assumptions with which evolutionary defenses of Projectivism begin.

So far as I can tell then, none of the three considerations really works to displace the following picture: an environmental niche places sensory, emotional and cognitive demands on any animal that could come to successfully occupy the niche. The animal must have the capacity to sense some range of qualities exemplified by the niche and so detect some structure in the niche that bears on the fulfillment of its needs. Nor do the considerations successfully bar the further idea that an environmental niche can present to the animals which occupy it a set of default pathways for action, default pathways which consist in patterns of appeal and repulsiveness there in the environment itself. At the very least Projectivism is a controversial philosophical gloss, not a simple implication of evolution.

By way of a final preliminary observation, it is worth noting that the philosophical Projectivist is in the business of completely generalizing a certain kind of debunking explanation, which in its ordinary deployment is inevitably partial and contrastive. Consider a schematic version of Freud's account of projective idealization in the sphere of sexual love. One finds another sexually appealing. One feels a taboo—never mind its source—against simply slaking one's sexual thirst with the other. Hence *Conflict*. There is, however, a default path that will resolve conflict: take the other to be wonderful and indeed wonderful for you in a way that would warrant, indeed demand, a committed relationship with sexual love as an integral and acceptable part. One need not fully conceptualise this path in order to be led down it. The path 'rises to meet you.' As you begin down it, conflict is reduced, so you continue down it, and experience seems to confirm that the other is wonderful, at least until you move in together.

Of course there is often an element of moonshine in such debunking explanations, even when they take a more sophisticated form. They fit some cases and not others. (Even Lotharios who feel no taboo can find another wonderful.) When such explanations do capture something, it is because they have been filled out with a good deal of collateral detail. Otherwise they remain explanatory cartoons.

All of that aside, the crucial point is that it is an assumption of the original debunking explanation that you found her sexually appealing. Was that too an illusion? If not, her sexual appeal was manifest, and global Projectivism is defeated. Of course it could have been an illusion, some version of 'fool's sexiness', the iron pyrites of love. In that case the explanation of this illusion would have to take a different turn. As it might be, she was rich and

in many ways like your mother, but (who knows why) you couldn't admit to yourself the genuine appeal of these things, so that the default conflict-resolving path was to find her sexually appealing.

Yet again, something really appealing is invoked in the debunking explanation of her apparent sexual appeal. Wasn't your mum *really* appealing? Well, since we have been gobbling down moonshine, I suppose that your finding your mother appealing was *just* a way of dealing with the guilty hostility produced by your unappealing dependence on her. But then I take it that your dependence really was unappealing, and manifestly so.

Even less cartoon-like attempts to debunk the evaluational appearances trade in one kind of manifest appeal or manifest lack of appeal for another. They therefore give little aid and comfort to the global philosophical ambition of treating all appeal as merely apparent. It is a common background assumption of real psychological debunking explanations that the appearances of value are not always illusory. That is why a special explanation is needed to account for the cases where they are.

These preliminary points are very far from anything that would refute the Projectivist deflation of the sensuous goods as projections of affect onto a neutral world. They simply serve to illustrate what is at issue, and to make the Detectivist alternative more vivid.

My argument will turn on a normative feature of affect. Many of our affective responses have authority, in the sense of requiring or at least making immediately intelligible what we then go on to desire and do. (Indeed, sometimes the authority of affect can be a life-structuring authority.) While the Detectivist can explain the authority of affect and of the evaluations it prompts, the Projectivist must ultimately diagnose it away.<sup>8</sup>

3. The Projectivist account of the world as in itself evaluatively blank meshes nicely with the dominant belief/desire theory of intentional action, which Donald Davidson did so much to refurbish.<sup>9</sup> In this theory 'desire' is

---

<sup>8</sup> Simon Blackburn, who takes very seriously something like the Projectivist's initial psychological story, tries then to explain how we could earn the right to the idiom of evaluative truth, an idiom whose content he rightly contrasts with claims of dispositional and autobiographical psychology. See *Essays in Quasi-Realism* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1993). If Blackburn's Quasi-Realism succeeded then he would not be a Projectivist in the present sense, for to the extent that he explains our right to the idiom of evaluative truth he would have shown that the world is not evaluatively blank. However, we would still deeply disagree about the epistemology of value. This would be partly because we disagree about the robustness of evaluative truth and the substantial role of evaluative truthmakers. Accordingly, Blackburn must reject the positive account of the authority of affect that I offer below. Similar remarks perhaps apply to Alan Gibbard's position as set out in *Wise Choices, Apt Feelings: A Theory of Normative Judgement* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990). But then I wonder how and to what extent they recognize the authority of affect, as opposed to its mere effectiveness.

<sup>9</sup> See "Actions, Reasons and Causes" reprinted in *Essay on Actions and Events* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1980).

just a name for whatever, in combination with an appropriate factual belief, could cause and rationalise a putative intentional act. Since the environment is evaluatively blank, desire in Davidson's sense is invoked to explain why we do anything we intentionally do. To take one of Davidson's examples: Someone pours a can of paint down his throat. Davidson tells us that we make sense of this as something the person did intentionally only if we see it as an outcome of some desire of his; say, to die in a slow and ugly fashion, and some belief of his; say, that consuming the paint will bring this about.

Davidson's example itself brings out the artificiality of this concept of desire. Sometimes I choose a game to play on my computer on the basis of whim and whim alone. This seems perfectly intelligible. But a self-destructive paint-drinking whim or fancy could hardly make intelligible one's drinking a can of paint. Yet the whim falls under the Davidsonian heading of 'desire' or pro-attitude. This fantastically abstract concept of desire covers an immense variety of different things, all those things that in conjunction with any kind of belief could rationalise action. To mention a few: ambitions, fancies, projects, aspirations, cravings, longings, habits, aches, hopes, proclivities, attachments, biases, wishes, needs, preferences, appetites, compulsions, urges *and each and every one of the emotions*.

When it comes to making sense of our life and activity it is the differences among these 'pro-attitudes' which are crucial, not their falling under the general determinable 'rationalisers of action which are not beliefs'. It would be a serious confusion to suppose that all these rationalisers of activity have some psychologically real component in common. Determinables are not components of their determinates.<sup>10</sup> The Davidsonian conception of desire is just the conception of an abstract place-holder. While this may or may not effect its suitability for an abstract analysis of acting intentionally, it certainly means that it is not a very useful notion in moral psychology.

Worse, there is a perfectly good non-philosophical sense of 'desire' in which desire is not only one of the springs of action, but a state which makes certain kinds of actions readily intelligible. In this sense of 'desire', which we might distinguish by the somewhat pleonastic name 'affective desire', we desire other things and other people, we are struck by their appeal, we are taken with them. This is part of how things are manifest to us: part of their appearing or presenting is their presenting to us in determinate ways and to various degrees appealing or repulsive. On the face of it, appeal is as much a manifest quality as shape, size, color and motion.

Accordingly, the world of our lived experience is a world of default pathways marked out by fully determinate versions of the appealing and the repulsive, the erotic and the banal, the beautiful and the ugly. The world we sense

---

<sup>10</sup> Think of being red and being colored. "What is left over when we take away being colored from being red?" Bad question; being colored is not a component of being red.

is layered with significance, it presents things to be done and avoided, continued and broken off, and does this prior to any deliberation or planning of action on our part. Deliberation becomes relevant only when the default paths do not satisfy or severally compete. We mostly act intentionally without deliberation or planning just as we mostly arrive at knowledge of our environment without theorising. Just as what is to be judged true is for the most part manifest to us thanks to our seeing and hearing and tasting and touching, what is to be sought and avoided is for the most part manifest to us by the very same sensory routes. The manifest always comes with some significance manifest, even if the significance is dull, tedious or degree zero.

So far, the Projectivist need not object. He can admit that the world *seems* laden with significance in these ways, but he will offer a deflating explanation. The significance of the world, its constantly offering us default pathways, is for him a matter of our projecting our rich affective life on to that world. We are led on by the siren song of voices, which turn out to be our own voices echoed back to us from an evaluatively blank realm.

On such a view, affect is never the disclosure or sensory presentation of the appealing, for the appealing could be nothing more than what we are disposed to desire in an affectively charged way. There is therefore no ground for an *epistemic* distinction between experiencing the appeal of a fetish and experiencing the appeal of a friend.

4. Against the Projectivist, I maintain the following: it is because affect can be the *disclosure* of the appeal of other things and other people that it can have authority in the matter of what we should desire and do. By 'the authority of affect' I mean not to refer to its sheer effectiveness as a source of desire or action, but rather to the fact that the presence of the affect can make the desire or action especially intelligible to the agent himself. It can make the desire or act seem apt or fitting in a way that silences any demand for justification.

In this way affect is akin to perceptual experience considered more generally. Perceptual experience makes certain immediate perceptual beliefs about the perceived scene seem apt or fitting in a way that silences any demand for justification for those beliefs. If the same beliefs were to immediately arise in the absence of perceptual experience then they would then lack a certain intelligibility from the inside. Imagine someone who has the gift of imageless clairvoyance suddenly conferred upon him. Detailed convictions about just what is happening in the next room suddenly just assault him, yet without any accompanying quasi-sensory content. When I try to imagine what this is like, I imagine that the arising of these convictions would lack intelligibility for the novice clairvoyant himself. They would cry out for justification, which only subsequent experience of the reliability of such immediate convictions might provide. Contrast forming immediate beliefs about what's going

on in the next room by hearing through the wall. Here the question of justification for one's beliefs does not typically arise, because what is going on next door has to some extent been disclosed by one's hearing it. Perceptual experience discloses how things stand in the environment and so confers a ready intelligibility on immediate perceptual belief.

In the same way affective disclosure of sensuous goods makes desire readily intelligible from the inside. Were a desire to come upon one without one's being in some way taken with the desired object or outcome then there would be a lack of intelligibility in one's having the desire. The question of justification—"Why am I doing or wanting this?" would naturally arise. In order to reinforce the suggestion that this would be because no good has been disclosed, let us focus on a particular case in some ways the evaluative counterpart of imageless clairvoyance. Consider an urge the having of which involves no experience of the worth or appeal of what it is an urge to do. Since affect is close to ubiquitous, we shall have to resort to an odd case to make the point.

So, to adapt an example of Warren Quinn's, I could find myself with a very strong urge to turn the knobs of doors counterclockwise, even though I have no interest in opening doors and no interest in feeling the solidity and texture of the knobs in my hand. The urge could be very effective, but it would not render intelligible what I am doing, least of all to myself. I aim to argue that the urge does not rationalise or render intelligible my action because, as stipulated, it involves no affect, and so no disclosure of the appeal of what it is an urge to do.

There are three alternative explanations consistent with Projectivism. One says that the reason my action is not intelligible to me is that I do not judge it worthwhile to randomly turn knobs. However, this sets the standards for intelligible action too high. Knowingly acting against one's judgement of what is worthwhile can be intelligible even from the inside. So, I think I should put on weight (to add to my already considerable *gravitas*). Accordingly, my offhand evaluative judgement is that I should eat my Power 5000 Protein Bar, my fifth for the day. Still, I find the taste of these food supplements so unappealing that I cannot bring myself to do it. That is a more or less intelligible condition to find oneself in, in stark contrast to the knob turning episodes. It suggests that affect—finding things appealing or repellent—is a source of intelligibility that is independent of evaluative judgement.

A Projectivist might respond by refining the contrastive explanation. Weakness of will, she might say, is a failure to be motivated to act in accord with one's *all-things-considered* judgement of what is best, whereas in the knob-turning case, one doesn't believe that turning knobs is good *in any way at all*. The claim then is that one's knob-turning is not intelligible because one has no tendency to judge it good in any way.

As against this, suppose I do bring myself, by sheer force of will, to munch on the Power Bar. I'd like to acquire even more *gravitas*, so I fancy putting on some more weight. To that extent, I believe it would be in some respect good to eat the bar. Yet my munching on the Power Bar can still lack a certain intelligibility even though I judge it good in some way. The thought "Why on earth am I doing this?" can coexist with judging that there is *something* to be said for eating the Power Bar. For I can still fail to see anything appealing about the Power Bar. A crucial source of action-guiding authority—*affective desire*—is absent, even in such cases. Nor is this lack of authority just the other side of not judging the act in view to be choiceworthy all things considered. We shall soon encounter a case of collapse of affect, a case in which the same sense of evaluative hollowness can attend an act that one fully endorses at the level of all-things-considered evaluative judgement.

The second explanation of why a knob-turning urge might not be intelligible to me is that there might be no pain or pleasure in the urge, where pain and pleasure are here to be understood narrowly as phenomenological aspects of one's having the urge, and of one's satisfying it. The natural contrast is with those desires that consist in the heightened arousal of the bodily appetites due to significant deprivation. So if you fast for three days you are pretty much prepared to eat anything in order to satisfy your hunger. Your extreme hunger presents to you as an *aching* desperation for food. It is entirely intelligible why you might want to get out of this state. Indeed the satisfaction of your desperate hunger might be so pleasurable in the narrow sense that you might just starve yourself for the pleasure of satisfying your desperate hunger.

Yet it seems clear that we could imaginatively add the corresponding extreme discomfort in the having of the urge to turn knobs along with some real pleasure in its satisfaction, and *still* find one's having of the urge to be in an important way devoid of intelligibility. This is how I imagine the compulsive urge to wash one's hands to be. To move from the pathological to the ordinary, pure bodily appetitive desire unaccompanied by any sense of the specific appeal of the thing desired is likewise devoid of a certain intelligibility. When I am desperate enough to eat anything at all, and I wolf down twinkies in order to satisfy my hunger, I can feel a certain absurdity in what I am doing; at least if I have enough residual attention to look over my own shoulder.

Fortunately, this is not the usual character of my gustatory life. Usually my bodily appetites do not become so voracious because they are kept more or less satisfied by eating appealing things; things that taste good, rather than things I go for because they will make me feel sated. *Affective desire*, the peculiarly intelligible desire that I am trying to bring into view, is not only to be distinguished from evaluative judgement, but also from the sheer arousal of the bodily appetites. In the same vein, my libertine informant tells

me that he still finds the compulsive slaking of his lust very enjoyable, but also in a certain obvious way absurd. He is confessing to being a affectively jaded, not to the waning of his appetites.

A third explanation, consistent with Projectivism, of why my knob-turning is not intelligible to me, even in the felt presence of my strong urge precisely to turn knobs, is that I do not *identify* with this urge. In the idiom of Harry Frankfurt and others, I do not desire to desire to turn knobs. But this does not get things exactly right either. I might be an unwilling addict, ruining my life with endless chess games played over the Internet. I repudiate my desire to play chess all the time, I want to get on with my life, but my chess playing is at least intelligible to me. I am really taken with chess, its appeal is manifest to me. My desire to play chess all the time is not alien to me in the way my urge to turn knobs is. My problem is that I cannot make effective my higher-order desire to forget chess and get on with my life. This may be partly because my first-order desire is full of a vivid sense of the appeal of chess. As a result, my acting on my first-order desire to play chess is intelligible to me, in contrast to my knob-turning. Higher-order desire, or whatever the apparatus of identification comes to, does not make for this difference.

Indeed, even after I have identified with it in Frankfurt's sense, an affectless urge might still lack intelligibility. Suppose that I often have an urge to yell out a string of obscenities in department meetings. This is not the familiar urge, which some of us know so well. Rather, *my* urge is an automatism; I sometimes have it when the discussion is all sweetness and light, and going in just the direction I want. Suppose I value being known as unpredictable and not to be messed with. I thus form an all-things-considered preference in favor of having the urge to yell out obscenities. I do not inform my colleagues that I have a mild case of Tourette syndrome. Instead I just burst forth every now and then. Even though I have come to integrate my urge into my pugnacious self-conception, the urge might still come over me like an automatism. I might still just find myself absurdly yelling obscenities. Yelling obscenities in itself still presents no appeal to me. The collateral thought, "Well, it will at least enhance my reputation as unpredictable and not to be messed with," need not do the right work. The urge to yell obscenities may remain evaluatively hollow, in a way that deprives it of any intelligibility. Any other oddball performance would serve as well to enhance my reputation.

That the authority of affective desire does not derive from collateral higher-order desire or evaluative judgement is further shown by the phenomenon of the collapse of affect. There you are teaching *Phil 287: The Philosophy of Sport* for the eighth time. Somewhere in the middle of the semester as you are lecturing you begin to hear the words coming out of your mouth as if you were a detached auditor overhearing remarks while waiting in a bus station. You are lecturing on automatic pilot in a way that allows your attention to

drift elsewhere, eventually to alight upon your own performance. You find it devoid of value and of dis-value. You may even notice that the students are quite taken with your philosophical analysis of the Olympic ideal. You couldn't care less, one way or the other. Your habitual performance is hollow because however professional it might be, it is not prompted by your sense of the appeal of anything in it or connected with it. This need not change even if you remind yourself of your genuine belief in the value of the philosophy of sport in the spiritual formation of your students. You can still remain cold, neither taken by nor repelled by your activity. To continue on, you need to draw on your evaluative beliefs and sheer will-power, you need to force yourself to complete the lecture because you judge it your duty to do so. The deficit that evaluative judgement and strength of will here makes up for is not a mere deficit in motivation. When affect collapses, the immediate intelligibility and appeal of what one is doing is also lost.

On the other side, there is the phenomenon of pre-reflective intrinsic motivation or 'Flow', as the Chicago psychologist Mihaly Chikszentmihalyi styles it.<sup>11</sup> In this state one is so taken with what one is doing that there is no attention left over to notice or think about anything irrelevant, including irrelevancies like verbalized positive evaluations of what one is doing. Consciousness of oneself as set in a world of opportunities and obstacles to one's will disappears, and the sense of time becomes distended. The ongoing activity is experienced as so appealing that we are willing to do it for its own sake, without regard for its consequences, and even when it is difficult or dangerous. Flow—the kind of affective engagement that fully embodies a person in his activity—is ethically significant, even though it is often experienced in activities that are ethically neutral and even though a completely corrupted person might have the experience of flow in running a concentration camp. Flowing *rightly*, or being affectively taken with real goods, is itself a compelling ethical ideal. We should not only want to do good and respond to the legitimate demands of others, we should also want to discover how to do these things in such a way as to live in and out of active awareness of the good. Such a person, I am inclined to say, has found a true vocation.

Many great moral wrongs become possible only because of the absence of appropriate affect. The reaction "How could anyone have done this?" in the face of a horrific crime is typically not an expression of faith in the practical force of the Moral Law, but rather of sheer bewilderment at how any feeling human being could have failed to be repulsed by the horrible act in prospect. Kant treats affect as mere inclination and speaks movingly of those who can do the right thing even though they have no feeling for it. Such people are indeed admirable, in much the same way as a fingerless archer who manages to win a gold medal is admirable. Absence of appropriate affect is an ethical

---

<sup>11</sup> *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience* (New York, Harper Collins, 1990).

defect. To compensate for this defect by strength of will is an impressive achievement. But we should not mistake the achievement for the ethical ideal, any more than aspiring archers should cut off their fingers.

5. Can the Projectivist make any sense of this ideal of living in and out of affective awareness of goods? More generally, can he make sense of what I have called the authority of affect? Well it may seem that on the mental side the Projectivist has a perfect right to recognize the very same range of detailed affect as anyone else. He simply understands these affects as the qualitative mental effects of an ultimately neutral world. Like everyone else he can recognize that affectivity is a source of motivation, a power or capacity to act. But can he explain how affectivity confers intelligibility on desire and action, how it can make a desire or an act seem just what is required?

To bring out one aspect of the problem the Projectivist faces, consider, by way of contrast with the primitive urge to turn knobs, the relatively primitive revulsion at inflicting damage on the bodies of others. This is the revulsion that makes many experienced target-shooters wince and miss when first attempting to shoot an animal, even if it is well within range. Part of the hardening of the fledgling hunter is his learning not to attend to something manifest in his experience, something that the primitive revulsion discloses.

If we were to succeed in following the Projectivist, and come to think of all desire and feeling as merely the mental effects of neutral worldly causes, then we would have flattened out the crucial distinction between such things as the urge to turn knobs counterclockwise and such very different things as this primitive revulsion towards inflicting damage on the bodies of others. For both the urge and the revulsion will then be construed as mere psychological forces, the one prompting and the other inhibiting action.

This highlights a further weakness in the Projectivist account of desire. Some affective desires require their own persistence, while mere urges do not. My affectively charged desire not to inflict damage on the bodies of others has a normative significance that is not extinguished by the waning of that desire. It cannot be rewritten without loss as the desire not to inflict damage on the bodies of others during those periods when I do not desire this. Part of feeling revulsion at the idea of inflicting damage on the bodies of others is being disposed to sustain and restore the revulsion were it to begin to weaken. Nor is this disposition just an extra psychological state tacked onto the revulsion. What the revulsion is disclosing itself makes it intelligible why one is disposed to sustain or restore the desire, should the desire begin to weaken or fade.

Things are different with my urge to turn knobs. It can be rewritten as the urge to turn knobs so long as I have that urge. The urge has no rightful force or authority independently of one's having it.

What is the Projectivist's account of this difference in the import of the affective desire and of the mere urge? By hypothesis it cannot be that the affective desire presents a value or a demand, which the urge does not. It can only be a difference in the associated attitudes that accompany the desire. The Projectivist thought must be that the urge, unlike the desire, just does not happen to come with a disposition to sustain or restore it should it begin to fade or wane. But once again, we can suppose that such an urge does come with the disposition to sustain or restore the urge should it begin to wane. The point is that having such a disposition is not particularly intelligible to the one having the urge. If the disposition were to fade or wane, nothing in the having of the urge would provide any reason to sustain that disposition. And this is because the urge, unlike the revulsion against damaging bodies, is not experienced as the presentation of value.

6. So far I have just been assuming that the Projectivist cannot consistently have resort to the idea that affectivity can be a refinement of sensing, and so be the very sort of thing which discloses sensuous goods there before us. This may not be obvious. For all I have said, it may seem that the Projectivist can exploit the ambiguity in Hume's remark about "raising in a manner a new creation" and go on to endorse a Dispositionalist or 'Response-Dependent' account of the sensuous goods.

For example, he might say, with considerable initial plausibility, that a scene's being ethereally beautiful is its being disposed to appear to be so under appropriate conditions. And he might go on to insist that a scene's appearing so is to be understood as essentially involving an affective response. However, the initial plausibility begins to fade when we examine the proposed property identity a little more closely.

The issue admits of something approximating a proof. To begin to divide the cases: Is the affectively modulated appearing itself to be understood as a genuine *presentation* of the scene's having the very property of being ethereally beautiful? If so the Dispositionalist account is incoherently identifying the property of being ethereally beautiful with the property of being disposed to present to subjects an instance of that very property. The incoherence is immediate if we think of the relevant presentation as 'Millian', i.e. as involving a direct relation to the property of being ethereally beautiful. For a disposition is a relational property and presentation is another relation. So the Dispositionalist will be *identifying* a property—in this case the property of being ethereally beautiful—with a relation to the holding of another relation that has that very property as a relatum. But a property cannot be contained within itself in this way.

Suppose instead then that the Dispositionalist thinks of his property-defining presentation as quasi-'Fregean', i.e. as not involving the property of being ethereally beautiful but some mode of presentation of it. (Frege himself

did not think of properties and modes of presentation in this way, but instead thought of the sense of a predicate as determining an extension. Yet once we allow an ontology of properties, we can ask Frege's question of how they are presented to a thinker, and to a perceiver.) On this variant of Dispositionalism, the mode of presentation is supposed to determine the property of being ethereally beautiful, but it is not itself that property. So, happily, the account does not imply that a property is one among several components out of which it is structured. However, a corresponding incoherence now lies in the account of the mode of presentation in question. For the Dispositionalist under consideration endorses these claims:

The property of being ethereally beautiful = the disposition to put us into a relation to mode of presentation M, under appropriate conditions.

Mode of presentation M presents or determines the property of being ethereally beautiful.

On pain of a vicious regress, presenting or determining must be a relation between M and the property of being ethereally beautiful, a relation whose holding does not depend on any intermediate relation to still other modes of presentation. Thus the form of Dispositionalism now in play entails:

M is a mode of presentation that determines this property: the disposition to put us into a relation to mode of presentation M, under appropriate conditions.

But how can a mode of presentation determine a complex property that in this way includes that very mode of presentation as a proper ingredient? It can have no stable location in the hierarchy of properties and their associated modes of presentation.

For suppose we start at the first level with properties of whatever adicity and complexity so long as they are not built out of and are not relations to any modes of presentation. At this first level we should also recognize modes of presentation of such properties. Call them level one modes of presentation. At the second level we allow second level properties, built from first level properties and first level modes of presentation. Also at the second level we will allow second level modes of presentation, which are the modes of presentation of the property complexes which appear at the second level. In general, at the *n*th level there will enter (a) *n*th level properties, i.e. properties built up from the properties at level *n*-1 and perhaps the modes of presentation of these properties, also lying at level *n*-1, and (b) modes of presentation of the *n*th level properties. The hierarchy seems to innocently capture the very idea of properties being built up from other properties and modes of presentation.

The claims that have to be considered in the context of this hierarchy are these:

M is a mode of presentation of the property of being ethereally beautiful.

The property of being ethereally beautiful = the following complex property: the disposition to put us into a relation to M, under appropriate conditions.

Assume, for *reductio ad absurdum*, that M lies at some level in the hierarchy, say L. Then the property it presents will also lie at L. But that property is supposed to be built up from M, so it lies at L+1 and not at L. (If we think of the hierarchy as cumulative, then we should change 'lies at' for 'first enters the hierarchy at' and we again arrive at a contradiction.) So M cannot be consistently located in the hierarchy of properties built up from modes of presentation and other properties.

Let us now relax the assumption that the property of being ethereally beautiful has a unique mode of presentation M. Suppose M' also presents this property. Then we have these two claims:

M and M' are modes of presentation of the property of being ethereally beautiful.

The property of being ethereally beautiful = the following complex property: the disposition to put us into a relation to either M or M'.

Since this complex property is built up from M and M' it must lie at a level higher than each. Yet by construction of the hierarchy, properties and their modes of presentation are found at the same level. Thus the property and its modes of presentation cannot be consistently located in the hierarchy. The argument obviously generalizes to as many modes of presentation of the disposition as you like.

The upshot is that the Dispositionalist about the sensuous goods is not entitled to talk of our affective experience as *presenting* the sensuous goods, and this remains so whether he glosses presentation in a Millian or a quasi-Fregean fashion.<sup>12</sup> The very idea of sensible qualities as identical with dispositions that are presented in sensory experience is structurally incoherent!

---

<sup>12</sup> To fully secure this upshot, the hierarchical conception of properties built up from properties and modes of presentation would have to be defended at some length.

An adequate defense of the hierarchical conception may seem impossible because of the fact that there are statuses that must be self-ascribed by those with the status. So for example, it might be insisted with some plausibility that no one can be offering goods for sale unless he takes himself to be offering goods for sale. Call that condition on offering goods for sale, the condition of self-ascription. Then one might argue that there must be

---

some other condition which when conjoined with the condition of self-ascription specifies the property of offering goods for sale. But then, so the objection goes, the property of offering goods for sale will be a conjunctive property. And one of the conjuncts will be a relation to a mode of presentation of the property of offering goods for sale. This can be shown to be at odds with the hierarchical conception by an argument that parallels the one given in the main body of the text. (If the property of offering goods for sale is compounded out of a relation to a mode of presentation of itself then it cannot be consistently located at any point in the hierarchy.) But surely—so the objector says—this just refutes the hierarchical conception. For the property of offering goods for sale *is* conjunctive in the manner indicated.

I believe the error in such an appeal to statuses that must be self-ascribed lies in the step from self-ascription being a necessary condition on having the status to the conjunctive analysis of the property of having the status. There are many properties and relations which have necessary, and perhaps even essential, conditions for their instantiation but which cannot be analyzed 'conjunctively' in terms of the holding of the essential condition *plus* some other condition. Thus it is essential to the holding of the relation of mutual attraction among particles that the relata be distinct. But there is, as it were, nothing coherent left over when we 'take away' the relation of being distinct from the relation of attraction. There is thus no analysis or account of what it is to be the relation of attraction along these lines:

The relation of attraction = the relation which holds of  $x$  and  $y$  when (i)  $R(x,y)$  (where  $R$  is some relation distinct from and not compounded out of attraction) and (ii)  $x$  and  $y$  are distinct.

So also, there is nothing coherent left over when we 'take away' from the property of offering goods for sale the property of self-ascribing offering goods for sale. Hence there is no conjunctive analysis of the property of offering goods for sale along these lines:

The property of offering goods for sale = the conjunctive property of (i) being  $C$  (where being  $C$  is some property distinct from and not compounded out of the property of offering goods for sale) and (ii) being a self-ascriber of offering goods for sale.

Absent such a conjunctive analysis, the fact that anyone offering goods for sale must self-ascribe that property does not conflict with the hierarchical conception of properties and their modes of presentation.

However, the Dispositionalist under consideration *is* endorsing the following property identity:

The property of being ethereally beautiful = the disposition to put us into a relation to mode of presentation  $M$ , under appropriate conditions. (Where  $M$  is a mode of presentation of the property of being ethereally beautiful.)

This account of the property's structure does conflict with the hierarchical conception of properties and their modes.

If the hierarchical conception can be sustained then I will have to rectify the suggestion made in passing on p. 14 of my "Are Manifest Qualities Response-Dependent?" (*Monist*, Vol. 81, 1998) to the effect that a Dispositionalist might hold to the claim that sensory experience presents manifest qualities if he adopts a quasi-Fregean account of presentation of qualities. I there supposed that the quasi-Fregean account ultimately fell to the 'missing explanation' argument. This objection is not pressed here, partly because it depends on making more of the distinction between Projectivism and Dispositionalism than I have in this paper. Roughly the Dispositionalist says there are, and the Projectivist says there are not, sensuous goods. But then the Dispositionalist cannot explain our liabil-

No such structural incoherence attends the Projectivist's deployment of a third form of Dispositionalism, which treats the property of being ethereally beautiful as a disposition to produce a certain affective *state*, where this is now understood as merely a qualitative mental state, and not a presentation of exemplifications of the property of being ethereally beautiful. This account of ethereal beauty is structurally identical to the account of the property of being pleasantly hallucinogenic as the disposition to produce pleasant hallucinations in subjects under appropriate conditions. Neither the pleasant hallucinations nor the qualitative mental states are to be thought of as refined presentations of further features of the world.

Here is where the problem now lies. The Dispositionalist must explain this fact: the judgement that something is ethereally beautiful has an entirely different epistemology and import from the judgement that something is disposed to produce pleasant hallucinations. Were one to find that hemlock tea, say, has this effect on oneself but not others it would then be absurd to go on to say, "Well, they should be having pleasant hallucinations." Hemlock tea either works on others as it does on me or it does not. The proper response to the discovery that it doesn't work on others in the same way is not to suppose that they are missing something in the tea which attending more closely would reveal. It is, rather, to restrict the scope of the dispositional attribution, and conclude that hemlock tea is pleasantly hallucinogenic *for me*.

By contrast, when I find that others are unmoved by what I see as ethereally beautiful then my choices are quite differently constrained. I can try to get them to see it too, and be moved appropriately. If I fail, then I am left with two hypotheses. Either I have things wrong, say because of sentimentality or some distorting mood that I was in, so that I then withdraw the judgement of beauty, and say instead that it merely *seemed* ethereally beautiful at the time. Or I conclude that the others are just blind to this kind of beauty. If I draw this second conclusion I then might give voice to my self-confident stance by saying "*I find it ethereally beautiful.*" But one thing I am not in a position to say is that it's ethereally beautiful for me, where this is understood on the model of 'pleasantly hallucinogenic for me'. I'm not in a position to say that, because it would be at odds with the concept of ethereal beauty. (Joe Cocker's once popular song which begins "You are so beautiful, *to me*" is no counterexample to this claim. As emerges in the song, Joe's girl—though a moral delight—is far from being a knockout. No one is telling Linda Evangelista, "You are so beautiful, to me," any more than one would say to David Lewis, "You are so intelligent, to me." Ludicrous, really.)

---

ity to sense such goods under appropriate conditions in the obvious way, i.e. by appeal to those goods themselves, or so I argue.

As Kant put it, the judgement of beauty has a kind of necessary universality that is at odds with the very idea of the beautiful *for me*. But if all that judgement, or the 'closest' true judgement in the vicinity, comes to is that the thing in question is disposed to put me and others like me into a qualitative mental state then the idea of the beautiful *for me* would be perfectly appropriate. Yet it isn't. So the Dispositional account must radically misconstrue what is predicated in the judgement of beauty. I think this point can be seen to generalize to all the sensuous values, once a certain distraction is set to one side.

The distraction is that judgements of sensuous value can be easily mistaken for certain judgements of (dis-)agreeableness. For each of the determinate sensuous goods and bads which fall under the headings of the appealing, the repellent, the sublime, the horrific, the erotic and the banal we can introduce counterpart dispositions. So when I find something appealing there is generally (though not always) something agreeable about the affective state I am in. There is of course no logical bar to simply considering the agreeable quality of the affective state that I am in, and using this as a basis for speculation about what others are likely to experience when confronted with similar external causes. I can then make what Kant characterized as a mere judgement of agreeableness, an attribution to the effect that the thing in question is disposed to produce a certain agreeable affective state. Notice that this is a speculative psychological judgement. To the extent that I judge that it is disposed to produce this state in others, I am relying on the kind of analogical argument from my own case that is properly stigmatized as the worst sort of inductive argument, from one case to all. Even if I restrict my judgement to the thing's disposition to effect *me*, I am still involved in a conjecture to the effect that its having once affected me thus and so is not due to some adventitious condition having been in play.

Yet my judgement that Yo Yo Ma's tone is ravishing is not speculative or conjectural in these ways. That is because it is not a psychological judgement at all. It is a judgement predicating a manifest value of the sound of Ma's cello playing. In this sense it is to be compared to the judgement that Ma's tone is vibratoless. It differs from that 'purely descriptive' judgement only in respect of the details of its sensory basis. Hearing Ma's tone as ravishing requires a refinement of sensing that naturally and standardly involves being in a certain way affectively taken with virtues of tone. But this aspect of the judgement's sensory origin does not make it anything like the judgement that Ma's tone is disposed to ravish hearers, where being ravished is thought of as just a very agreeable state to be in. That is a piece of speculative psychology, starkly unconstrained by any actual evidence an ordinary appreciator of Ma's playing is likely to have.

7. Where does this leave the Projectivist who has resort to the third—structurally coherent—form of Dispositionalism? It means he cannot construe judgements of sensuous value as the attributions of the relevant dispositions. They just can't be construed in that way. Instead the Projectivist must be offering surrogates for those judgements; as it were offering to capture the 'nearest' truth in the area. But the nearest truths cannot do the same justificatory work as the judgements they replace. Being merely psychological, these truths cannot capture the authoritative appeal of other things and other people, the very appeal that makes it especially intelligible why we spend so much of our lives and effort on them.

Moreover, attributing dispositions to put others into affective states just on the basis of one going into such a state oneself is sheer speculative psychology. Typically, the least speculative psychological remark is a piece of non-dispositional autobiography, as in: I was ravished by Ma's tone. By what right does the Projectivist go beyond that? And if he does not go beyond that, then it becomes very clear that his practical starting points register little in the way of the authoritative demands of other things and other people.

Consider for example the following passage from the C. K. Scott Moncrieff translation of *Le temps retrouve*, the last part of Marcel Proust's *A la recherche du temps perdu*. Discussing what he calls "the courage of one's emotions," the Narrator claims

it means the abrogation of one's dearest illusions, it means giving up one's belief in the objectivity of what one has oneself elaborated, so that now instead of soothing oneself for the hundredth time with the words "She was very sweet," one would have to transpose the phrase so that it reads "I enjoyed kissing her."<sup>13</sup>

The Narrator's life has been a misplaced search for an absolute satisfaction immune to the passage of time, a search in which he has thrown others away like so many refuted hypotheses. The transposition he considers in retrospect could have as well have taken place during the kiss itself. To imagine that is to imagine what would be well-called 'the pornographic attitude', the change of attentive focus from the appeal of other things and other people to their agreeable effects on us. The Narrator's adopting this attitude is made all the more macabre by his self-congratulatory remarks about the courage of one's emotions. For one feels that precisely the point of his attitude is to reduce the threatening demand of appealing others to the more controllable issue of the sources of pleasant feelings.

For our purposes, the point to emphasize is that the Narrator's reduction of his former beloved to a sexual morsel, by means of the transition from the thought "She was very sweet" to the thought "I enjoyed kissing her" is a

---

<sup>13</sup> *Remembrance of Things Past, Part 7: Time Regained* (Vintage Books, 1982) volume 3 p. 932.

classic Projectivist *epoche*. The manifestly appealing other, the one who is being kissed and is kissing, has receded from the scene, in favor of the savoring of one's own impressions. The judgement that she was very sweet has the capacity to rationalize and demand more than the judgement that one enjoyed kissing her.

I have been arguing that the Projectivist's deflationary view of the sensuous goods, when stripped of confusion and fudging, actually forces the repulsive *epoche* upon us. Projectivism is in this way the ideology of the Pornographic attitude.

To focus more exactly on the problem with the pornographic attitude, which I claim Projectivism underwrites, consider this passage from Martin Buber, which dramatises a certain kind of ethical and epistemological fall from grace:

When I was eleven years of age, spending the summer on my grandparents' estate, I used, as often as I could do it unobserved, to steal to the stable and gently stroke the neck of my darling, a broad dapple-grey horse. It was not a casual delight but a great, certainly friendly, but also deeply stirring happening. If I am to explain it now, beginning from the still very fresh memory of my hand, I must say that what I experienced in touch with the animal was the Other, the immense otherness of the Other, which however did not remain strange like the otherness of the ox and the ram, but rather let me draw near and touch it. When I stroked the mighty mane, sometimes marvelously smooth-combed, at other times just as astonishingly wild, and felt the life beneath my hand, it was as though the element of vitality itself bordered on my skin, something that was not I, was certainly not akin to me, palpably the other, not just another, really the Other itself; and yet it let me approach, confided itself to me, placed itself elementally in the relation of *Thou* and *Thou* with me. The horse, even when I had not begun by pouring oats for him into the manger, very gently raised his massive head, ears flicking, then snorted quietly, as a conspirator gives a signal meant to be recognizable to his fellow conspirator; and I was approved. But once—I do not know what came over the child, at any rate it was childlike enough—it struck me about the stroking what fun it gave me, and suddenly I became conscious of my hand. The game went on as before, but something had changed, it was no longer the same thing. And the next day, after giving him a rich feed, when I stroked my friend's head he did not raise his head. I considered myself judged.<sup>14</sup>

It is a remarkable passage, and not just because it depicts the eleven year old Buber as already able to think and feel in the very terms formulated by his much later self in *Ich und Du*.<sup>15</sup> Despite the stiff remarks concerning "the Other itself," the passage captures a child's sense of being judged because of an involuntary shift in sensory attention from the horse's mane he was stroking to what the experience of stroking the horse's mane was like.

This turning of attention away from the horse towards the sensory effect that the horse was producing is dramatized by Buber as a severing of the relation of a *Thou* to a *Thou*. Less dramatically, it was a suspension of an

---

<sup>14</sup> Martin Buber *Between Man and Man* (New York, McMillan Paperbacks, 1965) p. 11.

<sup>15</sup> *Ich und Du* (Leipzig, Insel-Verlag, 1923) published in English as *I and Thou* (Edinburgh, T. T. Clarke, 1937).

affective mode of awareness partly constitutive of little Buber's simple friendship with the horse. For a moment he is not taken with his darling the horse, but with the fun of stroking it. Not that the stroking was not always fun or that the fun needs to have been particularly piquant at the moment of distraction. It is just that for a moment the horse, its mane, its smooth-combed texture, its vitality, all these externalities are displaced as objects of attention in favor of how exciting it feels to stroke the horse's mane.

Why does the boy feel judged for this shift of attention? After all, is not the shift just the counterpart for touch of the shift of visual attention that takes place when someone, beginning on sketching a model, stops simply looking at the model and starts attending to how she looks? Not quite. The more exact counterpart is the shift from looking at her, say with pleasure and interest, to absorption with one's pleasure and interest. In that moment she recedes, becomes a thing for the sake of one's pleasure and interest. As this goes on one attends to how she looks only in so far as it excites one's pleasure and interest. *She* has been reduced to a serviceable source of pleasure and interest. We are on the verge of an ethical and epistemological fall when this way of responding to others gets ossified into a stance or default attitude.

Calling this fallen state 'the pornographic attitude' is intended to highlight the error of mentalizing affect. Instead of affect being a way in which the appeal and repulsiveness of other things and other people makes itself manifest, the affective states themselves become the focus of attention, as if affective engagement were an interior, private sensation detachable from one's being taken with or repelled by things.

It is of course crazed to regard quotidian attention to one's own state of pleasure as in itself problematic. Surely, without any fear of an ethical or epistemological fall, I can adjust the heat of the shower so that it pleases me or command the masseur to repeat that last series of blows to my lower back because it felt so good. Even Buber admitted that some such examples of what he called the "I-It" relationship—where for example my shower or my masseur-in-the-act appears simply as a source of pleasure to be controlled or guided—make up a wholly good aspect of human life.

But equally surely there is something to the idea that the "It" is too much with us. So much so, that we are losing our capacity for regular epiphanies of the real. To the extent that one habitually engages in the Projectivist *epoche*, other things and other people begin to loom merely as potential opportunities and obstacles to one's will. All that is left is to silently plot one's way through the world.

Regarding one's affective engagements as primarily mental, rather than forms of openness to how things are, goes with another kind of corruption of feeling which is related to the pornographic attitude; namely, the kind of sentimentality which finds its satisfactions in the kitsch. Kitsch rather mechanically stimulates feelings and then invites you to congratulate yourself

for having the conventionally expected response. One weeps, but one's oh-so-appropriate tears provide one with a secret pleasure. The circle is complete without any real intrusion on one's life of what one is weeping about. Real affective engagement with others is typically messier, both more unpredictable and yet more connected to what we mutually need. The proliferation of the kitsch thus lowers the stakes of life and, as Milan Kundera puts it, makes being lighter and ultimately unbearable.

Just as the pornographic attitude is not a matter of sex per se, kitsch is not a matter of so-called low as opposed to high culture. For examples of the kitsch, one strain in autonomy-based morality and a good deal of nineteenth century opera would do as well as those satin prints of Bambi-with-the-enormous-eyes. In the ethic that embodies a kitsch error, action is primarily an opportunity to demonstrate to oneself one's own capacity for self-rule in the face of impulse.<sup>16</sup> In the kitsch opera, banal plots and stereotyped tunes sung by ciphers are presented with such pomposity that one can only fill up the *longeurs* by congratulating oneself for having the cheap feelings the opera is designed to prompt. In both cases, the experiential circle closes without any messy otherness, let alone the Other, intruding.

That was of course a polemic for the purpose of dramatizing the hope that the true philosophy can treat affect as at least sometimes a revelation of sensuous goods, and so endorse our being naturally drawn away from ourselves toward other things and other people. If the correct upshot of philosophical reflection were a generalized Projectivism, philosophy would leave us with no counterforce with which to resist the centripetal pull of the self. Philosophy would then collaborate in a retreat from life, and if that were so, it would be best to follow Hume and retreat from philosophy instead.

Some will no doubt say that my arguments against the Projectivist, at best, produce a standoff; but it is here, in the instability of the lucid Projectivist's conception of his own philosophical efforts, that the standoff may be resolved.

#### 8. Galileo wrote:

These tastes, odors, colors etc. on the side of the object, in which they seem to exist, are nothing else but mere names, that hold their residence solely in the sensitive body; so that if the animal were removed, every such quality would be abolished and annihilated. Nevertheless as soon as we have imposed names upon them, particular and different from those of the other

---

<sup>16</sup> Many will find this an atrocity if it is directed against Kant whose ethics, they will rightly point out, makes central the dignity of the human person, and the inviolable respect that each owes to another. But to give centrality to "dignity" and the cool intellectual emotion of respect in one's account of demanding others can itself be a distancing maneuver. On this and important collateral matters see Ray Langton's brilliant paper "Duty and Desolation" *Philosophy*, 1993.

primary and real accidents, we induce ourselves to believe that they also exist as truly and really as the latter.<sup>17</sup>

I have been observing first that it would be a disaster waiting for us at the end of thought if the counterpart of Galilean Projectivism were true for the sensuous values. I have also suggested that the counterpart of Lockeanism—which works with the same fundamental ontology while treating the sensuous values as like secondary qualities in Locke’s sense—is just a fudge. In its import for practice it is indistinguishable from the repellent Galilean doctrine.

(A third issue, which I will not discuss here but which is central to the argument of *The Manifest*, is whether Lockeanism about the secondary qualities and Kantianism about the sensory qualities in general are each inconsistent with the kind of objectivism about the sensuous values that is necessary for holding out against the Projectivist *epoche*. After all, even if the classical definition of the beautiful as *kroma kai symmetria* is a little too reductive for our tastes, attributions of some kinds of sensuous appeal seem threatened if *kroma* turns out to be a ‘false imaginary glare’.)

The negative argument has been that Projectivism and its variants cannot do justice to the authority of affect, the way in which affect makes certain desires and actions seem fitting or immediately intelligible. The positive account will be Detectivist, and will explain the authority of affect as the authority of disclosures of value. My positive claims are these:

Affect has authority, when it does, by being a refinement of sensing and correct imagining, a more skilled way of doing these things.<sup>18</sup>

Sensing and correct imagining have authority because they disclose truthmakers for immediate (i.e. non-inferential) judgement.

Among these truthmakers are exemplifications of the sensuous goods, so that the world is anything but evaluatively neutral.

Immediate judgements of sensuous value, like immediate judgements of sensible quality, can thus be knowledge because they are formed from their truthmakers.

---

<sup>17</sup> *The Assayer* (1623) excerpt from the Stillman Drake translation published as *Discoveries and Opinions of Galileo* (New York, Doubleday, 1957).

<sup>18</sup> I do not say that this is the only value of affect or its only significant role in our lives. I simply want to defend the idea of *affect's* epistemic authority. Nor do I deny that the emotions, and in particular the belief-based or cognitive emotions play a central role in providing us with ethical knowledge. Recall that part of my reason for focussing on affect in contrast to emotion is an interest in a pre-predicative orientation and the crystallizations of it which disclose value.

Since affect is also motivating, since it can shape action as well as attention, it follows that in the 'canonical' case of an immediate judgement of sensuous value formed from a truthmaker that has been disclosed by appropriate affect, the one who makes the judgement will have an appropriate action-guiding orientation toward the thing judged valuable. (This is the best I can do for the otherwise too ambitious doctrine of Internalism.)

However, although affect discloses evaluative truthmakers it can make desire and action readily intelligible without going by way of the evaluative beliefs which it makes true. Those, like Thomas Nagel and John McDowell, who have insisted that evaluative belief can itself rationalise or make sense of desire and action have not gone far enough. The affective disclosures that ground immediate evaluative belief can directly rationalise desire and action.

Affect threatens to place us under a host of effective and authoritative demands, more than we can easily bear. This explains why a less-than-fully-courageous prudence might counsel against the affective life.

The role of evaluative reason is to bring affect's demanding revelations into some kind of liveable harmony, without thereby etiolating our affective life. Evaluative reason is not the slave of the passions, but it does properly serve the affective life.

How exactly could affectivity be a refinement of sensing and of the imagination? The suggestion really only comes alive if we have already rejected a mentalistic account of ordinary sensing. The function of sensory awareness is not to deliver sensations or structured qualia, nor to simply provide propositional belief. Instead the senses are forms of openness to things in the environment, more precisely to things of various kinds, qualified thus and so and standing in a variety of relations to the sensing subject and to each other. Sensing is a form of knowing, even if it is not yet knowing that.

The sensed environment is a dense structure of truthmakers for an enormous range of immediate perceptual judgements the subject might then go on to make. The epistemic role of sensing is to disclose such sensible truthmakers.

We need not think of truthmakers for judgements as facts. A truthmaker for a judgement is something whose existence guarantees the truth of the judgement. More exactly, if *t* is a truthmaker for the judgement that *p* then it is necessary that if *t* exists, then the proposition that *p* is true. So Frege—an object—is a truthmaker for the judgement that Frege exists. Frege's prejudice—an obtaining state or condition of Frege's character—is a truth-

maker for the judgement that Frege is prejudiced. The ferocity of Frege's prejudice—an exemplification of a higher order property by a lower order property exemplified by Frege—is a truthmaker for the judgement that Frege's prejudice is ferocious. Frege's mocking of Wittgenstein's fledgling ideas—a particular, occurrent event—is a truthmaker for the judgement that Frege is mocking Wittgenstein's fledgling ideas.

Start then with the notion that the senses provide neither sensations nor qualia, but awareness of environmental particulars—objects, stuff, states and events. One distinctive consequence of such awareness of an environmental particular is this: By turning our attention toward the particular of which we are aware we then have *it*, and not merely some quale it has produced or some mode of presentation of it, isolated as a topic or subject for further thought and judgement. Attention to the deliverances of sensory awareness is the most fecund source of topics for thought and judgement.

Where then does the predicative element in thought and judgement come from? In many cases it too is something of which one is immediately aware. Indeed it is distinctive of what I have been calling immediate perceptual judgement that what one judges or predicates of a subject is some feature of which one is also aware. So when I taste the astringency of the calvados, I am not only aware of the calvados—a certain liquid in my mouth—but I am also aware of its astringency. This astringency is a completely determinate or fully specific quality, which I am in a position to take the calvados to have, i.e. to judge or predicate of the calvados. If I do so, I have moved from sensing the fully specific astringency of the calvados to judging that the calvados is astringent in that very specific way, which language is a rough and ready means for describing. ('Is astringent' is inevitably a determinate predicate covering a host of more determinate forms of astringency, and so is 'cool astringency', so that perhaps we never limn in descriptive language the full specificity of the sensible qualities of which we are aware.) The full specificity of the predicable element in my immediate pre-linguistic judgement is a sign that my judgement has in a certain way *not gone beyond* what I was aware of in being aware of the astringency of the calvados. This is, I think, an important clue when it comes to the relation between sensory awareness and immediate perceptual judgement.

Let us continue to consider the simplest case; a subject/predicate judgement, arguably the characteristic form of immediate perceptual judgement. Our clue suggests that one's immediate perceptual judgement can be the predication of some feature of some subject, where the subject's having of the feature is something of which one is directly aware. The judgement is a complex act that is true if the subject isolated by attention has the predicated feature, another item isolated by attention.

So if there were a process by which one could attentively isolate some object, stuff, state or event of which one is aware and also isolate a feature of

that item then sensory awareness would have provided the materials required for the judgement that the item has the feature. Moreover, those very materials would derive from a truthmaker for the judgement. The judgement would be guaranteed to be true because of its origin. The origin would be sensory awareness of spatio-temporal particulars of various kinds, qualified thus and so and standing in a variety of relations to the sensing subject and to each other.

Of course I am here exploiting a certain intimate connection between states, events, exemplifications of kinds and exemplifications of relations on the one hand, and facts or true propositions on the other. The connection is so intimate that it has been mistaken for identity. But I am among those who hold that there is a difference between the snubnosedness of Socrates—a certain state or condition of Socrates—and the true proposition or fact that Socrates is snubnosed. The first is a spatio-temporal particular that could be the object of sight or touch, while the second is a proposition that happens to be true, something which could be judged. There is an enormous amount to be said for and against this distinction, but here I can only exhibit one advantage of parsing reality this way. The snubnosedness of Socrates—something we can immediately sense—is a truthmaker for the proposition that Socrates is snubnosed—something his cohorts could have immediately judged true. In this way what is sensed can make true what is immediately judged on the basis of sensing.<sup>19</sup>

It may help to convey the general idea of judgements formed out of their sensed truthmakers by way of a schematic description of how sensory awareness of states and events can generate judgements whose truth is guaranteed by the very origins of those judgements. In the typical case I sense—am

---

<sup>19</sup> As with states, so also with events, for example a particular chiding of Socrates by Xantippe. This is a truthmaker for the proposition that Xantippe chided Socrates and of course for a host of weaker propositions entailed by it. The point of distinguishing states and events is simply to respect the observation that events essentially involve changes in objects or stuffs and perhaps places, if these are allowed as spatio-temporal particulars. Some have suggested that everything we call a state essentially involves some changes, however slow. If so, this is no great matter. Events and states are exemplifications of properties by particulars, they make true propositions to the effect that the particulars in question exemplify the properties in question, and all the weaker propositions implied by these propositions.

There is more of an issue about how to press sensed objects and quantities of stuff into the role of truthmakers for immediate judgement. It is a nice question as to whether you can barely sense an object (or some stuff) without sensing some state of it or some event in which it is implicated. This is not the question whether all seeing is seeing that such and such is the case, but the related question of whether the objects of awareness are primarily events and states of substantial objects and quantities of stuff. Fortunately, to illustrate the view I have in mind we need not settle this issue here; we can stick with the sensed states and events for illustrative purposes. If a case can be made that in sensing objects and quantities of stuff we are sensing exemplifications of manifest kinds then it should be clear how the proposal that follows might be extended.

aware of—a host of states and events, a host of exemplifications of properties by objects and quantities of stuff (the snubnosedness of Socrates, the astringency of the calvados). From this typically enormous range of exemplifications, I am somehow able to attend to the F-ness of a particular object or, as it might be, a particular salient quantity of stuff. As it happens, I have an ability to predicate F-ness of an object when I am sensing and attending to an exemplification of F-ness by that object. Although this ability operates relatively automatically I also have the ability to inhibit it, if judging so is irrelevant to me or if there is significant evidence to the contrary which I possess. When the ability in question is deployed I have predicated F-ness of an object when I am attending to an exemplification of F-ness by that object. My judgement does not go beyond its truthmaker, which sensory experience has made manifest. Its truth is thus guaranteed by its origins. This is how immediate perceptual judgements often have the status of knowledge. There is no evidence from which they are inferred; instead they are formed out of awareness of their truthmakers.

The abilities to attend to a sensed event or state and to predicate some property there exemplified may be more or less innate, as with attending to a loud startling bang, or inevitably learned as with noticing a tell at poker or a double fork in chess. In order to attend to or even to be aware of certain items and certain features one may need considerable conceptual sophistication, considerable training of attention and thought. There is a sophisticated sensing exemplified by what Wittgenstein called ‘seeing as’, which enormously expands the range of things that can be sensed and immediately judged. We should not think that only simple qualities are able to be predicated on the strength of awareness of their exemplifications. Among other things, this mistake entails that the content of immediate perceptual judgement is extremely minimal, so that immediate perceptual knowledge could not then play any significant foundational role.

Just which exemplifications in the sensed field one can be immediately aware of depends importantly upon one’s conceptual sophistication. You can’t be immediately aware of someone’s bluffing in poker unless you understand something of the rules and point of poker. Being aware of your opponent’s bluffing depends upon a pattern of directed attention and visual search into the changing scene, and this is the manifestation of an ability which is practically inseparable from the inevitably conceptual understanding of poker. Conceptual sophistication helps us to use our senses to *mine* the scene, or more generally the sensed field, for relevant exemplifications—his bluffing, her raising, your having a busted straight.

So although the animals sense, and although some of what we sense requires little if any in the way of deploying our conceptual sophistication, the totality of what we sense is immensely richer thanks to that conceptual sophistication. To admit this is crucially not to grant that the exemplifica-

tions themselves are the product of an antecedent synthesis under concepts. In the poker game, the scene—the manifest acts of the poker players—needs no synthesis or assembly; it already has all the intrinsic order and structure required of a game of poker. Conceptually refined sensing does not *constitute* its objects. It is rather that having certain concepts requires certain abilities, and that among these abilities are characteristic refinements of the capacity to sense what is there in the environment *anyway*. How much sensory awareness reveals depends on two factors, what is there in the sensed field and the degree to which the sensory abilities of the sensing subject are refined. The Detective thought about the sensuous values is that exemplifications of them can typically be sensed only when sensing is refined by affect. And indeed a certain conceptual sophistication may be required in order to have certain kinds of affect, and so sense things as appealing and repellent in various determinate ways.

I must struggle to arrive inferentially at a conclusion to the effect that the chess board before me exemplifies a forced stalemate in three moves. A chess master might literally just see this. His seeing it is the deployment of an ability that probably was learnt by first using an inferential method like mine to arrive at the judgement that this and that situation exemplify a forced stalemate in three. But gradually the inferential elements have dropped away and he now just knows what an enormous range of forced stalemates in three look like. His ability is part of a general capacity to visually search, attend to certain features of, and so visually mine the chess positions presented to him so that certain tactical and strategic possibilities just leap forth as complex figures against the sensed background of the board. Here, of course, there is significant visual *imagination* in play, but it need not take the form of a much quicker, *sotto voce* variant on the patzer's "He goes there and I go here." As a matter of fact, if the verbalized analyses of the masters are to be taken as evidence, the intermediate conclusions of high level chess thinking, even when they are based on reasoning, often take the form of moderately 'thick' evaluations. The terminus of analysis is not necessarily the description of a material advantage, but very often '*significant compensation* for black', '*a deceptively weak pawn structure*', '*beautiful defensive chess*' or '*nagging vulnerability* on the king side'. There is a certain inevitable display of refined interest that seems directly related to a master's seeing what he sees.<sup>20</sup> In fact evaluating positions in such interested terms is part of what you have to learn in order to come to see more in the positions. It is not that chess computers like Fritz 6 or Rebel 10 do this same analysis but without the relevant interest or engagement. They rely on brute calculation. Despite

---

<sup>20</sup> Of course, because of the recursive structure of chess, we know that if such evaluations were made precise, they would have perfectly 'naturalistic' truth conditions, but that is not to the point here.

the fact that computers can now defeat all chess players, it is not at all paradoxical to describe human chess as an arena in which seeing is refined and guided by affect, at least so long as we realise that affect is not bodily sensation or appetite.

Of course, the thoroughly jaded chess master might still have the relevant abilities to see deeply into a game, and even use the evaluative terminology to describe the positions he sees, while no longer caring about chess in any way. But it would be a mistake to infer from this that the affectively charged interest in positional weakness, compensation and winning are not deeply relevant for the ordinarily engaged chess master. These active interests direct his attention and determine what he sees. Without the directive power of affect, the thoroughly jaded chess master will soon come to see less, his ability to see deeply will eventually atrophy.

The phenomenon of appropriate affective interest disclosing details of a sensed or imagined situation is of course ubiquitous. Affective interests make the correlative features of imagined or sensed situations stand out. Michael Stocker, who has done as much as anyone to keep affect on the agenda in philosophical ethics, writes:

When one is concerned to get somewhere in a hurry, slow drivers by the dozens may seem to vie with each other to block one's way. When in a bad mood, many ordinarily unnoticed things come to the fore with insistent irksomeness. When one is interested in something its presence or absence may be especially vivid; at a party the hungry person's eye may be captured by the food, the collector's by the antiques, the lubricious person's by the sexual possibilities.<sup>21</sup>

The remark highlights two things worth emphasising in the present context. As the case of the harried driver shows, affect can prompt illusion or failures to see. Anxiety can narrow attention, shame can make one hear a slighting tone when there is none. To say that appropriate affect can refine sensing is not to say that other forms of affect do not frequently distort it. (Still another reason to reject Projectivism is that it grossly obliterates this distinction.) Secondly, as with Stocker's 'lubricious person', or the visual imaginer in chess, affect frequently discloses *possibilities* as densely appealing. Affect refines imagination as well as sensing.

When I imagine a certain arrangement of shrubs in the front of my garden, I may sense a certain garish clash between the placement of cherry laurels and the rhododendrons, a clash that only someone who cares about layouts could 'see'. Suppose the question arises as to whether I have correctly imagined the proposed placement. There are really two questions here. At the level of neutral sensible qualities, have I accurately enough depicted and described how the layout would look from various angles? Secondly, given that my imagi-

---

<sup>21</sup> Michael Stocker and Elizabeth Hegeman *Valuing Emotions* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996) p. 40.

nation is correct in this way, is it correct in that the arrangement of features embodies the garish clash in question? Is that really a state of the correctly imagined layout? If it is, then it is a state that makes true my immediate modal judgement of sensuous value, namely that the rhododendrons and the cherry laurels in those positions *would* clash garishly. Being able to discern such value-laden features in what one is imagining involves a refinement of imaginative attention that typically comes by way of learning to care about such features.

There are two levels of affect in play in refined sensing and imagination: standing interests and occurrent crystallizations of such standing interests. To take the case of the imagined layout of the shrubs, there is first a general interest in a determinable range of goods and bads, of which the particular garish clash is but one determinate bad. This interest heightens attention to the imagined scene, so that embodied features such as the garish clash are likely to stand out. If such a garish clash does stand out there follows a corresponding specification of the antecedent general affective interest. It now becomes a certain definite revulsion towards the envisaged clash.

This mutual refinement of what is imagined and of the affective quality of the act of imagination itself can phenomenologically validate one's sense that one is being receptive to value. In contrast to snobbishness or visceral prejudice, we do not have a case of a standing revulsion looking for an object to justify it. Instead, careful attentiveness discloses a repellent aspect of the envisaged scene. As a result, one's immediate judgement that the rhododendrons and the cherry laurels so arranged would clash garishly is in one way like one's immediate judgement that the calvados is astringent. It is formed from its truthmaker, this time presented in imagination. It thus stands as a good candidate to be non-inferential evaluative knowledge.

What kind of truthmaker is presented by imagination? Well, what is imagined is a structured possibility, a complex, partly qualitative and partly relational type or universal, a *way* the garden might turn out. This imagined *way* the garden might turn out involves a certain juxtaposition of cherry laurels and rhododendrons. The question—an objective question as far as I can tell—is whether supervening on the juxtaposition is the property of being a garish clash. If so, then part of what has been imagined is an exemplification of the property of being a garish clash. Such a clash can be revealed by a certain involuntary revulsion that concretizes a good gardener's general interest in how the garden looks.

When non-inferential evaluative knowledge is arrived at in such a way—by the crystallizing or concretising of appropriate care—there will typically be no problem concerning associated motivation. The concretised affect will *be* the motivation. (Correct or value-disclosing *eros* is the offspring of appropriate *sorge*, and is itself motivating.) So at least in this sort of case, the canonical case if you will, we can provide part of what the Ethical

Internalist wants: the very conditions for arriving at non-inferential evaluational knowledge practically guarantee associated motivation. This motivation or 'desire' is just the concretised affect that disclosed the value in question. It is to that extent tailored to that value, and so *correct*, or just as it should be.

Now we can see how a concretised affective disclosure might itself rationalise desire or action. Many would agree that my immediate evaluative judgement to the effect that the rhododendrons and the cherry laurels would clash garishly can rationalise or make sense of my avoiding that combination. In that sense the evaluative judgement has authority; it calls for and makes intelligible a certain desire, act or, in this case, omission. But this authority is a derived authority. It derives from the affective disclosure of the garishness of the clash, the very thing that makes the judgement true. Without going by way of the judgement the disclosure itself can rationalise my avoiding the combination.

In this fashion, and without going by way of evaluative judgement, the world disclosed to an affectively alive person is a world of default pathways marked out by fully determinate versions of the appealing and the repulsive, the erotic and the banal, the beautiful and the ugly. The world such a person senses is thus layered with significance, it presents things to be done and avoided, continued and broken off, and does this prior to any deliberation or planning of action on his or her part.

9. Perhaps enough has been said to suggest why the affective life can be deeply challenging. Affect, when it does not function properly, can distort our evaluations and hence our lives. And when it does function properly it can disclose an enormous variety of demanding goods, which it will motivate us to pursue. There is every likelihood that these goods will pull in different directions, and to some extent intelligibly pull apart the life that is attentive to the enormously variegated values in things.

The authority of affect lies in its capacity to disclose goods that make claims on us. But this authority must be limited if it is to be lived with. The affective desires of an open person with a moderately complex life, even when those desires are correct in the sense of being value-disclosing, will not be mutually satisfiable, at least not without enormous, and probably life-fracturing, costs to herself and others.

So even if affective desire can be the presentation of the real determinate appeal of the desired object, no such desire in and of itself settles larger scale questions of what one should do. If it is to be fully validated as a sufficient ground for life-shaping action, the affective disclosure of value needs to be tested by a course of experience and action. Our considered evaluative beliefs are our summary judgements of this always still partial validation. Evaluative beliefs thus incorporate facts about the variety of things we have been taken

with and the extent to which experience and subsequent action has validated the force of these initial appearances of value.

This means that, for the most part, considered evaluative beliefs, when they are not simply conventional but are won from experience, can have authority over affective desire. In the conflict between one's considered evaluative beliefs and one's affective desires the argument for siding with one's evaluative beliefs is just that they incorporate a more comprehensive view of what affective desire locally and immediately presents. The authority of evaluative belief (like the authority of a chair) is in that respect like the derived authority of a servant who has been given time to take a larger view.

This way of locating the derived authority of evaluative belief opens up conceptual space for a strong form of weakness of will. In accepting the summary of evaluative disclosures and of tests of disclosure incorporated in an evaluative belief, say to the effect that avoiding oysters is a good thing for one to do, one is not thereby immune from continuing to enjoy a practically conflicting, and to some extent veridical, appearance of value. One can find oneself being taken with the oysters and accordingly eating them. This may be compared to knowing that the "ghosts" in the haunted house are actors in costumes, but being scared out of one's wits anyway. To the extent that considered evaluative belief is merely an interpretative synopsis of a range of immediate affective disclosures of value, it can lack the motivational force of any one of them.

Though evaluative belief is based in and has authority over affective desire, such belief cannot substitute for affectivity. If we are to be good at anything or for anyone we need to keep in constant repair our capacity to be struck by the appeal of other things and other people. Otherwise, all that old fashioned talk about having a good *will* remains just talk. We will be no better than an old chef with great recipes, who has lost his sense of smell.

The Projectivist philosophies pervading both our popular culture and the normative framework that dominates the scholarly discussion of our economic life leave little or no conceptual room for thinking of feeling as the disclosure of value. Here bad philosophy has been enormously corrosive. We can't be expected to take on the hard and necessary work of refining our fledgling capacity to sense what is good if our culture is constantly insinuating that it is confused even to suppose that we have such a capacity.<sup>22</sup>

---

<sup>22</sup> Special thanks to Ruth Chang and Jennifer Hawkins for helping me with these ideas. During the writing very helpful comments came from Ralph Wedgwood and also from Susan Brison, Cian Dorr, Kit Fine, Gilbert Harman, Benj Hellie, Sean Kelly and Keiran Setiya.