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Adding Goods

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ADDING GOODS

BY

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Adding Goods

Dissertation directed by Professor Michael Tooley

G. E. Moore famously warned us that "[*T*]*he value of a whole must not be assumed to be the same as the sum of the values of its parts*" (1903, p. 28). In so doing he denied that value is additive. W. D. Ross agreed with Moore and claimed of Moore's doctrine "that its truth in the abstract is *unquestionable*" (1930, p. 72, my emphasis). Many other philosophers have since followed suit. In the first part of my dissertation I develop various themes from Moore and argue that he made an important mistake which led him to reject the additivity of value. I then offer an account of realism about degrees of goodness and defend an account of intrinsicness and states of affairs that avoids the mistake Moore made. I also present and defend an axiology that entails that a state of affairs is intrinsically good, if and only if, it involves an agent that takes an attitude towards an intentional object such that the agent's attitude fits its object. In the second part of my dissertation I answer three objections that target this additive conception of intrinsic value: these are putative cases of incommensurability, organic unity, and indeterminacy in intrinsic value. If one embraces the metaphysics and axiology that I defend, a very compelling case against these purported counterexamples to the additivity of intrinsic value can be provided. As a consequence moral computation requires only simple mathematics.

For my mother

Acknowledgements

After high school, I moved to Kansas City, Kansas and enrolled in courses at Johnson County Community College in 1997. There I took my very first philosophy course. I recall the professor being in a rather bad mood that first day of class. He was berating people that, when they were interviewed by reporters, would speculatively answer questions that they were asked. He kept shouting "Just say "I don't know!" just say "I don't f-ing know!" to those questions." Apparently, he was no fan of speculation. Maybe this was all a bit of theatre. Maybe he hoped to impress the value of humility on us. I now think there is a plausible principle that made those rantings somewhat reasonable: we should assert something only if we have good reason to think that what we are asserting is true. To do otherwise places one at the peril of being an intellectual fraud. What we say matters and we should hold ourselves to standards a great deal higher than editors from Fox News and the like.

I decided to keep working in philosophy after that first class since my brain apparently would not let me think about much else. As luck would have it, I then ended up moving to Bellingham, Washington, where I studied philosophy in a wonderful department at Western Washington University. I got very lucky. Metaphysics was all the rage there and so metaphysics it was. Night after night we would argue about the merits and demerits of Presentism, Actualism, and Theism, among other topics. The professors were remarkable for being excellent philosophers, but also excellent mentors. At that point there simply was no possibility for me of not trying to make philosophy my career. Then I got lucky again. I was accepted with funding into a doctoral program at the University of Colorado, Boulder. The quality of the philosophy department at CU-Boulder was remarkable too. After 15 years of studying philosophy, and after

moving across three states and attending three colleges, I would do it all over again in a heartbeat. This is because I love philosophy first. It is also because my professors and my colleagues over this long journey have been guiding lights. I have been blown away, over and over again, by the wonderful and intelligent people I have had the opportunity to work with.

In roughly the order in which these professors, colleagues, and friends have impacted temporal parts of myself, I would like to thank: Landon Kirchner, Joshua Spencer, Ken Cleveland, Ned Markosian, Hud Hudson, Frances Howard-Snyder, Stuart Brock, Ben Bradley, Michael Collins, Andy Egan, Ryan Wasserman, Brendan Jackson, Nic Damnjanovic, David Barnett, Kathrin Koslicki, Graham Oddie, David Boonin, Graeme Forbes, Robert Rupert, Chris Heathwood, Alastair Norcross, Robert Pasnau, Michaela McSweeney, Alex Rivera and Joe Fraley. I would also like to thank the Philosophy Department and the Graduate School at the University of Colorado, Boulder for generous fellowships they provided. Thanks to the Department of Philosophy at Western Washington University for a position as a Research Associate where I was able to work and share ideas from my dissertation with a wonderful group of colleagues. Thank you so much.

Finally, three of my professors need to be singled out for special thanks. First, I owe a special thanks to Michael Huemer for his support and his detailed criticisms of my work throughout my career at CU. To both Dan Howard-Snyder and Michael Tooley I owe an enormous debt of gratitude. Dan has been a constant source of motivation, friendship, love, and criticism. Dan and his wonderful family have kept my ship a float many times when it was set to sink. Michael has been the best chair one could possibly hope for, as well as a reliable source of consideration, advice, and deep and penetrating philosophical criticism. I would be a shadow of the philosopher I am now were it not for Michael Tooley. Thank you all.

Contents

Introduction

In this dissertation I defend the claim that intrinsic value is additive. Value is like water. There is a total amount of water contained in the lakes around the world and to determine that total we need simply add the amounts of water contained in each lake. Quantities of water are additive magnitudes. To determine the quantity of water in some whole (all the lakes together) we sum quantities of water in each of its parts that do not overlap (the individual lakes). I believe that our lives are like shores that surround these lakes. To determine the overall intrinsic value of a life requires that we add the intrinsic values of its parts that do not overlap. These parts are our experiences. Such determination may be impossible to carry out in practice, and something's overall intrinsic value may even be impossible to know. However, this absence of knowledge is no council for despair. To make a claim about a matter of fact is not to make a claim about its knowability. Intuition reveals rich comparisons of value to help guide our choices. Sometimes the question is not whether we can know some proposition, but whether there are candidate facts that underlie claims we assume we already know. That is what I am interested in here.

Some things are good in themselves and some are better than others. Evaluative facts are perfectly objective according to the realist. Though realism about value has been much discussed, much less discussed is realism about *degrees* of value and what sort of metaphysics is required for degrees of value to enter the moral landscape. Here I offer a metaphysics to underlie a natural conception of degrees of the good. Inspired by claims advanced in Moore (1903), I argue that value depends on the fundamental while being irreducible to its base. Value is possessed by simple states of affairs and must involve the existence of a subject taking the right attitude toward the world. Towards defending a pluralist axiology, I appeal to an analogy

between truth and value. The end of belief is to get at the truth and we can approach this end by believing what seems to us to be true. The end of valuing is to get at the good and we can approach this end by valuing what seems to us to have value. A part of the good life involves understanding the good, and another involves having experiences with intrinsic value.

In chapter 1, "What is Realism about the Good," I briefly characterize what form realism about value must take to count as a legitimate form of realism. On my view, realism about the good—and the bad too, though I will focus primarily on the good—entails *that there are evaluative facts* that make true various positive evaluative statements like "deserved pleasure is good" or "caring for the well-being of one's children is good" or "loving the good is itself good." Realism entails that such facts are *objective*, *universal*, *irreducible*, and *real*. I discuss these four tenets of realism and offer an account of each of these concepts. I then consider two worries for this proposal. The first worry is that this view is incompatible with one plausible account of *reduction*. The second worry is that this view collapses into a form of evaluative *idealism*. Both worries rest on a mistake and I explain this mistake. This will position us to consider a unique form of Moorean Realism developed in the next chapter..

In chapter 2, "G. E. Moore's Realism," I present and defend a form of realism about intrinsic goodness. Though inspired by claims found in Moore's corpus, this version of realism was never explicitly defended by Moore. Nonetheless, it approximates a view that Moore, I believe, would likely have found to be congenial during his early career. It is interesting too. It is interesting because certain theses advanced by Moore are derided among modern philosophers. Though some of these theses are derided for good reason, one of his central theses, *Meinongianism*, has enjoyed a revival in metaphysics. It is not at all clear that this view, when properly articulated, is mistaken. When tweaked and wedded to other Moorean views it provides

an interesting version of realism. That said, though I defend this form of realism, I neither accept nor reject it. There are alternative conceptions of the metaphysics of value that strike me to be just as plausible. It is enough that there are no objections to this account that are persuasive. Or so I think. Towards capturing Moore's idiosyncratic views and presenting a novel and, I think, interesting account of realism about intrinsic value, what follows is a presentation and defense of *Moorean Realism*.

I will outline claims that can be found in Moore's *Principia Ethica* (1903) and his "The Conception of Intrinsic Value" (reprinted 1963) that form an altogether odd conception of intrinsic value. Then I contrast these claims with a view standardly attributed to Moore. These two views stand in tension and are in need of resolution. To resolve this tension I provide a background metaphysics which entails that there are different ways for things to be, which in turn requires that there are not *merely* different kinds of properties for things to have (a very uncontroversial claim), but that there are different basic existential quantifiers. I also argue that goodness is a conceptual property, rather than a fundamental property. As a concept I then argue that the application conditions for this concept are generated by the intuitions a virtuous thinker would have in good conditions. As a consequence, we can make sense of many of those odd claims found in Moore's writings. Then I consider two objections. The first objection questions how application conditions for the concept *intrinsic goodness* can be stated on the hypothesis that there is no universal that satisfies the concept. The second objection questions our ability to acquire the concept *intrinsic goodness* were there no universal goodness, nor some analysis of goodness in terms of concepts that are satisfied by universals with which we can be directly acquainted. Interestingly, Moore thought goodness was on a par with numbers, that there are

truths about both, though he denied that either numbers or goodness exist. I explain how we can extend Moore's account to degrees of goodness while capturing this analogy with numbers.

In chapter 3, "Identifying Axiological Atoms," I propose an account of states of affairs that have basic intrinsic value to serve as the objects for fitting attitudes. What are those things that it is fitting to favor as such? On the view defended here, a state of affairs S has value, in and of itself, and not because of its relationship to anything else with value, if and only if, S involves a subject, a psychological attitude, and an object, where the subject's attitude towards the object is fitting. Let's call this view the *Attitudinal Account of Intrinsic Value* (or AAIV). I will defend AAIV by considering a number of its advantages. Importantly, it allows us to unify Moore's axiology in a plausible way; it is compatible with the claim that goodness is simple, non-natural, and irreducible; it meshes nicely with traditional fitting-attitude accounts of value; and finally, it allows us to unify and analyze the virtues and vices. I then consider four worries for AAIV. First, we need to have an account of the concept *fittingness* and it is unclear how the account should go. Is fittingness normative and is it analyzable? Is fittingness an internal relation and does it come in degrees? I will argue that fittingness is a *sui generis* concept with close conceptual ties to value, reason, and character. Second, AAIV entails that beauty, diversity, achievement and autonomy lack intrinsic value. Is this plausible? Third, in addition to entailing that hedonism is false, AAIV *seems* to entail that pain is intrinsically good. This would be an "interesting" consequence indeed. Fourth and finally, the degree to which it is fitting to favor something is no simple function of the intrinsic value of the favored object. Our personal relationships to the entities that concern us matter. For example, though our children may be of equal intrinsic worth, it is fitting for me to favor the well-being of my child above yours. This observation is incompatible with certain ways of understanding fit.

In chapter 4, "Avoiding Reduction," I argue that intrinsic value is irreducible and that fitting attitudes analyses of value are mistaken. I argued that basic intrinsic value depends on fitting attitudes that are constituents in states of affairs with intrinsic value. These states of affairs serve as candidates for further fitting attitudes, namely, favor as such, in such a way that AAIV is compatible with, and helps to fill out fitting-attitude accounts of intrinsic value. That is, so long as the biconditionals used in stating such accounts are not taken to express analyses of intrinsic value. Here I argue against fitting-attitude accounts that do try to reduce intrinsic value to other evaluative facts, and against naturalistic accounts that attempt to reduce intrinsic value to non-evaluative facts. If I am correct, intrinsic value is irreducible even though it depends on the presence of fitting attitudes, and even though these fitting attitudes depend on the the existence of various fundamental facts that underlie them.

There are two ways to understand properties: to be concepts or to be universals. Fitting-attitude accounts entail that, necessarily, a state of affairs has the property *being intrinsically good*, if and only if, it has the property *being a fitting object of favor as such*. But intuitively something is a fitting object of favor *because* it is intrinsically good, and something is intrinsically good because it involves a fitting attitude. Since these various properties stand in an asymmetric relation, they must be numerically distinct. Furthermore, the fact that some state of affairs *contains a subject with an attitude that fits its object* will necessarily co-obtain with those descriptive facts (perhaps specified by an infinite disjunction or conjunction) that serve as its evaluative subvening base. Because the former property is evaluative and the latter is not, these facts are distinct too. As a consequence there are four intimately related layers of property and fact that are necessarily co-extensive. Thus, if necessary co-extension suffices for identity, we would be saddled with reductionism. I will present an argument against the antecedent of this

conditional. I then consider five arguments for thinking that necessary co-extension does suffice for identity developed in Frank Jackson (1998), Graham Oddie (2005), and Bart Streumer (2008). Towards being a good property manager, I will argue that the antecedent of this conditional is false as well.

In chapter 5, "Metaphysics for Intrinsic Value," I provide an account of states of affairs and intrinsicness. Moore endorsed three kinds of pluralism. He accepted that there are different ways to exist. Having attempted to articulate these different ways, he accepted that there are different kinds of things that have intrinsic value, claiming that knowledge, pleasure, and virtue generate intrinsic value. Having attempted to unify these intrinsic goods, claiming that their common core involves having a fitting attitude, Moore also accepted that there are different kinds of *bearers* of intrinsic value. He claimed that individuals, states of affairs, and properties can have intrinsic value. The first two kinds of pluralism Moore defended are very plausible. This latter form of pluralism is widely rejected for good reason. Philosophers working in value theory nowadays endorse monism about value bearers.

In chapter 5 I also outline an account of states of affairs as mereological fusions of individuals and properties. Accordingly, all atomic states of affairs are wholes that contain their constituents as mereological parts, and all non-atomic states of affairs are formed by fusion. I then offer three reasons for thinking this account is mistaken. First, Bradley's regress entails that there is nothing to convert a mere fusion of individuals and universals into a genuine unity, which would be required were states of affairs to be composed of their parts. Second, the possibility of self-exemplifying properties is incompatible with supplementation principles that are entailed by the parthood relation. Third, with non-symmetric relations like *John's facing Mary* and *Mary's facing John*, we have distinct wholes that share the same parts. This would be

impossible were a whole the fusion of its parts. The account of states of affairs that emerges entails that atomic states of affairs lack parts and are therefore simple. Then I provide an account of intrinsicness for intrinsic properties. Moore claimed that intrinsic value can be had in absolute isolation and that it must be shared between duplicates. I offer an account that supports these claims, and allows intrinsic properties the flexibility they need to meet demands from the good. Finally, I consider and answer a couple of objections.

In chapter 6, "Adding Goods," I outline an account of additivity for intrinsic value. Addition is not a terribly interesting operation when applied to numbers. But when applied to other kinds of things it can be downright mysterious whether its application is appropriate. The reason is that adding entities other than numbers often requires combining them, while the manner in which such entities are combined often involves arranging them, or even mixing them. But value doesn't exactly move around and the relative proximity of its bearers seems to be irrelevant to its combination. So *if* goods can be added, adding goods looks to be a rather different animal than adding numbers or milk with coffee. What's more, different quantities are not all alike. For example, gallons of water, or yards of length, or even degrees of IQ seem to behave in strikingly different ways. We cannot combine IQs but we can certainly combine portions of water. So *if* goods are quantitative or properties that permit of degrees, then locating goods amongst the more familiar kinds of quantity should be possible. But whether value is more like water or instead more like IQ in this regard is just not obvious. Is intrinsic value quantitative? Can goods be added?

Here I offer an account according to which, first, intrinsic value is quantitative like water is quantitative, and, second, intrinsic value can be combined without arranging its bearers. Furthermore, addition literally takes us from numbers which represent the intrinsic values of

experiences, for example, to numbers which represent overall intrinsic values of wholes that include these experiences as parts. On this view, the *existence* of these wholes results from combining states of affairs, while the overall *intrinsic values* of these wholes result from adding the intrinsic values of those of its parts or grounds that have intrinsic value in a fundamental or basic way. This view is subject to multiple challenges. The first challenge involves (1) isolating basic intrinsic value states, (2) determining the intrinsic values of these states, and then (3) describing how combination of these states occurs. The second challenge involves (4) isolating the relevant wholes that result from these combinations, and then (5) determining the overall intrinsic values of these wholes. Together with the axiology and metaphysics defended earlier, we can generate plausible value assignments to the things we care about. We can answer challenges (1) through (5) satisfactorily.

I briefly reconsider central features of the views defended in earlier chapters. In particular, I discuss what has intrinsic value and the nature of states of affairs and their formation. Then I consider a recent defense of the additivity of intrinsic value by Zimmerman (2001). I will raise a number of worries for Zimmerman's account and go on to articulate and defend a novel account of the conditions under which goods can be added, and I argue that the axiology and metaphysics defended earlier allows us to provide an argument for additivity. I end with a brief discussion of the zero, or neutral point for intrinsic value, and I discuss some principles of evaluative reasoning that are closely wed to additivity. These bare-difference principles, earlier appealed to in our discussion of Rossian arguments for value pluralism, can be vindicated if additivity can be vindicated.

In chapter 7, "The Problem of Organic Unity," I consider one objection to the present proposal. According to additivity, the intrinsic value of a whole is the same as the sum of the

values of those of its parts that have basic intrinsic value. The most common purported counterexamples to additivity are purported wholes with intrinsic values that, intuitively, differ from the sum of the intrinsic values of their evaluatively basic parts. Moore famously claimed that "*the value of a whole must not be assumed to be the same as the sum of the values of its parts*" (1903, p. 28). Recently, a number of very good philosophers have carried Moore's torch forward by providing additional cases of purported organic unities. This chapter argues that organic unities are a myth.

Here I consider one recent argument in support of organic unity by Brown (2007). Identifying where his argument fails will help to reveal which properties organic unities would have to possess, were they to be genuine. I propose other purported cases of organic unity and consider Moore's response to his own purported cases of organic unity. Though Moore's metaphysics required that he embrace organic unities, he nearly solved the problem he coined. I briefly consider an approach to intrinsic value that entails intrinsic value is *conditional*, that is, that it can vary from context to context. Though this account escapes organic unities, its costs are too high. Then I outline an account that avoids organic unity. When AAIV is wedded to the metaphysics discussed previously, we can dissolve purported organic unities and explain away the temptation to embrace them. Finally, I consider two worries for this account. Lemos (1998) and Hurka (2005) argue that we must embrace organic unities to accommodate the fitting attitudes we should take towards states of affairs that involve wicked pleasure. These states require us to have mixed emotional responses to wholes that include both. This seems to entail pleasure remains good *even when enjoyed by the wicked*. I explain where this worry goes wrong. Dancy claims that those external conditions that enable the generation of intrinsic value can

depend on other enabling conditions, namely facts about material objects. This is incompatible with the value they enable being intrinsic. I explain where this objection goes wrong too.

Finally, in chapter 8, "Incommensurable and Indeterminate Good," I argue against the possibility of incommensurability and indeterminacy in intrinsic value. The additivity of intrinsic value entails its commensurability and determinacy. *A fortiori* if there are either incommensurable or indeterminate intrinsic value states, then not all intrinsic value is additive. Are such states possible? In this chapter I continue from where we left off and argue that such states are impossible.

Here I attempt to isolate a number of cases in which pro-incommensurability intuitions arise, note some of their salient features, and I then consider Chang's "Small Improvement Argument" for the incommensurability of intrinsic value (2001, p. 55). I then consider a handful of cases that suggest that value is indeterminate. On this view, for some particular degree of intrinsic value n, there are states of affairs that neither have, nor fail to have intrinsic value to degree n. However, I argue that it is *vagueness* in value, not incommensurability in value, that is present in these purported cases of indeterminacy and incommensurability. This account allows us to identify where Chang's argument goes astray. Accordingly, unsound intuitions regarding incommensurability and indeterminacy in value are masquerading as sound intuitions about vagueness in intrinsic value. I outline an account of vagueness up to this task. What's interesting about this response is that, though it is common for defenders of commensurability to appeal to vagueness to explain away pro-incommensurability intuitions, these authors all accept that vagueness entails indeterminacy. These authors must all deny that value is always determinate, and hence, these responses offer only a partial solution to the problems above. On my view, however, we get a solution both to purported cases of indeterminacy and purported cases of

incommensurability in intrinsic value. In short, this is because I reject the claim that vagueness entails indeterminacy in favor of the view that vagueness is *sui generis,* whereas indeterminacy is impossible.

I then consider one evaluative space in which something like incommensurability and something like indeterminacy find a home. There is something like incommensurability and indeterminacy in our *valuing* or *desiring*. For example, we might reasonably be indifferent between x and y, prefer z to x, but reasonably remain indifferent between y and z. We can be reasonably indifferent between options that differ in their intrinsic value. This phenomena looks something like incommensurability. Moreover, for many states, we may be rationally unable to assign a determinate intrinsic value to those states. Arguably, what is given to us in intuition when it comes to intrinsic value is that certain things have it and that certain things have more of it than others, as opposed to the degree to which things have it and exactly how much better things are than others. This phenomena looks something like indeterminacy in intrinsic value. Conflating value with valuing is pervasive. But subjectivism is false and once we have clearly distinguished the fitting attitude from its intentional object, we can distance ourselves from the allure of incommensurability and indeterminacy. Finally, I end by considering an interesting consequence of the preceding discussion. In particular, if vagueness excludes knowledge, then whenever it is vague how valuable something is, we cannot know how valuable that something is, and whenever it is vague which of two entities is better, we cannot know which entity is better. I suggest that vagueness does exclude knowledge and that vagueness in value is abundant. As a consequence we are often in the dark when it come to comparisons of value, and also when it comes to assigning degrees of value to individual states of affairs. To the extent that what we reasonably believe ought to be done depends on our making such comparisons, we will often be

in the dark about our obligations. This a somewhat surprising consequence, but it is a price that defenders of additivity must pay if they are to accept the claim that evaluative reasoning requires only simple mathematics. However, this consequence gives us a nice response to a recent attempt to argue against the possibility of intrinsic quantities, and thus, it allows us a nice solution to this argument as it applies to degrees of the good.

So there is a summary of what is to come.

Chapter 1

What is Realism about The Good?

0 Introduction

There are million dollar questions and then there are *priceless* ones. What is the good? In the Republic, Plato asserted "that what gives truth to the things known and the power to know to the knower is the *form of the good*. And though it is the cause of knowledge and truth, it is also an object of knowledge. Both knowledge and truth are beautiful things, but *the good* is other and more beautiful than they" (508e, *my emphasis*). He compared the good to the sun. We can see only when the sun illuminates objects of sight. Similarly, we can understand only when the good illuminates objects of thought. For Plato the good was the source and unifier of *everything that matters*.

Clearly, that is not going to be an easy sale. I certainly do not buy it because the good is clearly not beautiful, even were some beautiful things good. The good causes nothing, even were good things to stand in causal relations. Perhaps Plato was exaggerating or simply misguided. But there is truth in hyperbole. For Plato and many, many other philosophers, the good is nothing less than the most important possible object of human inquiry. What matters most is the good. Were life to have any meaning whatsoever, the good would be the primary, if not the *only* source of that meaning. So whether he exaggerated or not, Plato was clearly right in a way. The good matters most. And partly because I whole-heartedly agree with this sentiment, over the next few pages I aim to explicate the good. I offer an account of *degrees* of the good and an account of

what unifies things that possess goodness. This account entails that goods can be added and summed, and I think there are good reasons to hold this view despite its widespread rejection and disdain.

Perhaps goodness does not play the roles that Plato thought it played. A more modest claim would be that certain things are good and that other things are bad. This claim must be true. Murdering children for fun? Bad. Loving children for their own sake? Good. Loving people for their murdering of children? Bad. Loving people for their loving of children? Good. Killing people for their murdering of children? Well, *controversial*. This is as good a place as any to start, so let's start here. There are some seemingly obvious evaluative claims and some not so obvious evaluative claims. Our question is whether such claims require that goodness and badness be real, were these claims true? This question is decidedly not about whether we really value things, or whether we believe things are really good or bad, or even about whether certain societies accept certain ethical standards. The answers to these other questions are obvious. Their answers are yes. The answer to our question is not at all obvious. For what one *means* when one says that goodness and badness are real properties is unclear, which renders our question difficult to answer.

Here I briefly characterize what form realism about value must take if it is to count as a legitimate form of realism. On my view, realism about the good - and the bad too, but I will mainly focus on the good - entails that *there are evaluative facts* that serve to make true various positive evaluative statements like "deserved pleasure is good" or "caring for the well-being of one's children is good" or "loving the good is itself good." Realism about value entails that these kinds of fact are *objective*, *universal*, *irreducible*, and *real*. What do these terms mean? Here is the plan: In section 1 I discuss these four tenets of realism. I consider alternative conceptions of

realism, and then I offer an account that avoids certain problems to which they are subject. I turn, in section 2, to consider two worries for this proposal. The first worry is that this view is incompatible with one plausible account of reduction. The second worry is that this view collapses into a form of evaluative *idealism*. Both worries rest on a mistake and I explain the mistake. This will position us to develop a form of Moorean Realism in the subsequent chapter that meets the desiderata for realism developed below.

1 Tenets of Realism

So what is realism? To begin, here is an apt remark from Crispin Wright:

> [I]f there ever was a consensus of understanding about 'realism,' as a philosophical term of art, it has undoubtedly been fragmented by the pressures exerted by the various debates–so much so that a philosopher who asserts that she is a realist about theoretical science, for example, or ethics, has probably, for most philosophical audiences, accomplished little more than to clear her throat (1992, p. 1).

Wright's point is well-taken. Philosophers use the term 'real' in quite different ways. So to avoid confusion I want to explain what I mean when I say that goodness or badness - and, *intrinsic* goodness in particular - "is real." For example, upon learning of a recent mass-shooting in Oslo, a shooting and bombing where 77 people were murdered, my gut reaction was that the event was a tragedy. The event itself seemed to me to be a bad thing. I mean, I did not think that it was simply *bad for* the people involved, though that was true and I believed it. I also did not simply mean that it was bad for those that were effected by event, though that was true and I believed it. Rather, what I meant was that the event was bad *in itself*. It was the sort of thing, setting other things aside, that the world would be better without. When many people suffer for no good reason, and when someone causes so many people to suffer for no good reason, that's a

bad thing. Period. To be more clear, I did not mean that I believed that the event was bad, though that was true and I believed that I believed that the event was bad. I also did not mean that most people, or most people in my society, would believe that the event was bad, though I hope that is true. So when I say that the shooting was itself bad, I am not making a claim about my mental states and I am not making a claim about mental states of some observers of the event. Rather, I mean to be making a claim about the event itself and to be saying of that event that *it*, not something else, is bad *itself* and not for what it may, or may not cause.

That was my gut reaction, and I believe that it was philosophically defensible. The reason for this is that the shooting just *seemed to me* to be a very bad thing. When considering that event I was subject to a certain kind of mental state, a seeming or appearance of disvalue, and the presence of this mental state justified my belief *that the shooting was bad*. The presence of that state made it *reasonable* to believe that the shooting was bad. That is how matters seemed to me then, and that is how matters seem to me now. In general, it is entirely reasonable to take things to be the way that things seem. The council "go with your gut" is a reasonable one. It is good advice. What else should we believe when faced with, and *only with,* a seeming that some claim is true? The answer is belief. This is not to say that such seemings are infallible. This advice is no council for certainty. Neither is it to say that we shouldn't be skeptical about many of our evaluative seemings. I think both that appearances of value are liable to error and that we should be skeptical of their reliability, especially in complex cases. But this is true for nearly all seemings. Appearances of value should be taken as seriously as appearances of anything else. So

we should accept that the content of these evaluative seemings are correct unless we have good reason for doubting them.[1]

Opponents of realism urge that there are good reasons to doubt such appearances. A fashionable view is that realism is naive because realism has been discredited by evolutionary theory, or because moral truth, if not all truth, is relative, or because moral judgments fail to describe anything. In one way or another, the thought is that there are countervailing reasons to reject appearances of value. Just as science has taught us that the everyday surfaces are mostly empty space, and so that chairs are not, strictly speaking, solid, attention to cultural variations in moral beliefs provides us with reason to reject the idea that there are universal truths about value. Plato would have found this change in fashion surprising. Is the realist and her opponent engaged in a mere verbal dispute, and thus, simply meaning something different by 'real' or 'good'? Or rather, do people sincerely deny that genocide is a bad thing while meaning the same thing as those that affirm that genocide is a bad thing? We can't answer these questions until we have an account of realism on the table, but before considering such an account, I want to make two points. The first is that even if we accept the contents of such seemings, for example, *that the Oslo shooting was a bad thing*, this does not entail realism about value. In order to establish realism, one would have to establish the further claim that there is an evaluative fact *that the Oslo shooting was a bad thing* with certain features. This further claim is not given to one in this seeming, but must be argued for philosophically. Thus, secondly, when the realist and her opponent are engaged in a purported dispute about whether there are good things, they could

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[1] The view that evaluative seemings generate prima facia justification in the absence of defeaters has been defended in Huemer (2001) and (2005). I think Huemer is correct, though Huemer does not offer an analysis of the mental state of *it's seeming to one that p*. He claims such seeming states are "assertive representational mental states." But what does this mean? Are there objects or properties, *mental* objects or properties with which one is directly acquainted, whenever it seems to one that p? Can such states be analyzed? If they can, will their analysis yield a state that can serve to justify beliefs? These are tough questions, but they will need to be side-stepped here.

either be disagreeing about whether the commonsense claim *that there are good things* is true, or about the philosophical claim that the evaluative fact *that there are good things* has certain features, or even that there is such an evaluative fact.

Let's say that a theory is a collection of statements that purports to describe the world, while the entailments of a theory are statements the theory entails against a background of widely accepted statements. These background statements serve as the common ground for those who would debate the merits of a theory by assessing its implications. Theories are tested against their implications. Plausible implications yield confirmation, whereas implausible consequences yield disconfirmation. As mentioned above, a realist account of value entails that there are true statements of evaluative fact where these statements require the existence of evaluative facts to make them true, and also where these facts involve the instantiation of objective, universal, irreducible, and real evaluative properties. So a realist theory of value entails that there are such properties. The question is whether this is a plausible implication, or whether this is an implausible implication.

Before considering a few recent accounts of realism, I want to mention and set to the side an important worry. The question of realism is the question of whether the concept *real* applies to some purported entity. If there is a concept of the *real*, presumably there are things in its extension and some purported entities not in its extension. If we are to have any mutual grasp on the concept, there must be some agreement about which entities do, and which purported entities do not fall in its extension. Another way to put the point is that grasping a concept requires grasping its paradigmatic instances. So suppose that I point to an obvious example of a chair and say *that is a chair*. If you haven't a clue whether I am pointing to a chair, presumably you do not possess the concept *chair* and we cannot disagree about whether there are chairs. A minimal

necessary condition for possessing a concept is the ability to pick out things that paradigmatically satisfy the concept, at least in normal circumstances. The same goes for the *real*. In order to disagree about what is real, presumably those parties in the dispute must agree *at least somewhat* as to the paradigms of the real.

And yet *philosophers* argue about whether there are tables, minds, and colors. Pick any paradigm of the real and you can find some philosopher that has argued at length against the reality of that paradigm. The problem this raises is what, exactly, such philosophers are doing? Are they simply stipulating a new concept, *real*,* and claiming that some paradigmatically *real* entity doesn't satisfy *real**? Are they then trying to legislate language to get the rest of us not already on board to use *real** instead of *real*? If that is what they are doing, then their project is an odd one. I don't see any point in debating whether something falls in the extension of a stipulated concept. And the worry this raises is the following: if moral facts are paradigmatically real, there's no point debating about whether there are moral facts. For anyone denying that there were such facts would, *ipso facto*, not be employing the concept *real* that is at issue. They would need to consult with a linguist, not a moral philosopher.

Though I do not know whether moral facts are paradigmatically real, I will assume that they are not and that there is a substantive debate to be had. When teaching I have witnessed what at least appeared to be serious disagreement about whether value is real. I would prefer to list paradigms of the real and to then offer an account of realism compatible with these paradigms, but I will not do that. Apparently, many able philosophers disagree over what would appear to be the paradigms of the real, and I would like to retain my faith that they are engaged in a non-useless exercise. This was all to say that when offering an account of realism I will not guide this account by considering what strike me to be paradigms of real entities. Because

philosophy should not occur in a vacuum, I will begin by considering recent statements of realism about value that have been defended in the literature. These accounts share features in common. I will assume that, unless there is good reason to believe otherwise, an account of realism about value should capture these similarities. The devil is, of course, in the differences. To begin, here is an early statement of realism about value by Richard Boyd:

> According to moral realism: 1. Moral statements are the sorts of statements which are (or express propositions which are) true or false (or approximately true, largely false, etc.); 2. The truth or falsity (approximate truth. . .) of moral statements is largely independent of our moral opinions, theories, etc.; 3. Ordinary canons of moral reasoning–together with ordinary canons of scientific and everyday factual reasoning–constitute, under many circumstances at least, a reliable method for obtaining and improving (approximate) moral knowledge.
>
> It follows from moral realism that such moral terms as 'good,' 'fair,' 'just,' 'obligatory' usually correspond to real properties or relations. . . (2001, p. 182).

Here is Russ Shafer-Landau:

> The way I would prefer to characterize the realist position is by reference to its endorsement of the *stance-independence* of moral reality. Realists believe that there are moral truths that obtain independently of any preferred perspective, in the sense that *the moral standards that fix the moral facts are not made true by virtue of their ratification from within any given actual or hypothetical perspective*. That a person takes a particular attitude toward a putative moral standard is not what makes that standard correct (2003, p. 15).

Here is Graham Oddie:

> Despite the appearances of chaos and confusion about the commitments of realism, a fairly simple order is discernible in these debates. We can distinguish five realist tenets – concerning, respectively, *propositional content*, *presuppositional fulfillment*, *mind-independence*, *irreducibility*, and *causal networking* – and in each of these debates these tenets defines a series of increasingly realist stances. Realism thus admits of degrees, and the five tenets yield six degrees of realism.
>
> Applying this schema to the case of value, the tenet of propositional content maintains that evaluative judgments involve the expression of genuine propositions about value, propositions which are apt for classification as either true or false descriptions of reality. The tenet of presuppositional fulfillment, that

> not only are such value propositions apt for classification as true or false, they do not lack actual truth values through unfulfilled presuppositions. . . The mind-independence tenet denies that truths about value are simply congeries of facts concerning desires or preferences, or other such attitudes. Irreducibility denies that truths about value are congeries of any other non-evaluative facts. The last of these five tenets – that of causal networking – is the most controversial. It is one thing to claim that facts about value are irreducible, quite another to claim that they play an active role in the causal network. . . These five tenets give rise to a unified and orderly hierarchy of theses of increasing strength, each successive thesis bringing with it a deeper commitment to realism (2005, pp. 2-3).

And finally, here is Michael Huemer:

> Ethical Intuitionism holds that moral properties are objective and irreducible. Thus, 'good' refers to a property that some things (perhaps actions, states of affairs, and so on) have, independently of our attitudes towards those things, and one cannot say what this property is except by using evaluative language ('good,' 'desirable,' 'should,' 'valuable,' and the like).
>
> Intuitionists also have an epistemological thesis, from which their doctrine gets its name: that at least some moral truths are known intuitively. . . As I see it, the most fundamental division in metaethics is between the intuitionists, on the one hand, and everyone else, on the other. . .[D]ualism is the idea that there are two fundamentally different kinds of facts (or properties) in the world: evaluative facts (properties) and non-evaluative facts (properties). Only the intuitionists embrace this. Everyone else is a monist: they say there is only one fundamental kind of fact in the world, and it is the non-evaluative kind; there aren't any value facts *over and above* the other facts (2005, pp. 7-8).

These philosophers all claim to be realist about value. There is overlap in their accounts. I seriously doubt that four philosophers that have thought long and hard about realism, all agreeing on whether a certain feature is required for realism, are mistaken. So I will assume that an articulation of realism should capture this overlap. That part is the easy part.

So let's imagine that a subject, John, has worked diligently to perfect a piece of music. He attains success and feels satisfied when considering his achievement. Suppose that John is a good person too, though with his imperfections, and that his achievement is not ill-gotten and that he deserves his success and that satisfaction he enjoys. Assume there will be no bad

consequences of his enjoyment. Assume that everything is as it should be. According to realism about the good, the sentence 'It is good that John is satisfied with achievement' *is meaningful*. We can imagine exactly what it would take for this sentence to express a truth. There is a proposition that corresponds to this sentence, its meaning, and it is the sort of thing that can be true or false. This sentence is not a disguised command or question. It is a straightforward declarative sentence. Furthermore, this statement, or some sentence or other that involves the predication of 'is good,' *is true*. Perhaps it is not happiness, or achievements, or satisfaction, or _____ that generates value. Perhaps it is something else. The point is that some proposition that involves predicating 'good' to something or other is true on the assumption of realism. This part of an account of realism I'm going to take for granted. No realist about value that I am aware of has ever denied these two modest tenets of realism. So if one is a realist about the good, then one accepts that certain claims like "_____ is good" are true.

For the moment, I am going to follow Ross and assume that goodness applies to objectives (1930, p. 173). The expression 'it is good that' can serve as an operator on *that*-clauses, where *that*-clauses purport to name facts that possess the property *goodness*. Facts serve as the bearers of value. The counterparts of facts are propositions, and I am going to assume that propositions are not the bearers of value. If we like, we could refer to *concrete states of affairs* as the bearers of value. So *John's enjoying his musical achievement* could be a state of affairs that can serve as a bearer of goodness instead of the fact *that John enjoys his musical achievement*. No matter. So long as it is understood that whenever evaluative statements are true, this requires that there is some sort of entity, some fact or some concrete state of affairs, that possesses value. The value bearer is not a proposition nor is it an abstract state of affairs that exists without being concrete. It is something that obtains. This means that realism requires that there be facts with

value, that is, something in the service as a truth-maker for propositions like *John is enjoying his musical achievement*. But more on this later.[2]

Now to those more controversial tenets of realism. Shafer-Landau aims to capture the objectivity of morality by claiming that moral facts, which include evaluative facts, exist independently from a "preferred perspective" or "stance" or "attitude" (2003, p. 15). He says of realists that they "believe that there are moral truths that obtain independently of any preferred perspective, in the sense that *the moral standards that fix the moral facts are not made true by virtue of their ratification from within any given actual or hypothetical perspective*" (2003, p. 15). These stances, or perspectives, are all mental states of subjects since only subjects take stances or have perspectives. On his view, then, the objectivity of value entails a kind of independence from the mental states of subjects. What it is for something to be good does not depend on the mental states of subjects. Huemer provides a similar account, while also cashing out the relevant notion of dependence. He claims that a property F-ness is subjective just in case "whether something is F *constitutively* depends at least in part on the psychological attitude or response that *observers* have or would have toward that thing" (2005, pp. 2 - 3, my emphasis). The objective properties are just those that are not subjective. He illustrates his proposal with a number of examples. Intuitively, *funniness* is subjective because whether a joke is funny depends upon whether people would be amused by the joke. *Sexiness* seems to be subjective since whether someone is sexy depends upon whether one would be found to be attractive by observers. Whether some figure is *square*, on the other hand, seems to be clearly objective since whether something is square fails to depend on the attitudes of observers.

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[2] One might wonder whether realism is committed to these truths being synthetic. I don't think they must. In the next chapter I argue that evaluative claims are knowable a priori, and that they have properties much like standard, though deep, analytic truths.

Now imagine a light that turns on, if and only if, just enough people desire that the light be on and thereby cause it to be on. Huemer's account correctly entails that *being on*, a property of the light, is objective too. Although whether the light is on causally depends on the attitudes of observers, whether the light is on does not *constitutively* so depend. On his view, a property F constitutively depends on attitudes of observers just when *what it is* for something to be F so depends upon attitudes of observers. Whereas causal dependence is often over time, or diachronic, constitutive dependence holds between facts that exist at the same time. Whereas causal dependence involves natural laws, constitutive dependence need not. Furthermore, the fact that I currently desire coffee counts as objective on Huemer's view. The presence of this attitude does not depend on the attitudes of *observers* even though this is an attitude of a subject. Thus, there can be objective facts about the mental states of subjects. This seems exactly right.

This way of cashing out independence is initially quite plausible, though it also seems to entail that Divine Command Theory or (DCT) is a subjectivist view.[3] DCT entails, for example, that whether an act is right or good constitutively depends on whether God approves, or would approve of the act. But it's not obvious that this is a good consequence. Rather, it would seem that theism provides an account of the source of value. Theists take themselves, if I have interpreted them correctly, to be worshipping the greatest good when worshipping God. In some sense, then, given that evaluative facts are fixed by something other than *our* attitudes, DCT would seem to count as an objective account of value. But perhaps we can avoid this worry if God were not free to approve of just anything, but was rather compelled (or constrained) by his nature to approve of only the good. Then the moral status of an act could constitutively depend

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[3] Shafer-Landau (2003) considers this worry for his own view and says that "we can place such theories as we like," while suggesting that the taxonomy of divine command theory isn't an important concern. Perhaps. The question is interesting nonetheless.

on what God wills, but what God wills would constitutively depend on his nature which is not at all up to God. This might not be such a bad consequence after all. This addition to DCT would permit the evaluative status of an act to be perfectly objective, with a slight finesse, since a nature is not a subjective feature like an attitude or stance. Natures are not themselves mental states and which nature a subject has is not up to the subject. This would mean that those facts upon which the good would *ultimately* depend could not be some arbitrary mental state of a subject, even God. This point can be generalized to other agents too, *ideal agents* if you like, without any theological presuppositions. We can amend Huemer's proposal to say that F-ness is subjective just in case whether something is F *ultimately* constitutively depends at least in part on the psychological attitudes or responses that observers have, or would have toward that thing which is F.

There are more important worries to consider. Should realism about value entail the falsity of nominalism about properties? If there are no properties, only sets or classes of individuals, then there are no evaluative properties. Given Huemer's way of stating realism in terms of properties, nominalism and realism are incompatible. There is an easy fix here. We can, again, *if we like*, draw the distinction between the subjective and objective in terms of facts or states of affairs. On this view, a fact would be subjective whenever its existence ultimately constitutively depends on the attitudes of observers, or on the attitudes that observers would have towards that fact. But what should we say of the fact *that I am currently being carefully observed by my bartender*? Suppose this is a fact. It certainly looks to be objective. In general, relational facts of the form [X takes attitude A towards Y] look to be objective even though their existence constitutively depends on the attitude of an observer, namely, the individual X that is a constituent of the fact. But Huemer's account seems to deliver the wrong verdict in such cases

because this fact about *me* constitutively depends on whether an observer is carefully observing me. Huemer considers a similar case and responds to it. Here is his case:

> Admittedly, my definition does not tell the whole story. We are more likely to call 'Jon Stewart is funny' *subjective* than 'Jon Stewart is well-liked,' even though both sentences describe people's attitudes towards John Stewart. Perhaps the difference is that only the former sentence superficially appears to attribute a non-relational property to Stewart; since 'liked' is the past participle of 'like,' the latter sentence *explicitly* refers to an attitude towards Stewart (2005, p. 255ff).

This case directs us to a general problem for those accounts of objectivity advanced by Huemer, Oddie, and Shafer-Landau. The property *being well-liked* is like *being carefully observed*. They are both objective and, in some sense, the expressions that pick these properties out are implicitly relational. Each of these properties also constitutively depends for its instantiation on some subject's mental states, and so the above accounts of subjectivity incorrectly count these properties as subjective. Moreover, I am happy to grant that *funniness* seems to be a subjective property, and also that, though *funniness* and *likedness* are both implicitly relational, *likedness* is more obviously relational than funniness. This is because the expression 'is well-liked' is elliptical for 'is well-liked by *x*' where the value of '*x*' is determined contextually, whereas the expression 'is funny' is not likewise elliptical. Rather, the expression 'is funny' seems to attribute a non-relational property to Jon Stewart. Perhaps *funniness* purports to pick out an intrinsic property of Stewart that, when certain conditions are present, would cause others to be amused. What is important is that these facts fail to account for the inclination to treat 'Jon Stewart is well-liked' as objective.

Let's consider a different pair of sentences for a contrast. We are likely to call the sentences 'Jon Stewart is considered to be funny by Liberals' and 'Jon Stewart is well-liked by

Liberals' to be both objective and true. These statements are explicitly relational. Moreover, whether the relevant relation these sentences specify obtains does not constitutively depend on the attitudes of observers, namely, observers that are not related *by the relation specified in these sentences*. So these relational facts do not constitutively depend on relevant observers and so these sentences count as objective on Huemer's view. Or so I assume. One might think that 'Jon Stewart is well-liked' gets confused with its objective counterpart because it is elliptical for some suitable relational statement, whereas there is no suitable objective counterpart for 'Jon Stewart is funny.' Either way this explanation cannot be right. Why shouldn't we rather say that 'Jon Stewart is funny' expresses an objective fact because its analysis entails that it is, in fact, a relational fact like 'John Stewart is well-liked by Liberals'? Perhaps we simply need a different example of a subjective property. I think this is what we should say. Moreover, since *funniness* is a dispositional property, and dispositional terms are often used to pick out both the intrinsic categorical base of a property and also the base together with enabling conditions which involve relations to other things, it is no surprise that *funniness* gets incorrectly counted as subjective. For it superficially appears to be intrinsic and only after analysis do we see that it is not. The only objective property in its vicinity would be the intrinsic categorical base for this dispositional property, if there is such a base. And it appears that only intrinsic properties would count as objective. Here's the rub: satisfying both of these constraints is impossible on a view like Huemer's.[4] No intrinsic property can count as subjective if subjectivity requires constitutive dependence on things other than the possessor of the property. And yet, all candidate relational properties fail to count as subjective since these relations do not constitutively depend on the attitudes of people not related by the relation. Typically, whether a relation is instantiated is

[4] The same problem can be raised for Oddie's (2005) and Shafer-Landau's (2003) accounts mentioned earlier.

perfectly objective. So it appears that Huemer's et. al's accounts of objectivity take subjectivity off the map. If not, they make the notion of subjectivity apply only to terms, or to ways of picking out objective properties. But surely, whether some property is subjective cannot depend on how that property is described, and surely some properties are subjective. For example, it cannot turn out that 'people like Stewart' is objective whereas 'Stewart is liked by people' is subjective. Since an account of realism requires an account of objectivity, we need a different account of objectivity to adequately capture realism about value.

People can reasonably disagree about whether Stewart is funny, but this is not the case for whether he is well-liked. A simple opinion poll would suffice to settle the latter question, but not the former. Reasonable disagreement of this sort is one mark of subjectivity and objective claims look like they can be settled. Whether *sushi tastes good* is clearly subjective but whether *I like the taste of sushi* is clearly objective. The latter is objective though it involves a fact about a subject's mental states. So *x's tasting good* and *y's liking the taste of x* cannot be equivalent. The problem lies in the fact that 'sushi tastes good' purports to pick out a *general* fact, whereas 'I like the taste of sushi' purports to pick out a *particular* fact about my preferences. A simple question could establish whether I like sushi, and similarly, a poll can establish whether sushi is well-liked. On the other hand, no such poll could establish the purported general fact that sushi tastes good. This is because *there is no general fact about whether sushi tastes good*. The subjectivity that pervades whether sushi tastes good prevents there being such a fact. There are only appropriately related particular facts about who enjoys sushi. This suggests an account of subjectivity:

The property *being F* is subjective, if and only if, (1) there is no general fact of the form X is F simpliciter, and (2) there could be particular facts of the form X is G and Y is not-G at the same time (where G is a psychological state appropriately related to F).

For instance, there is no general fact of the form [Sushi *tastes good*], there are only particular facts of the form [Sushi *tastes good to John*] and [Sushi does not *taste good to Smith*]. Here F = *tastes good* and G = *tastes good to x*, for some substitution of an individual on '*x*.' When these conditions hold the constituent property in these facts is a subjective property. An objective property is then one that is not subjective. Note that this account classifies *being well-liked* as objective. What of *being funny*? The answer is that it depends. If there is some general fact about whether Jon Stewart is funny simpliciter, some fact that is independent of particular facts about whether people find him to be funny, this fact is objective. If not, then not. This account simply does not tell us which is the case, and this is good since it is clearly unclear whether *funniness* is objective. It is unclear whether 'is funny' purports to pick out a different property than *being found to be funny by some relevant group*. Any account of subjectivity that entailed that *being funny* clearly is, or clearly is not objective, would thus be suspect.

Moore aimed to establish realism about value by first establishing that there is *intrinsic* value (1922). He believed this would establish value's objectivity since vindicating the objectivity of value would go part way towards vindicating its reality. On his conception of intrinsic value, such value could be possessed by its bearer in complete isolation from anything else, which includes observers and their attitudes. Such value could not then constitutively depend on other things. Assuming a view like Huemer's, were there intrinsic value, then, it would follow that there is objective value too. So Moore's project meshes rather nicely with the

account of objectivity defended by Huemer et. al. However, I am suggesting that this natural conception of objectivity is mistaken. But this consequence is good for realists about intrinsic value for it opens up conceptual room for the possibility that intrinsic value may remain objective even were it to depend for its instantiation on the attitudes of subjects. It might even depend on other things too, for example, natural or normative laws. Perhaps the good even depends on a God. This is not to say that the intrinsic value of some X depends on the attitudes of some observers of X. Rather, it is to say that if I am right, the correct account of objectivity does not preclude there from being intrinsic value that depends on the attitudes of observers.

This result is nice for other reasons. On a plausible conception of properties, non-fundamental properties are all *conceptual* in nature, whereas fundamental properties are all *physical* in nature.[5] So if intrinsic value is non-fundamental because it depends - in some yet to be spelt out sense of 'depends' - on the physical, then evaluative properties are conceptual. If the existence of concepts constitutively depends on the attitudes of subjects, intrinsic value would then depend on the attitudes of subjects too. On one view regarding the application conditions for certain concepts (non-singular, non-demonstrative), concepts such as *intrinsic goodness* depend for their application conditions on the *intuitions* of competent thinkers. Whether some object O satisfies the concept *chair* or *star*, for example, will depend on whether certain thinkers would intuit, in the right conditions, that O is a chair or a star. I suggest that we align these views with an account of properties according to which all non-fundamental properties are conceptual, whereas concepts are satisfied by things and their fundamental properties. The upshot: if this view is tenable and value is real, then *being intrinsically good* is a property no less real than *being a chair*, whereas both of these properties are jointly conceptual and satisfied by things that

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[5] *Consciousness* is plausibly a third kind of property. See Chalmers (1996).

instantiate only fundamental universals. Very roughly, future physics will tell us what there is beyond us, whereas examination of the way that we specify the objects and properties of physics will exhaust the rest of reality. Exactly this view has already been defended,[6] but I will fill this account out in the next chapter.

In addition to its objectivity, realism is committed to the *irreducibility* of value. Though I will return to this topic later, we need to have an initial, albeit rough gloss on the table with which to work. There are, at minimum, two kinds of account that need to be considered and each account permits two permutations. On one account of reduction, the concept *intrinsic goodness* is not reducible to non-evaluative concepts. This concept is distinct from non-evaluative concepts. On another account, goodness is a *universal* that is genuinely "out there" and it cannot be identified with non-evaluative universals. This universal is not identical to other non-evaluative universals. The standard account of reduction entails that reducibility itself guarantees identity. In both of these cases, however, if value is indeed irreducible, then intrinsic value is numerically distinct from those features that describe everyday objects, i.e. goodness is different from these features by way of being a different kind of concept, or else a different kind of universal. This is one core notion behind the claim that value is irreducible. Sometimes this core claim is put as follows: a feature F is irreducible just in case whether something is F is a fact *over and above* any fact of some specified kind. In this case, whether something is good is a fact over and above any fact of some specified non-evaluative kind. And yet, sometimes matters are put differently: in order to understand what goodness *is* it will never be enough to list the non-evaluative facts and their interrelations to one another because something will always be left out, namely, the evaluative facts. Intrinsic goodness does not *consist in* something non-evaluative. On

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[6] Heller (2008) defends *Conventionalism* about non-fundamental entities including material objects.

this way of putting things, then, what value consists in cannot be accounted for by way of enumerating non-evaluative features or facts.

There is another strand of reductionism. On this second view, the concept *intrinsic goodness* is determined by, or settled by, some non-evaluative concepts. Since determination is asymmetric, we do not have identity. Identity is, whereas determination is not, a symmetric relation. On the other side of the coin, the universal *intrinsic goodness* is determined by non-evaluative universals. Again, in this case the facts about intrinsic value go over and beyond the facts that determine, or settle them. In the first instance, the relevant facts are conceptual in nature, whereas in the second instance, the relevant facts are not. This gives us four kinds of reductionism corresponding to two types of entity being reduced, and also to two kinds of relations that play the reducing role. Which, if any of these forms of reduction, is the realist about value committed to rejecting?

Moore's "Open Question" argument aimed to establish that intrinsic goodness is conceptually simple and unanalyzable (1903, pp. 12-17). He claimed this concept was neither analyzable in terms of non-evaluative concepts, nor that it was a conjunction of different concepts. In short, he thought his argument showed that intrinsic goodness was irreducible in the first sense. The concept goodness is not identical to other non-evaluative concepts. But did he establish this claim? He certainly came close. Moore asked us to consider some natural property and then to ask whether it is good? For example, is pleasure good? Though he agreed that pleasure is often good, he went on to claim that affirming that pleasure is good is to affirm no trivial truth. But, of course, to affirm *that pleasure is pleasure* would be to affirm a trivial truth. So it couldn't be that pleasure is strictly identical to goodness, for the one truth is trivial, whereas the other is not. This argument was supposed to generalize: for any putative natural feature, the

good is not strictly identical to it. Thus, the good is non-natural and goodness cannot be reducible to the natural. That was the argument.

This argument assumes that if concepts X and Y are identical, then on reflection one can tell that X = Y. Perhaps this is because the very nature of a concept is given to us in intuition, or on reflection. However, one very large problem with Moore's argument is that different concepts might be satisfied by the same individual, or by the same property. For example, if we take the singular concept 'Socrates' alongside the concept 'the actual teacher of Plato' it could be an open question whether these concepts are satisfied by the same thing. They *are* both satisfied by Socrates, but it doesn't follow that we cannot identify Socrates with Socrates. For this reason, Moore did not establish that if goodness is a universal, that goodness is not identical to some natural universal. Moreover, Moore assumed that whether something is good is determined by its intrinsic nature. So on the second account of reducibility, Moore agreed that facts about goodness are reducible to non-evaluative facts. And yet Moore did not carefully distinguish between universals and concepts. Both sorts of entity can be expressed by a predicate in a language, but they are nonetheless quite different. Traditionally, universals have played the role of grounding objective similarities between things, entering into laws, and also grounding all other properties. Plato claimed that goodness was a universal. Concepts, on the other hand, have played the role of serving as meanings for predicates and also contents of thought. Concepts are parts of those maps by which we guide ourselves through a world occupied by universals. Thus, if there is a language-world divide, then universals clearly occupy the world's side, whereas concepts clearly occupy the other.

In different ways it was good and unfortunate that Moore conflated these properties.[7] Had he thought the good was a universal that had a corresponding concept to satisfy, his open question argument would have failed to apply to goodness. It would thus have failed to show goodness was irreducible, i.e. something over and above the non-natural. On the other hand, had Moore thought goodness to be conceptual, his argument would seem to have shown that goodness was irreducible, i.e. assuming that conceptual identities are revealed to us in intuition. On this latter view, Moore would have failed to explicate how goodness could be conceptual rather than a universal. In particular, he would have failed to explain how goodness could be objective on the assumption that goodness is a concept. Moreover, if Moore was assuming that the relevant identities would be a priori and between universals, and also that they would be easy to grasp having considered them, Moore also failed to establish the distinctness of goodness with a non-natural universal. Why on earth should we think that identities between universals would be easily grasped? There are large gaps in Moore's argument and there remains an open question regarding how to fill in these gaps.

Turning now to our last tenet of realism: In what sense must goodness be *real* for realism about value to count as true? This question is more difficult than it might appear at first glance. A truthmaker for an evaluative proposition will be an evaluative fact, and facts are presumably real by their very nature. But if to be a facts is to be real, what could claiming that value is real *add* to the claim that there are evaluative facts? In fact, there are at least three options worth considering. First, one might take reality to be graded. On this conception, corresponding to each level of dependence there is a level of reality. The fundamental facts of physics are more real

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[7] Here and throughout I use the term 'property' to pick out that which can be expressed by a predicate, be it a universal or a concept. At this point, it remains an open question whether there is some *other* kind of entity, an entity distinct from a universal or a concept, such that a predicate can pick it out. More on this later.

than chemical facts, chemical facts are more real that biological facts, biological facts are more real than sociological facts, and so on. There is a hierarchy or entities going from more to less real. Second, there is a binary conception of reality. On this view, there are fundamental facts and then there is everything else. There are two ways for things to be. There is a fundamental way of being and there is a non-fundamental way of being, but from this it does not follow that anything is more real than anything else. What follows is only that certain things are fundamental and others are not. Third, there is the view that existence is univocal. On this view, there is only way for things to be and it involves falling within the scope of the only kind of quantifier that there is, namely, the quantifier '(∃x)' of first-order logic. Some things depend on other things, and some things have the property *being fundamental* while others do not, but nothing is more or less real on account of these mundane facts. For now, when I claim that value is real I mean to claim that value is real in *at least one of these ways*. Shortly I will argue that Moore embraced a binary conception of existence and I will offer his account as one plausible metaphysics for intrinsic value.

Before considering two worries, I want to mention two departures I will be making. I am following neither Oddie nor Huemer in two important respects. First, Huemer adds an epistemological thesis to his account of realism, claiming that we can know some evaluative truths. I am keeping claims about the knowability of the evaluative separate. I am primarily interested in the metaphysics of value and I see skepticism to be a live option for the realist. Perhaps vast disagreement presents the realist with an undercutter, some reason to doubt the reliability of her evaluative beliefs, and in such a way that she cannot know evaluative truths. Perhaps skepticism is generally true. Though I do not believe either of these claims, I will not build an epistemological claim into realism about value. Realism, in my view, is a metaphysical

claim. Secondly, I take it that realism about numbers is compatible with numbers lacking causal efficacy. Belief in numbers is often regarded as suspect *precisely because* they would be causally isolated from us. For this reason I am not adding any causal thesis into realism. I do not believe that an account which claims that some X is real is any more realist for adding to this claim that X causes things to happen. But realism is a term of art the meaning of which is both partly stipulative and guided by the way the term gets used in philosophical inquiry. I don't think I'm straying too far by not including in Moorean Realism these two tenets. But if I am, I ask the reader to bracket these issues for the remainder of this book.

Summing up: realism involves a commitment to there being true claims of the form *x is good*. Those facts that make such claims true must be real, objective, universal, and not reducible to facts that are non-evaluative. Who would deny realism so construed? There are a number of alternative conceptions of value. First, the *subjectivist* is an opponent of realism. According to subjectivism, what it is for a thing to be good just is for it to be approved of, or desired by some individual. Though we value many things, nothing has value independent of its being valued by some subject. There are only facts about what is good for me and good for you, but these facts are identical to, or grounded in the preferences of subjects. I reject this view. Second, the *non-cognitivist* claims that statements of the form *x is good* fail to express a proposition. On one simple account, a sentence like 'lying is bad' means something like 'lying, yuck!' Thus, the question of the truth or falsity of evaluative claims does not arise on this view. I reject this view too. Third, the *nihilist* claims that positive evaluative claims are meaningful but always false. Perhaps this is because evaluative predicates purport to pick out an objective property, but fail to do so because there are no evaluative properties, or rather because all evaluative properties are subjective. I reject this view. Fourth, and finally, there is the naturalist. On this view, all

evaluative facts are reducible to non-evaluative facts. What it is to be good, for example, consists in nothing over and above being pleasurable. Perhaps what it is to be good is occupy a certain descriptive role. I reject this view. These options together with realism exhaust logical space and so one of these views has to be correct while the other four must be rejected. A different book would be required to argue against these alternatives.[8] Thankfully those books have been written.

2 Two Worries

One might first worry that any view of the form outlined above collapses into idealism about value. According to Oddie, *value idealism* is the view that "the goodness of a state consists in the fact that some suitable collection of valuers experience (or, under suitable conditions, would experience) it as valuable" (2005, p. 17). This is simply a sophisticated form of subjectivism. Above I claimed that the conditions under which the concept *intrinsic goodness* applies to a state of affairs is determined by the intuitions that competent and virtuous thinkers would have, in optimal conditions, about the whether concept applies. For a number of reasons this is quite unlike value idealism. The first reason is that, for all I have said, the concept *intrinsic goodness* is a simple concept. And I do believe that intrinsic goodness is simple and unanalyzable as Moore suggested, though not because of Moore's open question argument. A collection of intuitions that thinkers have, or would have, would be a complex entity. Thus, there should be no temptation to *identify* goodness with a collection of anything. So if we read 'consists in' as entailing identity, this view does not collapse into a form of value idealism. The second reason is that, for all I have argued, the relevant class of thinkers must be *specified evaluatively*. And I *do* believe that the relevant class of thinkers must be specified evaluatively. It

[8] See Huemer (2005), Shafer-Landau (2003), and Oddie (2005).

is the *virtuous* thinkers whose intuitions determine the conditions under which the concept *intrinsic goodness* applies, not just some thinker or other. A *virtuous* thinker is one that is disposed to respond fittingly. They are the sorts of people that when they see distress, they answer it, and when they acquire evidence against their view, they change their view, and when they hear of some needless suffering, they feel bad about it, and so on. The virtuous are *good* people. Though we discuss this in more detail later, *fittingness* is an evaluative notion, and so there can be no non-circular analysis of the good. In this way the application conditions for evaluative concepts are special. For all other concepts, their application conditions can be stated non-evaluatively, but when it comes to evaluative concepts, their application conditions cannot be stated non-evaluatively. For contrast, a vicious person could understand and deploy the concept *chair*, but only a virtuous person can understand and deploy the concept good. This is because part of *what it is* to be a good person is to understand evaluative concepts. This is again circular and, of course, a realist about value is committed to their being no non-circular account of value. This points us in the direction of another worry.

A different kind of worry for this view is that it collapses into a form of *reductionism* about value. Another way of understanding value idealism is as the claim that value *reduces* to mental states that valuers have towards a thing, or would have towards a thing in certain circumstances. We need not say that value *consists in* a collection of intuitions, but only that goodness is nothing over and above a collection of intuitions. Oddie (2005) claims that a necessary condition for value idealism is that some non-evaluative facts determine the evaluative facts. There could be no difference in the evaluative without a difference in the non-evaluative. This is an example of the second kind of reduction. As a matter of fact, I claim that the concept goodness is reducible in this second sense.

Is this a problem? I don't see why it would be. Evaluative properties remain distinct from physical properties. Though conceptual, the evaluative would remain fundamentally different in kind from other concepts since whether such concepts apply depends on intuitions in a very different way than other concepts. In order to specify which intuitions determine the conditions under which goodness is satisfied we must use evaluative concepts. Considering chairs provides a case in point. In some sense, the existence of a chair is determined by its parts and their arrangements. In some sense, a chair is nothing over and above its parts arranged thus-and-so. Facts about chairs and their properties are determined by underlying fundamental facts and, on a view to be developed more later, on our intuitions regarding which things count as chairs. This doesn't cast doubt on the reality of chairs. We know what we mean by 'chair' and we can say true things about chairs and can point at them and purchase them, and sit on them, and so on. These facts provide enough evidence of the reality of chair and no philosophical thesis should undermine our confidence that there are chairs. The same goes for the good.

Perhaps the worry is instead that these underlying facts about chairs explain all the relevant facts there are to be explained, and so chairs would be idle. Maybe the idea would then be that idleness is a sign of unreality. This second form of reduction might then entail that the reduced entity is not real (or less real) because the reducing base contains all the information that is needed to explain the contribution a purported chair makes to reality. We will return this worry later. For now, if the way in which chairs or goodness exist is fundamentally different than the way in which their underlying fundamental facts exist, then it's unclear how we can even state the reducibility claim in question. For whenever an instance of 'x reduces to y' is true, both x and y must fall within the scope of the same quantifier. They do not on this view. Second, such reduction would prove too much. In some sense the biological is explained by the chemical

which is explained by the physical, but this is no reason to deny the explanatory power of the various natural sciences. So something has to have gone wrong.

There are other worries, but I will save them for the next chapter.

Chapter 2

G. E. Moore's Realism

0 Introduction

In this chapter I present and defend a form of realism about intrinsic goodness that is an extension of the account outlined in the last chapter. Though it is inspired by claims found in the Moorean corpus, this version of realism was never explicitly defended by Moore. Nonetheless, it approximates a view that Moore, I believe, would likely have found to be congenial during his early career. It is interesting too. It is interesting because certain theses advanced by Moore are derided among modern philosophers. Some of these theses are derided for good reason, though one of his central theses, *Meinongianism*, has enjoyed a revival in metaphysics. It is not at all clear that this view, when properly articulated, is mistaken. When tweaked and wedded to other Moorean views it even provides us with an interesting version of realism. That said, though I defend this form of realism, I neither accept nor reject it. There are alternative conceptions of the metaphysics of value that strike me to be just as plausible. It is enough that there are no objections to this account that are persuasive. Or so I think. Towards capturing Moore's idiosyncratic views and presenting a novel and, I think, very interesting account of realism about intrinsic value, what follows is a presentation and defense of *Moorean Realism*.

Here then is the plan: In section 1 will outline claims that can be found in Moore's *Principia Ethica* (1903) and his "The Conception of Intrinsic Value" (1922). These claims form an altogether odd conception of intrinsic value. Then I contrast these claims with a view

standardly attributed to Moore. These views stand in tension and are in need of resolution. I try to resolve this tension. I provide a background metaphysics which entails that there are different ways for things to be, which in turn requires that there are not *merely* different kinds of properties for things to have (a very uncontroversial claim), but that there are different basic existential quantifiers. In section 2 I consider two objections. The first objection questions how application conditions for the concept *intrinsic goodness* can be stated on the hypothesis that there is no universal that satisfies the concept. The second objection questions our ability to acquire the concept *intrinsic goodness* were there no universal goodness, nor an analysis of goodness in terms of concepts satisfied by universals with which we can be directly acquainted. How can we acquire a concept X if there is no property that we are aware of that satisfies X? In section 3 I extend this account to *degrees* of goodness. Interestingly, Moore thought that goodness was on a par with numbers. Though he claimed that 2 + 2 = 4 and that knowledge is good, he denied that numbers or goodness exist. He took numbers and the good *to be* in a similar way, though without *existing* at all. I offer an account that allows us to make sense of this idea. Accordingly, numbers and the good are conceptual entities, but they are no less real on account of this fact. The upshot is that even if this account is mistaken, and it very well might be, there are modest variations to it that are realist, Moorean in spirit, and quite plausible.

1 Was Moore a Moorean?

Moore was interested in metaphysics and ethics, and though he did a great deal to present a compelling metaphysics to service his ethics, at places his metaphysics was unclear. For example, though Moore was purportedly a realist about value, (1) *he denied that goodness exists* (1903, p. 110). Though Moore claimed that various things have intrinsic value, (2) *he denied that*

goodness is an intrinsic property (1965, p. 272 ff.). Though Moore claimed that knowledge and beauty are intrinsically good, (3) *he denied that goodness describes anything whatsoever* (1965, p. 272 ff.). As a consequence, though many things possess intrinsic value, intrinsic value is not actually intrinsic, neither does it describe its possessor as predicates (or properties) are taken to do, and goodness does not actually exist in the first place. At first blush, the conjunction of these claims sounds more like a form of anti-realism about value than it does a form of realism. But if they do not suffice for anti-realism, the following claim certainly seems to suffice: Moore claimed that (4) having enumerated all the non-evaluative properties of a thing one will have thereby enumerated *all* of its properties. We could give a complete description of *absolutely everything in reality without ever mentioning value* (1965, p. 272 ff.). These odd claims are rarely noticed, but Moore still gets touted as a realist, even a paradigmatic realist in many circles. I think we should pause to revisit Moore's view and to consider these neglected claims to see whether attributing realism to Moore is plausible.

To be clear, my primary interest is not exegesis of Moore's works, but rather in whether some realist conception of intrinsic value that approximates Moore's own account is compatible with certain views in metaphysics. Let's consider one of these views. Some metaphysicians have argued that derivative entities, namely those entities that inherit their existence from more fundamental entities, are either *less real* or *differently real from* the entities on which they depend. Let's call this kind of view 'Different Ways To Be' or (DWTB).

(DWTB) Necessarily, if X non-causally depends on Y (or the Ys), then (1) X and Y are real, but (2) X is real in a different way than Y is real.

The variables 'X' and 'Y' will range over facts, and I will ignore the complication that one entity can depend on many entities. Dependence need not be a one-to-one relation, but for simplicity I will talk as if it is such a relation. This account remains silent on whether X's non-causally depending on Y suffices for X's consisting in nothing over and above Y, or whatever Y consists in. Moreover, I will assume that non-causal dependence is asymmetric. Thus, 'X' and 'Y' must range over distinct facts. Finally, by 'necessarily' I mean what philosophers label as metaphysical necessity: it is necessity of the strongest kind.

There are two permutations of this view. According to the first, dependence introduces a *graded* conception of reality. So when X depends on Y, X is *less real than* Y. This is one central idea behind reduction. Whenever X reduces to Y, X is determined by, and so depends on Y. To the extent that reduced entities are to be counted as "second-class" citizens of reality, this first permutation captures this thought. According to the second permutation, dependence does not introduce a graded conception of reality, but rather a *bivalent* conception. Dependence guarantees there being different kinds of reality. This sounds odd, but the idea isn't new. It entails that there are different ways for things to be, but not that any one thing is more real than anything else. Importantly, these views are both compatible with there being existence *simpliciter*, i.e. a most general way for something to be. What these accounts reject is not that there is such a notion, but rather that ways of being are mere restrictions on this notion. In particular, both of these ways of understanding DWTB entail that particular ways of being are more basic, or more fundamental than existence *simpliciter* (if there even is such a thing). Before considering a natural alternative to these accounts, I want to dwell on DWTB a bit longer.

Accounts like DWTB have won many defenders[1]. Let's consider non-evaluative examples to illustrate the proposal. Chairs and tables have been suggested to be less real than those particles that compose them. Perhaps when chairs and particles stand in a "special" relation to one another, in this case a *composition* relation, entities on one side of this relation turn out to be *less real* than entities on the other side of this relation. Maybe there is a class of building relations that have the following feature: whenever some entities stand in one of these building relations to one another at least one of these entities is less real than the other. Such relations serve to generate new entities from others, but the claim is that, when they do so, those generated entities are less real than the materials by which they are built.

Perhaps numbers and sets are *differently real* from any minds that contemplate them, while minds are differently real from any brains that embody them. To enjoy one kind of reality may require having causal powers, whereas for other kinds of reality the presence of causal powers would be irrelevant. In this way, there are marks of those different ways of being that entities can enjoy: having causal powers partitions one class of entity from those that lack this mark. Descartes famously claimed that God exists in a different way than His creatures. Maybe his thought was that infinite beings are more real than finite beings. Entities with natures of such different kinds, one perfect and the other imperfect, are such that they must exist in ways as different as those kinds that distinguish them. And the examples can and have been multiplied.[2]

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[1] See Turner (2010), Fine (2010), McDaniel (2009), and Sider (2012) have all defended views in the neighborhood of DWBT. For example, Fine claims that the fundamental is real, whereas what depends on the fundamental is not real but merely factual. McDaniel argues that there are different fundamental ways of being that correspond to different fundamental quantifiers, and that these fundamental ways of being are more fundamental than existence *simpliciter*. Sider argues that only the fundamental is real and that claims about the non-fundamental are not true simpliciter, but only true-in-english. These accounts share a common core: that existence is a rather complicated notion.

[2] See McDaniel (2009).

The guiding idea throughout these examples is that there are different ways for a thing *to be* where some of these ways are more fundamental than other ways for things to be, or are instead simply fundamentally different. This view should not sound *that* strange. A quick poll confirms that this kind of view is found to be intuitive by many presented with it that do not already have an opinion on the matter. That's worth something in my book.

Let's now consider an alternative view. On this alternative, there is only one way for a thing to be and it involves *existing*. Some things exist and other purported entities do not, but there are not different kinds of existence, there are simply different kinds of properties that existing things can have. This view entails that existence is univocal so let's call it 'Univocal Existence' or (UE).

(UE) Necessarily, an entity X *exists* $=_{df.}$ X falls within the scope of the unrestricted existential quantifier '$(\exists x)$' of first-order logic.

We can express purported ways of being as restrictions on '$(\exists x)$.' In this framework we can say all of the same things that defenders of DWTB want to say without further commitment to ways of being. For example, let '$(\exists x_f)$' mean *there is fundamentally an x such that*, and let '$(\exists x)$' mean *there is unrestrictedly an x such that*. Here is a simple definition: $(\exists x_f)\ (x = y) =_{df}$ $(\exists x)\ (x = y)$ & x is fundamental. To exist fundamentally is simply to exist and to be fundamental. If one permits unrestricted quantifiers and the property of *being fundamental*, one should accept that this definition states at least a necessary truth, which would leave us with a decision: we either accept the fundamental quantifier to be more basic or accept the predicate 'is fundamental' to be more basic. Both are inter-definable, but presumably only one of these definitions can be

correct. Moreover, even Moore was open to the claim that "the words 'being' and 'existence' do stand for two entirely different properties" (1953, p. 300).

It should be noted that UE and DWTB are empirically equivalent. There is no observation that one could have that would settle which of these theses is true. Though it is true that something must exist for us to observe it, we do not observe the property being real, nor particular ways of existing like *being fundamentally real* if such there be. It should also be noted that which of these theses is true is substantive and not verbal. Either there are different ways to exist and some of these ways are more fundamental than their corresponding properties, or else this is not the case. Furthermore, though UE posits one fundamental quantifier, DWTB posits many. One thing UE has going for it is *simplicity*. If simplicity counts in favor of a theory for being indicative of truth, then it provides UE with an advantage over DWTB. But two things: this advantage would be negligible and it is unclear whether simplicity is indicative of truth. For if the world is simple, then it is, but if the world is not simple, then simplicity is not indicative of truth. So appeals to simplicity make an immodest assumption about the way the world is, and whether the world is such that UE, a simpler account, is true, or whether DWTB, a slightly more complex account, is true, is what is at issue. In any case, which of these views should Moore have adopted given his other commitments?

In order to answer this question we need to discuss Moore's background views. The good on Moore's view possessed a strange status given that Moore gets cited as a paradigmatic realist about intrinsic value. As I mentioned, Moore explicitly denied that goodness exists, though he affirmed that whether a thing is intrinsically good follows from the intrinsic nature of its bearer. Here is that crucial Moorean passage:

> 'Metaphysicians' have, therefore, the great merit of insisting that our knowledge is not confined to things which we can touch and see and feel. They have always been much occupied, not only with that other class of natural objects which consists in mental facts, but also with the class of objects or properties of objects, which certainly do not exist in time, are not therefore parts of Nature, and which, in fact, do not *exist* at all. To this class, as I have said, belongs what we mean by the adjective 'good' (1903, p. 110).

There is confirmation for the text above: "I used to hold very strongly, what many other people are also inclined to hold, that the words 'being' and 'existence' do stand for two entirely different properties; and that though everything which exists must also 'be,' yet many things which 'are' nevertheless do emphatically *not* exist" (1953, p. 300). Moore thought that there are different ways *to be* and that goodness *is* in one way, but does not *exist* in another. He says something importantly stronger in this passage too, namely, that existence can be contrasted with being. Natural objects and their properties *exist* and they are the sort of things we can observe, but goodness *is* and cannot be observed. Again, Moore confirms this claims: "[A]ny truth which asserts 'This is good in itself' is quite unique in kind - that it cannot be reduced to any assertion about reality, and therefore must remain unaffected by any conclusions we reach about the nature of reality" (1903, p. 114). What an odd thing to say given that Moore claimed that whether a thing is good follows from facts about its intrinsic nature, where these further facts *are* about reality. For how can a fact follow from another fact that is about reality without also, *ipso facto,* being about reality itself? Recently, Drier has suggested that "Moore's claim that Good does not exist has no significance except as a historical curiosity" (2006, p. 197). First, the *Principia* was written against the backdrop of a dominant Meinongianism in the late 1800's and early 1900's in England. It's no surprise he adopted this view. Second, Moore later rejected the claim goodness does not exist and claimed that the distinction between *existence* and *being* rests on a confusion.

Nevertheless, I think Moore's early view has more significance than Drier seems to think. Perhaps the earlier Moore was right and the later Moore mistaken.

Moore claimed that knowledge and beauty are both intrinsically good, and so he was committed to there being true propositions of the form [x is good] and [x is intrinsically good]. He said a number of positive things about goodness too. Famously, he claimed that *intrinsic goodness* is a simple non-natural property that depends only on the intrinsic nature of its bearer for its possession. Whether something possesses this property, on his view, was given to us in intuition. Given that it is intrinsic, this kind of goodness can be had in isolation from anything else. Given that it's non-natural, it is not the sort of property that can be discovered empirically. The natural properties, for Moore, were the sorts of properties to be studied within the hard sciences. As for the simplicity of the good, Moore was not clear on the matter. Moore conflated the claim that the concept *goodness* is unanalyzable with the claim that the property *goodness* lacked complexity, or parts. As I mentioned earlier, he did not clearly distinguish concepts from universals. Moore also claimed that the fact that something is good follows from its nature, where the *following from* relation is not logical consequence. These claims, minus the claim that goodness does not exist, constitute the standard view attributed to Moore.

But Moore said other things that do not fit well with this standard view. He denied that when we say something is good, that goodness *describes* the thing in question.

> I can only vaguely express the kind of difference I feel there to be by saying that intrinsic properties seem to *describe* the intrinsic nature of what possesses them in a sense in which predicates of value never do. If you could enumerate *all* the intrinsic properties a given thing possessed, you would have given a *complete* description of it, and would not need to mention any predicates of value it possessed; whereas no description of a given thing could be *complete* which omitted any intrinsic property (1963, p. 272 ff.).

After citing just this passage, Drier rightly asks: "What do you call a metaethicist who maintains the following theses? (1) Ethical terms do not reduce to non-ethical ones. (2) 'Good' is not the name for any natural property. (3) Ethical statements are not about reality. (4) Ethical statements do not describe anything." He goes on to suggest that "[w]ithout further information, we would probably conclude that he is an Expressivist" (2006, p. 205). Indeed we would. Drier hesitantly concludes that Moore was a "proto-expressivist." However, we should avoid attributing expressivism to Moore. Expressivism claims that statements of the form [x is good] all lack truth-values, but Moore claimed that we can have moral knowledge. Knowledge requires truth. So expressivism is not an option.

There is one final Moorean commitment that it is important to highlight. Moore claimed that whether something is good follows from its intrinsic nature. A thing's intrinsic value depends on the non-evaluative properties a thing possesses. In responding to a criticism of C. D. Broad's, Moore said:

> It is true, indeed, that I should never have thought of suggesting that goodness was 'non-natural,' unless I had supposed that it was 'derivative' in the sense that, whenever a thing is good (in the sense in question) its goodness (in Mr. Broad's words) 'depends on the presence of certain non-ethical characteristics' possessed by the thing in question. I have always supposed that it did so 'depend,' in the sense that, if a thing is good (in my sense), then that it is so *follows* from the fact that it possesses certain natural intrinsic properties, which are such that from the fact that it is good it does *not* follow conversely that has those properties (1968, p. 588).

Drier calls this passage a 'hermeneutical disaster,' but it is not (2006, p. 203). Clearly, Moore thought that facts about goodness one-way *supervene*, though non-analytically, on perfectly natural facts. Fix all the fundamental facts of a thing, and you thereby fix its intrinsic value. However, we can fix a thing's intrinsic value and we have not thereby fixed the natural.

Goodness *follows from* these underlying facts in this sense. Given that Moore's open question argument attempted to establish that we can understand any individual natural fact without being able to deduce, on the basis of the concepts involved in understanding these facts, that the thing in question is good, we arrive at a *synthetic* necessity. Moore was simply dubious of such necessities, but felt compelled to admit them on the basis of his ethics and metaphysical views. Indeed, this is now a common view among evaluative realists.

Can we make sense of these, or at least a large body of these Moorean claims in a plausible way. We can manage this by distinguishing different ways of being such that value exists in one way, whereas that which gives rise to value exists in another. That is, we appeal to DWTB and then flesh it out. In particular, we do this by distinguishing between more and less fundamental ways of being, and then by identifying value's existence as less fundamental. This way we capture Moore's claim that value is derivative. Since these ways of being are not reducible to one another, we can uphold the irreducibility of value which Moore hoped to establish by way of his open question argument. Something can be less fundamental than another without reducing to it. Most controversially, we can then identify evaluative properties with *concepts*. On one plausible account, the application conditions for a concept are determined by the intuitions that competent thinkers that possess the concept have, or would have in optimal conditions. I suggest that the application conditions for evaluative concepts, unlike other concepts, are just those that *virtuous* thinkers would apply in optimal conditions. In this way we preserve the objectivity of intrinsic value and go some way towards making sense of Moore's claim that predicates of value do not describe. If these theses are plausible, we have in hand a novel account of realism that is compatible with much of what Moore wanted to say.

This account needs to be filled out. In particular, how should we develop DWTB? Consider the predicate 'is healthy' and various situations in which we might be inclined to use it.[3] We might say that I am healthy, that my heart is healthy, or that spinach is healthy. Running and rock climbing are both healthy activities, or that some people have healthy appetites. According to McDaniel, these cases present us with a common property, and what it is in virtue of which this property is possessed differs from one case to another (2009, p. 294). Running is a healthy activity in virtue of its leading to properly functioning lungs or bodies, spinach is healthy in virtue of the fact that its consumption thwarts the onset of cancers, and people are healthy when their bodies are strong and free from mental and physical illnesses. And yet, *healthiness* is no mere disjunction of these properties, instead it is unified in a way that mere disjunctions are not. There is something its instances have in common, but the disjuncts of disjunctions need have nothing in common. McDaniel calls such properties *analogous* properties and then argues that *existence*, along with healthiness, elegance, and flexibility, is among the analogous properties. He calls this view of existence 'Ontological Pluralism.' Accordingly, there are fundamentally different ways to exist where these different ways are unified. One might add to this view, though McDaniel does not, that although these ways of existing are unified, existence *simpliciter* is a less fundamental determinable of its more fundamental determinates. That is, though he claims that each way of existing is fundamental and that generic existence is less fundamental, he denies that the relation between generic existence and these particular ways of existing is an instance of the determinable/determinate relation. This is because he thinks that in general determinables and their determinates are equally natural, whereas particular ways of existing are more natural than

[3] This example is taken from McDaniel (2010).

generic existence. If two properties are equally natural, on his view, it follows that they are equally fundamental. I will not be making this assumption.

How do we motivate this view? McDaniel offers three motivations: one theological, one phenomenological, and another ontological. God is claimed to exist in a different way from his creatures, and perhaps because God is infinite and his creatures mere finite shadows. Secondly, a number of philosophers have claimed that different ways of being are given immediately to us in experience, and perhaps this was Meinong's view. Because these justifications are clearly unsatisfactory, I will set them to the side. The third consideration is more interesting. Call a property that applies to things across ontological categories 'topic-neutral.' We can ask of topic-neutral features whether they are analogous. According to McDaniel, for some features, there is pressure to answer affirmatively. He offers the parthood relation as a case. Parthood applies to concrete and abstract things, but according to McDaniel, its logic changes from domain to domain. When applied to facts we have a non-extensional logic for parthood and when applied to regions of space-time we have an extensional logic. His view is that a generic parthood relation is less natural than its domain specific instances and that *existence*, like this generic parthood relation, is no mere disjunction of its instances because there is a unity across them.

But are there motivations for applying this view to *existence*? The dynamic view of time according to which tense properties are real and cannot be reduced to tenseless relations would seem to require two related existence relations: existence simpliciter and existence at a time. These are both *ways* for things to exist. The same goes for existence at a place or at a world, if there be such ways of existing. Individuals enjoy a certain kind of existence, whereas their properties enjoy another. The Aristotelian view of universals according to which their existence *in* a thing depends on *there being* a thing in which they inhere is such a case. These are potential

examples of different ways to exist that are related. Nevertheless, I do not know how to give a convincing *argument* for the claim that there are different ways to exist. A defender of UE could attempt to analyze these candidates or to argue against them, and I have no reason to think she couldn't be successful when doing so.

However, this view is exactly what someone with Moore's commitments should accept, I think. Moore denied that goodness is an intrinsic property since he wanted to reserve that title for the basic physical properties that constitute a thing's nature. This view allows him to do this. He could restrict intrinsic properties to be those instantiated by things that exist in a fundamental way. Moore denied that goodness exists and he can do this by denying that goodness falls within the scope of a fundamental or physicalist quantifier. Though he would be denying that goodness exists in one sense of the word, he could accept that goodness exists in another sense of the word. Moore denied that goodness describes anything. This denial is more difficult to reconcile. Perhaps goodness is *a way for something to be* and not a genuine property, understood as a universal, that something can possess. Let '$(\exists x_d)$' mean *there non-fundamentally is an x such that*. Just as quantifiers do not describe anything, the quantifier '$(\exists x_d)$' does not describe anything either. And it is in virtue of falling within the scope of this quantifier that something is good, not by virtue of having a descriptive property *being good*. On the other hand, goodness is a concept that applies to things like instances of knowledge, virtue, and pleasure. So it is true that these things are good. If we interpret Moore as thinking that *describing* is a more worldly notion than mere *applying*, we can readily admit that goodness is a concept that applies even if goodness is not a universal that describes. *Goodness is a way for things to be and there is a corresponding concept that applies to states of affairs, even though goodness is not a universal instantiated by states of affairs that also describes these states of affairs.*

Are there considerations for treating goodness as conceptual rather than as a universal? I can think of a number of considerations. First, Moore thought that goodness *is*, but does not *exist*. He also suggested that goodness, like numbers, do not exist in time and that entities of this sort cannot be observed. These features hold for concepts. Thus, identifying goodness as conceptual confirms Moore's claims regarding the properties of things that *are*, but do not *exist*. Secondly, it can be vague whether people are bald, rich, happy, or tired. However, other properties do not permit vagueness in their application conditions. Here's a hypothesis about why: only *concepts* allows for vagueness because we determine their application conditions, whereas fundamental properties (universals) are never such that it is vague whether something instantiates them. Vagueness is, in some sense, in the head and not in the world outside of the head. Sometimes it is said that universals "carve nature at the joints" whereas concepts need not. One way for a property to fail to carve nature at the joints is for it to fail to clearly apply to some part or feature of nature. A vague concept just is a concept that, in a range of cases, neither clearly applies nor clearly fails to apply to some feature in the world. Yet it can be vague how intrinsically good something is as well as which of two things is better. For example, it is vague how good is a pleasurable walk on the beach and whether a pleasurable walk on the beach is intrinsically better than enjoying a good meal. This confirms the claim that goodness is conceptual. Still another argument for goodness as conceptual appeals to the notion of non-arbitrariness. Some concepts are satisfied by non-conceptual properties, namely, the fundamental concepts that are satisfied by fundamental properties like mass, charge, identity, or distance relations. Not all concepts are similarly satisfied. Purportedly gerrymandered concepts like *being a rabbit or a duck* do not have corresponding partners in the world that satisfy them. But we need some way to draw a non-arbitrary line between the concepts that do have properties in the

world that satisfy them and those concepts that do not. Here is the only principled, non-arbitrary way of managing this feat that I can imagine: a concept has a property (a *universal* out there in the world inhering in a thing) as its satisfier, if and only if, it is a fundamental concept satisfied by a fundamental property. For all other concepts, their satisfaction conditions are determined by us. This division of properties into universals and concepts allows us a simple ontology of properties. What does it take for those concepts to be satisfied if they do not have properties that fulfill the role as their satisfiers? What is it for us to determine whether some concept applies to a fundamental chunk of reality? Here is David Barnett:

> For a certain family of predicates, which I will call 'mundane,' we have very good reason to take our intuitions at face value. Predicates like 'is bald' and 'is rich' are mundane: their meanings seem shallow, transparent, and without environmental content. There appears to be nothing more to their meanings than would be reflected by our community-wide pattern of intuitions—elicited in good epistemic conditions, after careful consideration—regarding their conditions of application. This is not because intuition has a mysterious capacity for grasping meanings, but rather because what our community-wide pattern of intuitions would be plays a constitutive role in determining what the meanings of our mundane predicates are in the first place. Had our entire community been disposed to have different intuitions about the application of the predicate 'is bald,' the predicate would have expressed a different concept (2010, p. 24-25).

Concepts are the meanings of mundane predicates. On this view, there is nothing more to the application conditions for certain concepts than that some relevant thinkers would intuit that they apply in the right conditions. How is this fact connected to use, that is, to the way we use words that take these concepts as their meanings? The way we use words is *evidence* of the intuitions we have about the conditions under which the concepts expressed by words would apply in a given case. Strictly speaking, *use does not even partly determine meaning*. Use is

correlated (when speakers are sincere!) with intuitions that speakers have about whether a concept is, or would be satisfied.

Suppose this is so and that 'intrinsically good' expresses one of these mundane concepts. That is, suppose that there is no environmental content to the concept of goodness and no universal that satisfies it. This is to say that the fundamental properties do not themselves determine the conditions under which concepts apply unless the relevant concept is fundamental. Perhaps this is because the only way for the environment to determine the meaning of a predicate is to be appropriately causally related to its acquisition and goodness lacks causal efficacy. Perhaps this is rather because the only way for the environment to determine the meaning of a predicate is for it to get its meaning by way of demonstration and goodness is not a demonstrative concept. Either way, on this view, whether something satisfies the concept *intrinsically good* gets determined by whether some relevant class of thinkers does, or would intuit that this concept applies in the right circumstances, and *not* by any of the fundamental things or properties in the world, or by demonstration. Which circumstances are relevant? Circumstances in which subjects are not cognitively impaired, thus rendering their intuitions subject to error. There is thus an idealization underlying the application conditions for concepts. Concepts can be grasped better or worse, but it is the intuitions of those that grasp, or would grasp the concepts ideally that determine when and whether such concepts apply. Would such a view, if correct, threaten realism about value? Does counting intrinsic goodness among the concepts and not among the universals threaten its reality? The answer is no. Chairs are real, but have the same status as the good on this view. However, I suggested earlier that realism may be compatible with the claim that an objective property constitutively depends on some subject's mental states. Intuitions are mental states and so, on this account whether something is good

constitutively depends on mental states. Realism might seem to be threatened were I mistaken in my earlier criticism of Huemer's account of objectivity.

But realism is *not* threatened even were I incorrect. This is because the relevant class of thinkers must be *virtuous* in order for their intuitions to pick out evaluative concepts. For most meanings, competence with respect to those meanings is insensitive to the character of the thinker that grasps them. A jerk and his virtuous counterpart can understand what it takes for *being bald* or *being a chair* to apply equally well. For such concepts, character need not hinder understanding. This is not so when it comes to the good and bad. Competence with evaluative predicates requires that the thinker be a morally sensitive person for otherwise they would be disposed to have *incorrect* intuitions about the application conditions for evaluative predicates. Semantic competence requires moral sensitivity and semantic competence requires reliability. This sort of sensitivity involves intuiting that it would be bad to harm an innocent person, to ignore evidence, to laugh at another's suffering, and so on. It involves intuiting that being compassionate is good, that fairness is better than unfairness, that understanding is worth seeking, and so on. Good people know what 'good' means because what good people mean by 'good' determines its meaning.

There is a point that I have not seen made that is relevant to this hypothesis about the good, and let's call this hypothesis exactly what it is, namely, a *hypothesis*. It is sometimes said that if one knows whether φ is good, then one is motivated to promote or desire that φ be the case. Apprehension of the good motivates. I think this thought has something right about it. This claim, or a relevantly similar claim, falls out of the conceptual account of goodness rather nicely. Before I explain why, here is a relevant quote from Mackie:

> Plato's Forms give a dramatic picture of what objective values would have to be. The Form of the Good is such that knowledge of it provides the knower with both a direction and an overriding motive; something's being good tells the person who knows this to pursue it and makes him pursue it. An objective good would be sought by anyone who was acquainted with it, not because of any contingent fact that this person, or every person, is so constituted that he desires this end, but just because the end has *to-be-pursuedness* somehow built into it (1977, p. 40).

To be virtuous requires being disposed to desire the good and pursue it. Part of *what it is* for a state to constitute a virtue is for that state to involve a fitting response, and one of the more important fitting responses is to desire the good. To be good is to satisfy the concept intrinsic goodness. In order to satisfy this concept good people must intuit that the concept is so satisfied. We have a circle, as I already mentioned, but it is no vicious circle. The realist about value is committed to its irreducibility, but the Moorean about value has a story about why value is irreducible. It is irreducible because it is conceptual, and it is intuitions of virtuous people that explain why the concept is satisfied. So goodness is real even if its reality is quite different from the reality of particles. But how does the reality of value follow from the reality of the fundamental?

Here it will be useful to take a look at "donkey conditionals." Heller presents an interesting argument for the claim that non-fundamental objects are merely conventional (2008). Whenever there are particles with certain properties arranged in some pattern D, there is a donkey. This is a mundane compositional fact. Less mundane is the fact that this fact is necessary. In every world in which there are such particles with those properties and in that arrangement, there is a donkey. Heller asks: what explains this necessity? He argues that there are only two viable answers to this question. The first answer is that the necessity is brute and unexplained. The second answer, soon to be qualified, is that there is no donkey over and above the particles so arranged. If we accept the first answer, we are forced to accept (infinitely many?)

brute necessities, which should be avoided. But Heller argues *that there are no donkeys*. That is, there are no composite objects that are donkeys since all there is is the fundamental. Nonetheless, Heller claims that we can give an adequate account of how this donkey proposition could be true in a world where there are no donkeys. It is here that donkey conditionals show their face. Here is Heller:

> The universe, as things actually are, can be completely described without mentioning, for instance, donkeys. I leave out nothing by not mentioning donkeys. This sounds more daring than it is. I do not deny that there are donkeys. The English sentence "there are donkeys" is true. This is compatible with my claim that the minimal description is complete, because "there are donkeys" is part of a higher level description of those same facts that can be described more minimally. . . An axiom might look something roughly like this: whatever that arrangement of fundamental particles is (gesturing in the direction of a donkey), a donkey is present whenever fundamental properties are arranged sufficiently like that. . . What accounts for the impossibility of particles arranged in pattern D without the presence of a donkey? The answer is that we have a linguistic convention governing the word 'donkey,' a convention with the consequence that whenever particles are arranged in pattern D, their being so arranged can be described with the sentence "a donkey is there." There are not two metaphysically isolated facts that need to be connected by some necessarily true conditional. Instead there is one fact, a fact about the distribution of fundamental properties, that can be described in a minimal language that includes terms referring to fundamental properties and to locations but does not include the term 'donkey' and can also be described in a more practical language that does include the term 'donkey' (2008, p. 89).

Suppose we are worried, like Moore was worried, about the existence of synthetic necessities. We should thus be worried about the fact that whenever there are particles with fundamental properties arranged in pattern G, then there is an intrinsically good state of affairs. Is this necessity brute? If we wish to avoid unexplained necessities we must be able to explain this purported necessity away. Moore claimed that a description of the world that did not involve any evaluative facts could be complete. We could make this claim more general: a description of

the world that involves no non-fundamental facts (or descriptions) is complete. Even still, it *is true* that deserved pleasure, knowledge, and virtue are all intrinsically good. The sentence "deserved pleasure, knowledge, and virtue are all intrinsically good" is a true sentence of English. There is a linguistic convention such that whenever there are particles arranged in pattern G, their being so arranged can be described as "that is a good thing." Or, keeping with the terminology employed earlier, whenever particles are arranged thus-and-so, they satisfy the concept being intrinsically good. Whereas Heller uses the term 'linguistic convention' I have introduced the idea of intuitions determining application conditions for concepts. Perhaps we mean the same thing.

The point is that we have managed, I believe, to say a lot of what Moore wanted to say. The picture that has emerged is interesting and fairly plausible.

2 Two Worries

I want to consider two worries for this account. The first questions the applications for the concept *intrinsic goodness* on the hypothesis that there is no universal that satisfies the concept. The second questions our ability to acquire the concept intrinsic goodness if there is neither a universal goodness, nor an analysis of the concept *intrinsic goodness* in terms of concepts that are satisfied by universals with which we can be directly acquainted.

How could the content of these intuitions be correct or incorrect if there is no non-conceptual property to satisfy the concept *intrinsic goodness*? Were someone to apply the predicate 'is good' to a *child's being happy* in virtue of what sort of fact would the concept apply? According to the first objection, 'is good' applies, if and only if, this state of affairs has the non-conceptual property *being good*. I suggested there is no such property because there is no

such universal. Thus, the worry is that this claim cannot be true. There are a number of responses. But first, in the next chapter I argue that something is intrinsically good exactly when it involves a subject taking a fitting attitude. So I will give an account of exactly when this concept applies. But this only pushes the question back a step. For we can ask: in virtue of what does the concept *fitting* apply to some attitude? Assuming that neither attitudes nor fittingness are fundamental, the same problem emerges again.

There is more to say in response, but for now I can only say the following: note that what satisfies evaluative concepts are the same entities that satisfy many everyday concepts. They are states of affairs, although these situations at rock-bottom only involve individuals and fundamental properties as constituents. I did not say that truth is conventional. Statements are true when they correspond to the way the world is and, in this case, *that X is good* is true just when X satisfies *is good*. But I did not say that the concept *is good* is a conventional entity, whatever that might mean. Our intuitions are one thing, but the existence of the concept is another thing. For all I have said, concepts are like Platonic universals in that they can exist unsatisfied and unthought about. What I *did* say was that whether certain concepts apply to some entity is determined by intuitions that particular thinkers do, or would have in various circumstances. If my imagined objector is looking for a deeper explanation of why a concept applies in a given case, I do not have one on offer. If she is looking for an explanation of why we have the relevant intuitions, I would suggest consulting a linguist, sociologist, or maybe an anthropologist. I certainly do not know *why* we have the intuitions that we do, but I do think that one role our intuitions play is in determining meaning which is a conceptual affair. They do not simply justify our beliefs about what has value, they constitute the conditions under which things satisfy evaluative concepts. As a consequence I reject the claim that there needs to be a property

that satisfies a concept for it to apply so something. Concepts can apply because, to put matters intentionally misleadingly, we think they apply. If all there is is the fundamental, then concepts apply to things in the world that are fundamental. But given that our concepts go well beyond fundamental concepts and truly apply quite often, this *requires* that concepts are not satisfied by corresponding properties.

It is the intuitions of virtuous thinkers that matter here. Whether a thinker is virtuous is also a conceptual matter. But one might worry that there could be a virtuous thinker X, and a vicious thinker Y, such that X and Y intuit that all and only the same things are good, and that all and only the same things are bad. On my view, this is impossible. But I have motivated this view, following Heller, partly to avoid postulating brute necessities and clearly a brute impossibility is no better than a brute necessity. What can I say in response? There are constitutive connections between meaning and character, between value and meaning, and between character and value. Fitting attitudes generate value and character, virtue being one of the many goods. These characters so generated determine the conditions under which the concept *intrinsic goodness* applies. The meaning *intrinsic goodness* is nothing other than the concept *intrinsic goodness*, so when those with good characters intuit that certain things are good, they cannot be wrong. There are necessary, and constitutive connections on this account. These connections are all connections between concepts. They thus approximate analytic truths. For if these truths are not truths about a concept independent reality, then these truths involve relations between concepts.

This point raises the second objection. How can one acquire the concept *good* if not through confrontation with the good? Presumably, I acquire the concept *red* by way of being acquainted with it. Plausibly, other concepts are analyzable in terms of these basic concepts that correspond to properties we are acquainted with, or else they are hardwired into us. Neither of

these options seems to hold for the good. So in virtue of what do we grasp the meaning of predicates that express this concept? My answer is speculative at best since a theory of concept acquisition is well beyond the scope of this chapter and my knowledge. Above I drew a connection between motivation and meaning. Mackie argued that to understand the good is to be motivated to pursue it. Indeed, know-how and knowledge-that are often intertwined. Just as the way we use words is evidence of the intuitions we have, the way we behave (towards ourselves and towards others) is evidence of the intuitions that we have. In a way, to the extent that use determines meaning for evaluative predicates, the way we behave determines their meanings as well. So can't we conclude that, for the concept good, we acquire it by being disposed to treat others well, with respect, and to inculcate compassion, love, and so on? Take the class of actions which we would call the sorts of actions that good people would perform. Can't acquisition of the concept *good* come by way of being disposed to perform actions from among this class? If so, we could explain why goodness is motivating: it motivates because to understand what good is *just is* to be motivated in ways that are indicative of its promotion. Now, I'm not saying that this is the only story that one might offer about how evaluative concepts, at least thin evaluative concepts, are acquired. It nonetheless seems like a plausible piece of the picture.

Then again maybe the explanation is simpler. Perhaps parents just point to things and say BAD or GOOD and as children we begin to make similar remarks for scenarios that resemble them. Whatever the explanation, many of us do acquire and employ evaluative concepts with frequency and ease. There must be a satisfying explanation for how we do this. A good question is not a good objection.

3 Realism about Degrees of The Good

Earlier I suggested that value is similar in its reality to chairs, assuming that chairs are real. I could have suggested that value is similarly real to numbers, assuming that numbers are real. This would have been odd because numbers are in disrepute. Value would not be benefitted by a close companionship with the reals. Yet this was exactly the sort of thing Moore did say. Why? Here's that important passage once again.

> 'Metaphysicians' have, therefore, the great merit of insisting that our knowledge is not confined to things which we can touch and see and feel. They have always been much occupied, not only with that other class of natural objects which consists in mental facts, but also with the class of objects or properties of objects, which certainly do not exist in time, are not therefore parts of Nature, and which, in fact, do not *exist* at all. To this class, as I have said, belongs what we mean by the adjective 'good' (1903, p. 110).

And then Moore continues. . .

> It is not goodness, but only the things or qualities which are good, which can exist in time - can have duration, and cease to exist - can be objects of *perception*. But the most prominent members of this class are perhaps numbers. It is quite certain that two natural objects may exist; but it is equally certain that two itself does not exist and never can. Two and two *are* four. But that does not mean that two or four exists. Yet it certainly means *something*. Two *is* somehow, although it does not exists (1903, p. 110).

These passages form an interesting pair. How is the good at all like the number 2? I suppose neither are observable. Moore claimed both are outside of time and that's doubtful, but we can let that pass. Importantly, Moore never offered an account of degrees of value though he claimed that value comes in degrees. Here we hear that numbers and value are on a par, and Moore never offered an account of numbers. So what should the Moorean about value say? What are degrees of intrinsic value?

We will discuss degrees of intrinsic value in greater detail in chapter 5. For now I want to offer a brief suggestion. When we say that one thing is intrinsically better than another this entails that one thing has more value than the other. When we state a fact about something that has a degree of some property, such statements always appeal to number: a degree of anything is a numerical degree of something, even if which number it is a degree *to* is left implicit. Quantities are properties that involve some unit and any specification of that unit requires a number for that specification, namely, it requires at least a '1' to specify the property's base unit, for example: 1 gram, 1 foot, or 1 mph. Such units need not be the *smallest* quantities of a particular kind, but there must be some unit by which all other units of that quantity are defined. So numbers would seem to be ineliminable from talk of quantity. To be a quantity of something involves being related to a number. Interestingly, the account above nonetheless allows us to treat numbers and value in a particularly uniform way, which is to say that there is some way in which neither exists and another in which they exist harmoniously.

If we suppose that there are exactly two quantifiers '$(\exists x_f)$' and '$(\exists x_d)$' such that the former is the fundamental quantifier and the latter the non-fundamental quantifier, we can capture Moore's claim that number and value are on a par. Both fall within the scope of '$(\exists x_d)$' but not '$(\exists x_f)$.' This assumes that at the fundamental level numbers will be eliminable. This is a *big* assumption, but exactly this project has been attempted.[4] Now, Moore suggested that metaphysicians are primarily interested in what falls within the scope of '$(\exists x_d)$' whereas scientists, or "naturalists" are interested in what falls within the scope of something like '$(\exists x_f)$.' Metaphysicians are interested in derivative entities. Though this cannot be quite right, the view I

[4] Field (1980) admits, after putting forward the most powerful attempt to eliminate reference to numbers in physics to date, that we are committed to numbers in our ontology. If he is correct, then *logicism* (the view that mathematics is reducible to logic) is untenable. I am in no position to judge whether Field was right.

am offering Moore explains why *he* may have thought this. Metaphysics is an a priori discipline. With only few exceptions most metaphysics has been done from the armchair. What do we have access to from these chairs? The answer: *concepts*. On the hypothesis under consideration, concepts are just those entities that fall with in the scope of '($\exists x_d$)' and so it would be natural to think that it is they, not those properties uncovered by science, that are the object of the metaphysician's inquiry.

Nevertheless, metaphysicians are interested in what is fundamental, whereas the linguist should be interested in assigning truth conditions to statements wedded to '($\exists x_d$).' These truth conditions are, and will be informed by science.[5] Future physics will reveal *some* of the fundamental properties. But there are non-physical properties that will deserve a place among the fundamental constituents of the world too, e.g. logical properties, probabilities, and perhaps even mental states. Moore appears to have thought that metaphysicians did not have access to universals. For the universals are natural. This gives us another reason to interpret the good, on Moore's conception of the good, to be a concept. He clearly thought that we had a priori access to it.

There is a worry that I have avoided mentioning. Why should we think that the fact that X is *non-fundamental* entails that X is less real than anything else? Instead, why shouldn't we instead think that whenever X depends on Y, both X and Y are equally real? Above I hedged and did not take a stand on how to interpret DWTB. McDaniel's view entails that there are different kinds of quantifiers and I claimed that there are exactly two: one fundamental and the other not. It remains *a further step* to claim that entities that fall within the scope of one quantifier are less

[5] See Sider (2011).

real than entities that fall within the scope of the other. Is there any argument for privileging universals over concepts vis-a-vis their reality? Here is Fine on a similar matter:

> It is natural to understand fundamental reality in terms of the relative concept of one thing being less fundamental than, or reducible to, another - the fundamental being whatever does not reduce to anything else. . .We may grant that some things are explanatorily more basic than others. But why should that make them more real?
>
> What I would like to suggest, in the face of this difficulty, is that we reject the idea that the absolute notion of fundamental reality is in need of a relational underpinning. The conception of reality that we are after is simply the conception of Reality as it is in itself. Thus, even though two nations may be at war, we may deny that this is how things really or fundamentally are because the entities in question, the nations, and the relationship between them, are no parts of Reality as it is in itself (2011, p. 25).

Fine then claims that whatever is grounded in the real is not real. Grounding for Fine is that dependence relation that Moore claimed relates value to the non-evaluative. So if reduction entails that the reduced entity is less real than its base, and if dependence entails reduction, then we would have reason for thinking that value is less real than the fundamental features that generate it. Is this view plausible?

It's not obvious. The concept *bachelorhood* is reducible to the concept *unmarried adult male*. Set the Pope aside. Is the concept *bachelor* less real than the concept *male*? That's unlikely. Fine must have a non-analytic form of reduction in mind. For plausibly, all concepts are equally real. So we must ask whether entities that fall within the scope of '$(\exists x_d)$' are reducible, in some non-analytic fashion, to entities that fall within the scope of '$(\exists x_f)$.' Fine provides no argument for this further claim, and Moore finds the *following from* relation needed to characterize this form of reduction mysterious. In fact, it is not at all obvious that we can characterize the fundamental without an explication of this mysterious notion. As a colleague once said to me:

"answering that question is above my pay grade." I am content with defending the weaker thesis that we have no reason to think that value is less real than chairs and we have reason to think they are on a par. We have no reason to think that value is any less real than the fundamental even though value is derivative. Value may depend on properties to be discovered by future physics, and value may exist in a very different way from these properties, but none of this justifies us in thinking that value is a second-class property.

Chapter 3

Identifying Axiological Atoms

0 Introduction

Moore said more confusing things in his *Principia*. In one place he said: "If I am asked. . . What is good? my answer is that good is good, and that is the end of the matter. Or if I am asked "How is 'good' to be defined?" my answer is that it cannot be defined, and that is all I have to say about it" (1903, p. 58). This passage meshes nicely with Moore's claim that the concept *good* is simple and unanalyzable. However, he also claimed that "whenever [someone] thinks of "intrinsic value," or "intrinsic worth," or says that a thing "ought to exist," he has before his mind the unique object - the unique property of things - which I mean by "good" (1903 p. 17). This passage is at odds with the passage above. Here Moore appears willing to identify the concept *good* with the concept *being such that its bearer ought to exist*. Setting aside Moore, what should we say about such identifications?

One response involves claiming that the biconditional 'x is intrinsically good, if and only if, x ought to exist' can express a truth without expressing an analysis. Similarly, perhaps water has a nature and some substance is water, if and only if, that substance is constituted by H^2O molecules. The concepts *water* and H^2O pick out the same entities, but the former is not analyzed by the latter. When we discovered that water was constituted by H^2O we didn't learn what we had meant, implicitly or explicitly, when using the word 'water.' We learned something about water. Moore could hold a similar view about the good. Intrinsically good things are exactly

those that ought to exist for their own sake, but the concept good is simple. Given that Moore's open question argument was intended to show that an analysis of the good was impossible, Moore should hold that goodness can be picked out by different expressions that stand in some informative, non-analytic relations to one another. This may even have been his considered view. We will return to this account later.

There is a different more common response made nowadays. This response claims that an analysis of the good is possible, though only in evaluative terms. Thus, this view avoids the threat of reductionism. For example, Brentano claimed that the good is "that which is worthy of love, that which can be loved with a love that is correct" (1969, p. 18). Broad claimed that "X is good" can "be defined as meaning that X is such that it would be a fitting object of desire to any mind which had an adequate idea of its nonethical characteristics" (1930, p. 283). More recently, Zimmerman claimed that "x is intrinsically good = df. it is fitting for anyone who contemplates x to favour it for its own sake" (2011, p. 3). These "Fitting-Attitude" accounts share the notion of a correct or fitting attitude towards an object of value. The accounts permit variations. Some accounts are stated in terms of obligation, duty and merit. The relevant attitudes have included favoring, love, promotion, and desire. Objects serving as relata for these attitudes have included facts, persons, and abstract states of affairs. If some fitting-attitude account will work, then we can say more about the good than that "the good is good and that's the end of matter."

Fitting-Attitude Accounts do not collapse value with valuing and this is important. The value under consideration is supposed to be objective, whereas valuing is a subjective notion. The fact that it is fitting to value something does not entail that the relevant object is actually valued by anyone. Furthermore, we often value things that it is not fitting to value. Thus, there is no threat of collapsing a purportedly objective notion with its subjective counterpart on the

fitting-attitude accounts. In the next chapter I will argue that it is fitting to favor something, at least in many cases, partly *because* a thing is intrinsically good, which would turn such purported analyses on their heads. For the time being, however, we need not interpret fitting-attitude accounts to be offering analyses of intrinsic value.

Here's is the plan for this chapter: In section 1 I propose an account of states of affairs that have basic intrinsic value to serve as objects of value for these fitting attitudes. What are those things that we should favor as such? When something has *basic* intrinsic value, it has intrinsic value and not in virtue of its relation to anything else with intrinsic value. These states of affairs serve as the axiological atoms. On the view defended here, **a state of affairs S has value, in and of itself, and not because of its relationship to anything else with value, if and only if, S involves a subject, a psychological attitude, and an object, where the subject's attitude towards the object is fitting.** Let's call this view the *Attitudinal Account of Intrinsic Value* (or AAIV). I defend AAIV by considering a number of its advantages. Importantly, it allows us to unify Moore's axiology in a plausible way; it is compatible with the claim that goodness is simple, non-natural, and irreducible, which are each plausible views; it meshes rather nicely with traditional fitting-attitude accounts of value; and finally, it allows us to unify and analyze the virtues and vices. Later, in chapter 5, we will see that AAIV also provides us with resources for avoiding what would otherwise be promising cases of organic unities in value.

In section 2 I consider four worries for AAIV. First, we need to have an account of the concept *fittingness* and it is unclear how the account should go. Is fittingness normative and is it analyzable? Is fittingness an internal relation and does it come in degrees? I will argue that fittingness is a *sui generis* concept with close conceptual ties to value, reason, and character. Second, AAIV entails that beauty, diversity, achievement and autonomy lack intrinsic value. Is

this plausible? Third, in addition to entailing that hedonism is false, AAIV *seems* to entail that pain is intrinsically good. This would be an "interesting" consequence indeed. Fourth and finally, the degree to which it is fitting to favor something is no simple function of the intrinsic value of the favored object. Our personal relationships to the entities that concern us matter. For example, though our children may be of equal intrinsic worth, it is fitting for me to favor the well-being of my child above yours. This observation is incompatible with certain ways of understanding fit.

1 Axiological Atoms and The Void

What is our relation to value? There is no easy answer. On the one hand, belief is intimately related to truth in that one central aim for belief is to approximate, or to get at the truth. When confronted with evidence that P is true, we should believe to a proportional degree that P is true. Something similar holds for value. When we become aware that something is good, we should value it. The central aim for valuing is to value the valuable. Thus, valuing stands to the good as believing stands to the true. Both the good and the true are objects worthy of these respective attitudes that fit them.

We should be virtuous and prudent. What these traits consist in involves forming beliefs responsively to evidence and responding, for example, to perceived suffering with compassion. In another way, the cultivation of a good character involves being disposed to take fitting attitudes towards the world. It would appear that, if AAIV is correct, both the formation of character and the generation of intrinsic value are intimately linked since both are tied to fittingness. Indeed, AAIV offers us resources for explaining the nature of intrinsic value and virtue. There is more that we can say about the good than that the good is good. Here is AAIV again, but with slight modifications:

($AAIV_G$) A state of affairs S has *positive value to degree n*, in and of itself, and not because of its relationship to anything else with value, if and only if, S involves a subject, a psychological attitude, and an object, where the subject's attitude towards the object is *fitting to degree n*.

There is a relevant corollary:

($AAIV_B$) A state of affairs S has *negative value to degree n*, in and of itself, and not because of its relationship to anything else with value, if and only if, S involves a subject, a psychological attitude, and an object, where the subject's attitude towards the object is *unfitting to degree n*.

What kind of value is at issue here? Some philosophers aim to distinguish intrinsic value from final value. Moore was interested in intrinsic value and it was, for him, a deeply metaphysical notion. When something has intrinsic value it has value *in itself* and *independent of its relations to other things*, and it will *be shared between perfect natural duplicates*, and can *be possessed in complete isolation*. Final value, on the other hand, is value that something has *for its own sake*. According to a number of philosophers, it *can* depend upon something's relations to other things and it can even differ between duplicates. For example, a painting's rarity may make that painting more valuable *for its own sake*, but whether a painting is rare will depend on whether there are other similar paintings. Of course, a duplicate painting will not retain the same value as the original.

Following Moore, I am offering AAIV as an account of intrinsic value. I want to mention briefly why. I do not understand the notion of value *for its own sake*, but I believe it betrays some

confusion. Either 'value for its own sake' is a terminological variant for 'intrinsic value' or else this expression fails to refer to a kind of value. *Agents* act *for the sake of* various ends or *for* various reasons. If there are sakes, they are kinds of reasons that might be cited to explain an agent's action. The 'for' in 'for its own sake' makes clear that what follows the 'for' is some relevant reason *for* which the agent acted. The bearers of intrinsic value are states of affairs, not agents. We would not claim that something *weighs five pounds for its own sake*, or that some person is *five feet tall for her own sake*, or that a car is *moving five mph for its own sake*. If value is a quantity like weight, nothing has *n* units of intrinsic value *for its own sake* either. Later I will argue that value is such a quantity, but for now, once we make explicit the idea that all instantiations of intrinsic value involve the instantiation of a degree of intrinsic value, we should reject the idea that something is valuable to some degree *n for its own sake*.

We could stipulate that something has value *for its own sake to degree n*, if and only if, were someone to contemplate it, it would would be fitting to favor it as such to a corresponding degree. One could introduce the notion of value *for its own sake* by way of a fitting-attitude account in a way that even defenders of Moorean intrinsic value could accept. That's uncontroversial. However, if this is what final value amounts to, it merely presents another condition on intrinsic value that is compatible with there being intrinsic value in the Moorean sense. In that case, we could ignore final value to consider whether some fitting-attitude account is correct. The extremely common mistake, as I see it then, is conflating value with valuing. Though we value something for its own sake, nothing *has* value for its own sake.

Let's return to AAIV in both of its guises. What I want to point out first is that this view has never been explicitly defended, though AAIV has been hinted at in many, many philosophical discussions of value and virtue. For example, Moore repeatedly claimed in his

Principia that goods all involve *consciousness of some object*, where the constituents of these states of affairs like *consciousness itself* have little or no value. Such states of affairs can, as wholes, nevertheless possess great value. In the final section of his *Principia* Moore wrote:

> Unmixed goods may all be said to consist in the love of beautiful things or of good persons: but the number of different goods of this kind is as great as that of beautiful object, and they are also differentiated from one another *by the emotions appropriate to different objects*. These goods are undoubtedly good, even where the things or persons loved *are imaginary* (1903, p. 224 my emphasis).

Moore acknowledged that we should love the good and hate evil. He also acknowledged that we should have these attitudes even when we are merely imagining the good or the evil, though I suspect he would add that we must also believe that what we are imagining is real. Thus, certain attitudes can be appropriate to have in the absence of objects with value. Moreover, when these attitudes are appropriately taken towards imaginary things, we arrive at a state of affairs with great value. As a consequence, we can understand the notion appropriateness independent of the value of the object to which some attitude is directed, and also to be an ingredient of states of affairs that possess intrinsic value.

This is an important point that Moore is making and it has been neglected by everyone working in value theory since. It is also one of the primary motivations for the manner in which AAIV is stated. I want to pause to explain this point. Consider someone, call him 'Saint,' that is maximally virtuous. Saint always does the right thing and for the right reasons. Saint is taking a stroll down the beach during a beautiful sunset and happens on some children playing in the water. He feels happy that the children seem so carefree while also enjoying the beautiful sunset. It is very plausible that the fact *that Saint is happy* in these circumstances adds value to the world as such. Let us imagine Saint's envatted doppleganger duplicate Saint*. The experiences Saint*

is having are qualitatively indiscernible from the experience Saint is having. Saint* is thus likewise happy, but there are no actual children playing nor is there any actual sunset that is causally relevant to Saint*'s happiness. Nonetheless, *that Saint* is happy* has no less value than *that Saint is happy*. Of course, there is additional value in Saint's world that is lacking in the world inhabited by Saint*. There is the happiness of children playing carefree. But with respect to the evaluative contributions of Saint and Saint*'s experiences alone, their contribution is exactly the same.

Though everyone will not agree with this assessment, I find it to be deeply intuitive. The point can be extended too. Qualitative duplicates must share the same virtues and vices, as well as the same experiences of pleasure and pain. Facts about virtue and vice supervene on the mental states of these duplicates, and intuitively, these mental states are to be individuated intrinsically. We do not need to see what is going on outside of a subject's head in order to determine whether the mental states of the subject are appropriate. As a consequence the common object in such cases must be the *relevant* object for the determination of the intrinsic values of Saint and Saint*'s experiences. I don't know what that common object is exactly, but their experiences have the same content. Perhaps this object is a propositional entity or an abstract state of affairs. Whatever it is, it (1) lacks intrinsic value, and (2) is that to which fitting and unfitting attitudes are directed. In this case, the objects can be described as *there seeming to be children happily playing* and *there seeming to be a beautiful sunset*. These states are shared between our duplicates and it is fitting to be pleased in their presence.

There are a number of considerations that favor AAIV. First, it fits well with value pluralism and helps for making an important distinction in value. Personal goods make a life go better for the one who enjoys them. Impersonal goods make the world better for containing them. Both Ross (1930, pp. 134–141) and Moore (1922, pp. 183–225) argued that knowledge, pleasure, and virtue are among the intrinsic goods. However, not all pleasure is intrinsically good. Pleasure in the suffering of others does not make the world better for containing that pleasure. On the other hand, being pleased by the suffering of others can be *good for the subject*. On one view, this is because the subject is getting what he wants, that is, he is having a desire satisfied and is aware of it. On another view, pleasure (despite its content) simply makes a life go better for its recipient. Both views entail that being pleased by the suffering of others can be *good for the subject*. Thus, there are personal goods that are not impersonal goods, and there is a plurality of impersonal intrinsic goods. This view is very plausible. However, pluralism of this sort faces a challenge: why should we countenance exactly these goods? More specifically, why should these goods make the list rather than other purported goods, and what, if anything, unifies them? It would be incredible if there were *no explanation at all* for why just these goods are the intrinsic goods. This would be a bizarre brute fact.

Interestingly, AAIV both predicts and unifies precisely the sort of axiology endorsed by Ross and Moore at various points in their careers. To illustrate:

(1) Knowledge is an intrinsic good because it involves belief (a fitting attitude) directed at a proposition. Plausibly, the conditions under which it is fitting to believe that a proposition is true occurs when one has *evidence* that the proposition is true. Thus, the possession of evidence generates a reason to believe, and when one believes when this reason is present

one has responded fittingly. To the extent knowledge includes a belief supported by evidence, knowledge is intrinsically good.

(2) Pleasure is intrinsically good because it involves a subject that desires to be having a certain sensation (a fitting attitude) while the subject has that sensation. Plausibly, the conditions under which it is fitting to desire that some sensation persist involve that sensation's not being undeserved or taken for the wrong kinds of reasons. Pleasure taken in the suffering of another is pleasure taken for wrong kind of reason, so such pleasures do not involve a fitting attitude. Therefore, they do not contribute intrinsic value.

(3) Virtues are intrinsically good. Compassion involves aversion (a fitting attitude) towards another's misfortune and a desire (a fitting attitude) for the sufferer to have their situation improved. This particular virtue is good precisely because aversion is a fitting attitude to take towards another's suffering. Taking joy (an unfitting attitude) in another's misfortune is intrinsically bad. Thus, the vice schadenfreude is intrinsically bad.

The first motivation for AAIV is that it unifies the pluralist's goods. There is an explanation for why these goods are just those on the list, and the explanation is that AAIV entails that they are each intrinsically good. Moreover, we have an explanation of why some experiences can be good for a subject, but not intrinsically good. When a subject is getting what they want, getting what they want does not generate intrinsic value if there desires are not fitting. Personal goods generate impersonal goods only when they are fittingly enjoyed.

The second motivation for AAIV comes from Ross. In a famous thought experiment Ross argued for a desert-sensitive axiology (1930, p. 138), and AAIV nicely accommodates Ross's case. Ross asked us to compare two worlds: In world 1 there is some number of vicious people

and some number of virtuous people. There is also some amount of pleasure to be distributed alongside some amount of pain. In world 1 all and only the virtuous receive the pain, whereas all and only the vicious receive the pleasure. Now consider a second world 2. Everything between these worlds is otherwise similar except that in world 2 the distribution is exactly opposite. There things are such that the vicious are pained and the virtuous are pleased. Ross asked us which world would be better? He claimed, and I think that he was certainly correct, that world 2 would be better. People there are getting what they deserve. Justice is being done and this fact improves the world. From a prudential point of view, moreover, matters seem to be different. The vicious should prefer world 1 to world 2, whereas the virtuous should prefer world 2 to world 1. Interestingly, this is exactly what AAIV predicts.

A plausible constraint on fitting pleasure is that the subject experiencing the pleasure not be vicious. When the vicious are pleased, all else equal, that makes matters worse. When the virtuous are pleased, all else equal, that makes matters better. So world 1 lacks positive intrinsic value, whereas world 2 has positive intrinsic value. So there is no surprise that it would seem that world 2 is better than world 1: it is. This point generalizes. To the extent that we take desert seriously when making evaluative comparisons, AAIV offers one way to derive such comparative judgments from more basic facts concerning the intrinsic values of atomic states. This is because desert can literally be built into the notion of fit as a condition on its instantiation, or the degree to which some attitude is fitting. We can build fit into these axiological atoms. Taken together with an earlier point, we see that fit is then a function of *at least* two factors. The degree to which an attitude is fitting is determined by the character of the agent with the attitude, and it is determined by the nature of the object to which the attitude is directed. An attitude can fail to be fitting in two different ways: either the agent does not deserve to take the respective

attitude towards the object because they are vicious, or instead because the object should not have the attitude taken directed towards it.

This points to an interesting problem for Ross's axiology that I ignored. In fact, Ross's axiology included one further good I neglected to mention. He thought that the two world argument just given confirmed a fourth kind of good. He wrote: "[I]t would seem then that, besides virtue and pleasure, we must recognize (3), as a third independent good, the apportionment of pleasure and pain to the virtuous and vicious respectively. And it is on the recognition of this as a separate good that the recognition of the duty of justice, in distinction from fidelity to promises on the one hand and beneficence on the other, rests" (1930, p. 138). After this passage Ross argues that knowledge is the fourth and final intrinsic good. Here another motivation for AAIV can be provided. Ross argued for the intrinsic value of pleasure, knowledge, and virtue similarly. We were asked to consider some world where one of these states is present, another where that state is absent, while holding all else equal. Once we judge, as Ross did expect us to judge, that the world where the state is present is intrinsically better than the world where that state is absent, we will have confirmed that that state has intrinsically value. His argument for the intrinsic value of justice has this form, but does it establish a similar verdict?

The answer is, I believe, a modified yes and no. The case establishes that the more just distribution of pain and pleasure is intrinsically better. But we need not follow Ross and conclude that this is because justice is in itself a further intrinsic good. The judgment that results from considering two worlds cases do not reveal *why* one world is better than another, only that the differing factor is relevant to which world is intrinsically better. What we should infer is that whether pleasure is intrinsically good depends in no small way on whether it is enjoyed

deservedly. We can achieve the same judgment in Ross's two worlds case with a different explanation, and also while retaining a simpler axiology. This is again because desert can serve as a constraint on fittingness. Instead of saying that there is some further distinct intrinsic bad in a world in which the vicious are pleased, some bad which lowers the overall intrinsic value of the world in which that bad thing exists, we can instead *discount* the intrinsic value of the pleasure enjoyed by the vicious because it is unfitting, or less fitting. So Ross located the value difference between his two worlds by introducing a further intrinsic good and bad, justice and injustice respectively, but we need only adjust the intrinsic value of pain and pleasure *for justice* to achieve the same result. Notably, justice was the intrinsic good which led Ross to embrace organic unities. For justice makes a difference to the overall intrinsic values of wholes, even though justice was not itself a feature that belonged to any parts of these wholes. To the extent that organic unities should be rejected, that would give us independent reason to reject Ross's interpretation of his two worlds case, and yet AAIV allows us to do exactly this.

There are a number of motivations for AAIV. First, it allows us to unify the pluralist's goods and also to explain the intuitive difference between personal and impersonal goods. Impersonal goods require fittingness whereas personal goods do not. Second, AAIV allows for a desert sensitive axiology. Third, it is compatible with fitting-attitude accounts of value. Fourth, it is compatible with Ross's two worlds cases. Fifth, it is compatible with a broadly Moorean account of intrinsic value and many of the metaphysical commitments that attended Moore's view. For example, fittingness is an evaluative notion so the account does not threaten reducibility. Furthermore, the account is not offered as an analysis, so it is compatible with the simplicity and unanalyzability of the good, and also with our having a priori access to it. Sixth, and more on this later, it allows us to avoid organic unties, so we can retain the claim that value

is additive. Seventh, the notion of fittingness is extremely flexible. As we will see, the schematic form of AAIV permits all sorts of constraints on fittingness. Eighth, unlike other accounts, AAIV earlier predicted that Saint and Saint*'s experiences have the same intrinsic value. There is an ninth motivation as well. Let's turn to it now.

Hurka has presented a popular and very influential account of the virtues and vices (2001). I want to briefly outline Hurka's recursive account and explain why understanding the virtues and vices in terms of fittingness is preferable to his own account. In so doing we will uncover a decisive objection to Hurka's recursive account and we will unify the virtues and vices. In this way we acquire an ninth motivation for AAIV. Hurka begins by offering what he calls 'base clauses' for his account:

(BG) Pleasure, knowledge, and achievement are intrinsically good.
(BE) Pain, false belief, and failure in the pursuit of achievement are intrinsically evil.

These base clauses specify the basic intrinsic goods on Hurka's view. Next we add a number of recursion clauses:

(LG) If x is intrinsically good, loving x (desiring, pursuing, or taking pleasure in x) for itself is also intrinsically good.
(LE) If x is intrinsically evil, loving x for itself is also intrinsically evil.
(HG) If x is intrinsically good, hating x (desiring or pursuing x's not obtaining or being pained by x's obtaining) for itself is intrinsically evil.
(HE) If x is intrinsically evil, hating x for itself is intrinsically good (2001, pp. 3 - 28).

These base clauses together with these recursions generate further intrinsic goods and evils on Hurka's account. The goods and bads so generated can then serve as further inputs into the recursion clauses, and so the number of goods and bads can be iterated to the extent that a subject can consider the good or bad itself. Those goods and evils generated by the recursion clauses are *attitudes of subjects that involve particular responses to value*, or dispositions to respond to value in various ways. In short, these attitudes are the virtues and the vices. Thus, Hurka's account explains why various mental states are virtues and vices, and also *why* these states are intrinsically good and intrinsically bad respectively. Furthermore, there are other conditions that can be added and modifications that be made. For example, Hurka adds more recursion clauses relating to attitudes of indifference, and he adds conditions on proportionality. Not only should we not be indifferent to the good, but the degree to which we love some good should be proportional to the degree to which it is intrinsically good.

How do particular virtues and vices map onto the outputs of the recursion clauses? At this point Hurka goes on to simply enumerate various virtues and vices, and to then map them onto various outputs of these recursion clauses. For example, disliking someone's suffering is the virtue of compassion and it is an instance of hating something that is intrinsically evil. The virtue benevolence is taking pleasure in other people's good and it is an instance of loving the good. The vices envy and jealousy are vices that involve the hatred of another's good. Of course, I am grossly simplifying his account. Hurka writes:

> It is probably most accurate to define envy and related vices as Nozick does, in terms of attitudes to conjunctions of goods and evils (*Anarchy, State, and Utopia*, pp. 239 - 40n). Then the emulatively envious person prefers a situation where both he and another have a good to one where he does not have it and the other

> does, but prefers the first situation by more than the difference in value between it and the second—which is just the difference between his having and not having the good—makes appropriate. The maliciously envious person prefers a situation where neither he nor the other has the good to one where he does not have it and the other does, thereby preferring a worse conjunctive situation to a better, or hating the better (2001, p. 100ff.).

This passage nicely illustrates the depth of the analyses of virtue and vice that Hurka's account permits. The range of attitudes and objects available in the base and recursion clauses allow for the construction of a vast range of mental state. Thus, they permit us to analyze a wide range of virtue and vice. In any case, there was a rough outline of Hurka's account. Fantastic though it is, it is subject to three important problems. An account of virtue an vice that appeals to AAIV instead of his base and recursion clauses can avoid all of these problems.

The first problem was already mentioned. The object that one directs an attitude at when one possesses a virtue is not something with intrinsic value, or disvalue. The relevant objects have no value because they are not the sort of thing that could have value. Both Saint and Saint* took joy in the perception of someone else's good, though it is false that they both loved the good. There was no good to love in Saint*'s case. Thus, Hurka's account would treat Saint's attitude as virtuous, but not Saint*'s attitude. This is a mistake. One of these individuals possesses a virtue, if and only if, the other does. Hurka could modify his recursion clauses to avoid this worry. For example, (LG) could instead read:

(LG*) If x is intrinsically good or would be intrinsically good were X real and one believes that x is real, loving x (desiring, pursuing, or taking pleasure in x) for itself is also intrinsically good.

Perhaps an amendment like this one could avoid my first worry. Whether or not it does, there is a second worry. In virtue of what facts do Hurka's base clauses hold? More specifically, it would be amazing if all of these recursion clauses together, each with extremely similar forms, all held as a matter of brute inexplicable fact. This is exactly what Hurka's account entails, but we should avoid postulating brute facts. On the other hand, AAIV understood to be an account of intrinsic value *and virtue and vice* entails something very much like Hurka's account. Why is it intrinsically good to love, or desire to pursue intrinsically good things as such? Answer: because it is fitting. We can understand these recursion clauses to be explained by an underlying notion of fittingness. It is fitting to hate *that p* when it both seems to one *that p* and if it were the case *that p*, *that p* would be evil. Many of those mental states specified by AAIV will be virtues. For example, compassion involves a fitting response to someone's perceived suffering. This is an instance of hatred towards perceived evil but the reason that hatred towards perceived evil is both intrinsically bad and a vice is that it involves a fitting response, an attitude that fits its object. The same goes for the rest of the virtues and vices. AAIV allows us to unify them as virtues and vices, but also to explain their respective intrinsic values and disvalues.

The third worry is that the virtues and vices, on Hurka's view, do not actually count as basic intrinsic goods or bads. Both depend on, or seem to be grounded in, states of affairs that themselves have basic intrinsic value, namely, those states of affairs specified in Hurka's base clauses. As we will see, the only way to generate a plausible estimation for the intrinsic value of a whole involves adding only those states of affairs it has as parts that have basic intrinsic value. Otherwise, we fall prey to overestimating intrinsic value. But then virtues and vices cannot add intrinsic value to the world because they lack basic intrinsic value. This is an implausible consequence.

I have presented nine motivations for AAIV. I you like, you can think of their conjunction as an argument for AAIV. I know of no account that betters the *attitudinal account of intrinsic value*. But perhaps it is subject to serious difficulties?

2 Four Worries

In this section I would like to consider four problems for the present approach. First, we need to have an account of the concept *fittingness* and it is unclear how the account should go. Second, AAIV entails that beauty, diversity, achievement and autonomy lack intrinsic value. Is this plausible? Third, in addition to entailing that hedonism is false, AAIV *seems* to entail that pain is intrinsically good. Fourth, the degree to which it is fitting to favor something is no simple function of the intrinsic value of the favored object (none at all if what I said above is correct). Our personal relationships to the entities that concern us matter. Though our children may be of equal intrinsic worth, it is fitting for me to favor the well-being of my child above yours. This observation is incompatible with certain ways of understanding fit.

The Problem of Fit

The notion of a fitting attitude needs to be spelt out. I offered intuitive examples above: belief fits a proposition one has evidence for believing, compassion fits perceived suffering, and desire fits innocent acquired pleasures. If the virtues and vices all involve fitting or unfitting attitudes, to the extent that we grasp them we implicitly grasp fittingness. However, Ross rejected the idea that we can understand intrinsic value in terms of either *appropriate* attitudes, or in terms of attitudes that *ought* to be taken towards an object (2002, p. 104-106). First, he claimed that an attitude is appropriate because the object to which it is directed is intrinsically good. He

rejected fitting attitudes analyses of intrinsic value for getting the order of explanation backwards. Second, he took the notion of an appropriate attitude to involve judgment, namely, *belief* that the object is good. In this way fitting-attitude accounts are subject to the charge of circularity. The notion of *being judged to be good* presupposes the concept that the expression is supposed to partly analyze.

Neither of these worries are relevant to AAIV so I want to get them out of the way. First, I offered AAIV to be a necessarily true biconditional and not an analysis. Nevertheless, I am happy to *now* say that states of affairs are intrinsically good *because* they involve some relevant fitting attitude. This is not a claim about analysis, it is simply a claim about ontological dependence. More importantly, strictly speaking, this first worry is irrelevant because AAIV is not a fitting-attitude account of intrinsic value. AAIV locates intrinsic value in a state of affairs that involves a fitting attitude as a constituent, and *not* in the object to which some fitting attitude is directed. I argued above that there are many fitting attitudes that take objects that lack intrinsic value. On the other hand, I do present AAIV as an account of the valuable objects for various fitting-attitude accounts of intrinsic value. Just because a fitting attitude need not take an object with intrinsic value, it doesn't follow that it cannot. According to indirect realism in the philosophy of perception, for contrast, we are aware of external objects in virtue of being aware of internal, mental objects that represent them and that are causally related to them in the right way. By analogy, our attitudes towards events in the world can be fitting in virtue of their being fitting responses to propositions that represent them in the right way. Thus, responses can be fitting to things that have intrinsic value, and unfitting when aimed at things that have disvalue.

If the appropriate attitude towards a valuable thing involve the judgment that it be good, then this is irrelevant from the perspective of AAIV that take the object of such attitudes to lack

value. But suppose instead that Ross meant to be making a general point about any appropriate attitude. If so, that claim is clearly false. Appropriate responses need involve no judgment whatsoever, and some that do involve belief that the object in question is bad or beautiful or properties other than good. I gave examples above: I might desire to be having some sensation, say, a sensation associate with a nice massage without thereby judging the sensations to be good in themselves, as opposed to *my enjoyment* of the sensations to be good. It is fitting to be pleased by a beautiful sunset, but I need not judge the sunset to be intrinsically good, in fact, I would explicitly reject that it is. Perhaps in each of these cases the object will seem to be good, where seeming might be construed as a kind of judgment. But if this is the claim, then I still deny that beautiful things seem to be good, or ugly things seem to be bad. A fitting response to a perceived pile of feces and vomit may be disgust, but it does not follow that I must judge it to be intrinsically bad. Many fitting attitudes involve desires, or desire like states that occur without any evaluative belief at all. Many involve simple emotions without accompanying evaluative beliefs. For example, when something hurts it is fitting to desire the painful sensation to stop. This attitude can be fitting in the absence of a belief that the pain is bad in itself. When at the doctor's office a child may be subjected to some necessary, though painful treatment, and yet it would be fitting for the child to want the pain to stop and dislike it, even if it were both in their own best interest and the best interest of anyone affected for the child to receive the treatment. In this case, the child may make no judgment other than that the sensation is painful. So it is fitting for the child to want the pain to cease, and even if the child were aware that the pain was producing some further compensating good, it still seems to me that it would be fitting for the child to want the pain to cease. This further information would simply make it reasonable for the child to want the pain to continue for instrumental reasons, which is entirely compatible with it

also being fitting for the child to dislike the pain as such. Moreover, as has been pointed out time and again, one needn't judge the object good for it to be fitting to favor it.[1] One might judge the object to have those features that *underlie* its value, if it even has intrinsic value. So one could favor a sensation because one finds it pleasant, and one needn't judge it to be good *in addition* to its being pleasing in order to favor it as such and fittingly.

This response points to another, more general feature of fittingness. The fitting response can come apart from the evaluatively best, or the most prudent, or even the required response in many cases. So we cannot understand fittingness in terms of these notions. This means that we cannot analyze a fitting attitude as an attitude that it is in one's best interest to have, or that it is intrinsically best to have, or that one ought to have towards a given object. There are four views that need to be considered.

(Axiological$_G$) Necessarily, an attitude of favoring O as such is fitting $=_{df}$ There is an object O to which A is directed and O is intrinsically good.
(Axiological$_B$) Necessarily, an attitude of disfavoring O as such is fitting $=_{df}$ There is an object O to which A is directed and O is intrinsically bad.
(Axiological$_N$) Necessarily, an attitude of being indifferent to O as such is fitting $=_{df}$ There is an object O to which A is directed and O is neither intrinsically good nor intrinsically bad.

(Deontological$_S$) Necessarily, an attitude A is is fitting $=_{df}$ There is an object O and one is all things considered morally required to take A towards O.

[1] See Scanlon (1998).

(Deontological$_P$) Necessarily, an attitude A is is fitting $=_{df}$ There is an object O and one is prima facie morally required to take A towards O.

(Prudential) Necessarily, an attitude A is is fitting $=_{df}$ There is an object O and it is in one's best interest to take A towards O.

(Representational) Necessarily, an attitude A is fitting $=_{df}$ There is an object O and taking A towards O correctly represents O's properties.

Imagine that someone is telling you an extremely funny joke. A fitting response would surely be laughter and a relevant fitting attitude would be one of amusement. This would be so even if you knew that were you to be amused, an evil demon would destroy you and the world. I take it this is obvious for some sense of the word 'fitting.' What does this case show? Plausibly, a fitting attitude comes apart from both the most prudent attitude to take, and the obligatory attitude to take, and the best attitude to take. For it is fitting to be amused, or to favor the joke even though it seems to be neither good nor bad, or because it seems to be bad to be amused by the joke that it is fitting to favor. It is fitting to be amused even though one should not be amused all things considered. This is simply granting the controversial claim that we can have obligations to have certain attitudes. For if ought implies can, and we can't help but find certain things amusing, it's false that we ought not to find them to be amusing. Were this so, it could not be fitting to find a joke amusing even if it were amusing. Moreover, it is clearly not in my best interest to be destroyed by an evil demon. So the prudential account entails that it is not fitting to find the joke amusing, but it is fitting. So all of these views are untenable. This point can be

generalized to any fitting attitude as far as I can tell. None of these considerations capture whether amusement would be fitting in this circumstance. There is more to *being fitting* than is encompassed in these considerations.

One might instead think that what we have is a *prima facie* duty, or a prima facie obligation to have the attitude in question, that is, when it is fitting to have the relevant attitude.[2] Initially, this response seem to be promising. It is fitting to be amused and one has a prima facie obligation to be amused, but one has other more stringent obligations not to be amused, in which case one should not be amused even though it is fitting. If someone is suffering needlessly, the fitting response is one of compassion. One *should* be compassionate, which is to say that one has some reason to be compassionate. This *prima facie* reason can be overridden by further considerations. Similarly, if my compassion would lead to the destruction of the world, I should refrain from being compassionate to the extent that I'm able to. Were I to find that someone is suffering from a minor injury resulting from a botched attempt to blow up a kindergarten classroom, my compassion would no longer be fitting, and so I need not be compassionate all things considered. Further information can provide further reasons that would render otherwise obligatory attitudes from being so.

This account of fittingness won't do. First, there is the point about *ought implies can*. Second, a defender of fittingness as unanalyzable or representational could agree that whenever an attitude is fitting there is a reason for an agent to have the relevant attitude. They could even accept that sometimes these reasons are moral reasons, and grant that these reasons are often prudential reasons too. This is compatible with the claim that what fittingness consists in cannot be reduced to the possession of reasons of one of these sorts. I am happy to concede that a fitting

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[2] This suggestion has been defended recently by Lemos (2011) and Zimmerman (2001).

attitude is always attended by some reason or other to have the fitting attitude, and even one that can be overridden. This doesn't establish the claim that for an attitude to be fitting *just is* for there to be a reason, or prima facie duty to possess that attitude.

Returning to the joke, is it really plausible to think that I have a *prima facie* obligation to be amused? I cannot see that it is. The fact that the joke is funny gives me a reason to be amused, but absent any other relevant reasons, would I really be doing something immoral if I just didn't get amused? This sounds just wrong. The same holds for other fitting attitudes too. Were somebody to be driving behind me gabbing away on their phone and fail to brake in time, and then slam into my car driving my face through the windshield, for example, it would be fitting for me to be irate. Indeed, other sorts of attitudes and reactions might be fitting too. But it sounds bizarre to say that I am under a prima facie obligation to be angry. We can just suppose that there are no overriding reasons not to be angry. But would I really be doing something immoral if I responded cooly and calmly, taking the higher road so to speak, and then asked the driver whether they were ok? If not, appealing to *prima facie* obligations as a way of defining fittingness won't work.

That said, I concede that whenever an attitude would be fitting to have, it gets accompanied by a reason to have it. This suggests an alternative:

(Reason) Necessarily, an attitude A is fitting $=_{df}$ There is an object O and there is a reason to take A towards O.

What a reason consists in is less obvious to me than what fittingness consists in, but regardless, this account is clearly unsatisfactory. I might have some reason to belittle a friend in

front of a large crowd because I know they will be extremely amused were I to do so. That fact may give me some sort of reason to belittle my friend, or to *desire* to do so, but that would be an unfitting thing to do to my friend, and an unfitting desire to have. There are unfitting responses that we have reasons to have and fitting responses we have reasons not to have. The same holds for other attitudes. One might have reason to ignore evidence that would count against one's views about whether P. Perhaps by willfully ignoring evidence I will feel better about myself or my relationship with someone else. However, willful neglect would still be an unfitting attitude to take towards the evidence. This is another case in which there is *some* reason, perhaps a prudential reason in this case, to take an attitude it would be unfitting to possess.

That said, we are left with another alternative. On the representational view, a fitting response is one that is *correct* or *accurate*. On one way of understanding this view, attitudes involve evaluations and the attitude is fitting just when the evaluation is true. Recently, Oddie has argued that veridical desires involve experiences of value, and that experiences of value are seemings (2005). When one *desires* that P, then P seems to be good to one. Thus, it would be fitting to desire P just when so desiring P would be correct, in which case P would be good. For beliefs, it would be fitting to believe P just when that belief would be correct, in which case P would be true. For the virtues matters would be more complicated. But if virtues are to get counted as good, this view would be committed to saying that all attitudes that constitute virtues are such that they involve some representational state, that it can be correct or incorrect, and that virtue is present only when that state *is* correct. For some cases this seems plausible. Compassion may very well involve a representation that someone is suffering and that their suffering is bad. Perhaps a similar story can be told for the other virtues and vices, so that all the virtues involve a correct representation of value, whereas the vices all involve an incorrect representation of value.

I have sympathies with this account, but it will not work as it stands. First, as I mentioned earlier, there is a sharp difference between the concept *intrinsic goodness* and *goodness for a subject*. On the representationalist view, in order for a response to be fitting, it must represent an object as intrinsically good. But this cannot be right, for we can have fitting responses when we represent objects as good for us. It is fitting to want to go for a run in the sun, or to eat spinach, or to desire a good night's sleep. In none of these cases does my desire represent these situations as being intrinsically good. If my desires represent at all, which I am simply taking for granted, they represent these objects as *good for me*, or for my well-being. This is compatible with states of affairs that involve these fitting attitudes and objects having intrinsic value, but the claim is that they need not involve an representation of intrinsic value at all. Another worry is that this view is too sophisticated. By that I don't mean that it is too complex, I mean that individuals can have fitting attitudes without being able to represent anything as good in any way. I see no reason to exclude the happiness an infant or child enjoys from the domain of the intrinsically good, but neither animals nor children (unless they are all just pretending) employ the concept intrinsic value. I'm pretty sure that many of my freshman students struggle to grasp the concept themselves. However, the representational account must attribute overly sophisticated mental states to such creatures in order to count their innocent pleasure as good. This must be wrong. Furthermore, if what I claimed above is correct, then the direct objects of fitting attitudes typically lack intrinsic value. Representationalism is forced to count representations of these objects as unfitting. Saint*'s virtue contributes no value to the world, for his representations of value are all inaccurate, and thus unfitting according to representationalism. I submit this result cannot be right.

With that said I am going to assume that fittingness is a *sui generis* concept. There is no analysis of the concept to be had. This view was recently defended by D'Arms and Jacobson for the emotions and the objects that they fit, although the arguments provided there can be extended to other attitudes (2000, p. 71). However, this isn't to say that fittingness cannot be better understood by considering its relations to other concepts we care about. For example, I care about intrinsic value and the notion of fit is central to understanding it, and the notion of intrinsic value is central to understanding fit. What I'm denying here is that fittingness can be given an analysis in terms which do not themselves presuppose the concept of fit at some level in *their analysis*. Fittingness is the common thread running through the good and the bad, and virtue and vice.

Moving on. There is an internal and an external conception of fit at home with ordinary reasoning about value. On the internal conception, when the intrinsic properties of the subject, the attitude, and the object are settled, whether the subject's attitude fits its object has been settled. For example, once we have settled the character of the subject, the nature of the object, and the nature of the attitude in question, we have then settled whether the attitude is fitting to the object. On the external conception of fit, settling such facts fails to settle whether the attitude fits its object. It would certainly be nice if an *internal* conception were correct, for such a conception would indicate that an analysis of fittingness would available in terms of these features that settle whether an attitude is fitting, even if the analysis is hard to pin down. This prospect appears doubtful. There are also good reasons to endorse an external conception of fit. Typically, an attitude is fitting or unfitting because of external factors. The question is just what these factors are.

I have only one reason for preferring an external conception of fit. Though a fitting response need not be the ethically right response, moral reasons have a role to play in determining fit. Some of these reasons depend on moral laws that are external. Here an analogy with causation is fitting. Particular causal facts are governed by natural laws. For example, a cue ball falls when it is dropped because of a gravitational law, and the cue ball moves when hit with a cue because of force laws. These laws are external to these particular causal facts. They are external to the ball and the cue. On one account, such laws involve second-order relations between universals[3] where these laws could exist even in an empty world. I imagine that particular evaluative facts are like particular causal facts, and hence, that there evaluative laws that govern fittingness that generate these particular evaluative facts. For example, it is an evaluative law that pleasure taken in something perceived to be intrinsically bad is intrinsically bad, or that pleasure enjoyed by someone bad is not intrinsically good. Such laws govern the conditions under which pleasure generates intrinsic value by placing constraints on the conditions under which a desire is fitting to an object.

In normative ethics we aim to uncover the ethical laws by considering cases involving rightness and wrongness, but the same would seem to hold for axiology. Once we settle the matters of particular fact and the natural laws, we thereby settle whether some relation is a causal relation. Similarly, once we settle the matters of particular fact and the evaluative laws, we thereby settle whether some attitude is a fitting attitude. The matters of particular fact are internal to a state of affairs that is intrinsically good, but evaluative laws are external. We will return this later in chapter 4. There I argue that intrinsic value is compatible with such value depending on such laws, for intrinsic properties quite generally depend on the presence of some law or other.

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[3] See Tooley (1997).

Fittingness is a graded notion which yields degrees of intrinsic value, and better or worse vices. In some important sense an attitude can be more or less fitting to its object. On the one hand, there is crying over spilt milk. This response is unfitting, but not terribly unfitting. Then there is suicide over spilt milk. This sort of response is unfitting too, and moreover, it is more unfitting than crying over spilt milk.[4] Now, some readers may find the notion of fittingness to be incomprehensible. Perhaps it is a mere hodgepodge of related concepts without any common strand. Why should we accept this "new" concept of fittingness? As it happens, I cannot think of any experiments that can prove that fittingness is *sui generis*, though I did just give nine reasons for thinking that AAIV is true. I offered cases to illustrate fittingness too. I then tried without success to analyze it in other terms. But I'm open to hearing other options. On the bright side, the notion is a highly flexible one. In different contexts different factors will be relevant to fit. In some contexts the consequences of having an attitude will be relevant to whether it is fitting, in others prudence will be relevant. This is old news. Which reasons are relevant to some matter is partly determined by context, where the contexts selects a set of salient reasons that bear on whether some response is fitting in that contexts.[5] The good news is that introducing fit into the axiological atoms secures intrinsic value and allows us to avoid getting ensnared by a number of problems in value theory.

Hedonism and the Problem of Pain

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[4] The extent that deontic notions are not similarly graded gives us one further reason to reject a deontic treatment of fittingness.

[5] I do not mean to support some full-blown contextualism about fittingness, but rather to make the mild point that the conditions under which an attitude is fitting can vary depending on the circumstance, since which reasons are relevant so varies.

The correct account of pleasure and pain might seem to be incompatible with AAIV as it was stated. One plausible account of physical pleasure has it that a subject is pleased, if and only if, the subject is aware of some pleasurable sensation and desires to be having that sensation when they are aware of it. It would be odd to call an experience pleasing if the subject disliked having the sensation, or if the subject was unaware of having it. An analogous account can be given for pain. A subject is in physical pain, if and only if, the subject is aware of an unpleasant sensation and the subject is averse to having that sensation while they are having it. So both states involve an attitude, namely desire and aversion respectively, and an object, some phenomenal property that is given to the subject in experience. Pain would seem to be intrinsically bad, and pleasure to be intrinsically good. Do either of these states really involve a fitting attitude?

Intuitively, there would be nothing unfitting were we to reverse these attitudes and to desire the phenomenal property associated with pain and be averse to that phenomenal property associated with pleasure. So AAIV cannot count pleasure as an intrinsic good, or pain as an intrinsic bad. Thus, contrary to my claims, AAIV is not able to generate the axiology it claims that it can generate. Furthermore, though it is good to be averse to another's suffering, it does *not* seem to be intrinsically good to be averse to **one's own suffering**. Aversion is a fitting attitude to take towards another's suffering, but the identity of the sufferer as such should be irrelevant to whether aversion is fitting. If so, then AAIV entails that a state of affairs involving aversion to one's own suffering is intrinsically good and this is counterintuitive. Isn't aversion to one's own suffering just *being in pain* or *not liking being in pain*?

Matters get very tricky, very quickly. I assume that veridical pleasure and pain involve *desiring* to have a certain kind of experience, namely, the desire to have an experience that

involves the presence of a phenomenal property, or aversion to an experience that involves the presence of a phenomenal property. When one is aware of this property, one has a sensation. The property itself is not intrinsically good and neither is the sensation. Intuitively, were one to have some sensation and be averse to it, the state of affairs *one's being averse to the sensation* would not be intrinsically good, and were one to have some sensation and desire to have it, the state of affairs *one's desiring to have the sensation* would be intrinsically good. The question is whether AAIV is incompatible with these intuitive assessments. To see whether it is incompatible, we need to ask which of the following states of affairs has intrinsic value or disvalue:

(1) One's being averse to having some sensation while one is having it, or
(2) One's being averse to one's being averse to having some sensation while one is having it.

Supposing that sensations do not have features which make them fitting or unfitting objects of aversion, pains need not involve a fitting attitude. If (1) is correct, then AAIV does not count veridical pains as intrinsically good. Supposing that sensations do have features which make them fitting objects of desire, then pains do involve a fitting attitude. If (1) is correct, then AAIV does count veridical pains as intrinsically good. This is assuming that aversion is a fitting response to certain sensations, namely, the sorts of sensations associated with damage to the body. Of course, there remains a problem even if (1) does not involve a fitting attitude. If it doesn't, though pain will not count as intrinsically good, it will fail to count as intrinsically bad. For some this consequence will be just as counterintuitive. My response is as follows: If (1) is the correct account of pain and it does involve a fitting attitude, I am committed to the interesting consequence that pain is intrinsically good. I think we can counteract the counter-intuitiveness of

this consequence by noting that pain would nonetheless involve the presence of a sensation one wants not to be having. In that case, though it is fitting to take this attitude towards this sensation, the subject is not getting what they want. Thus, painful experiences would remain *bad for their subjects* and impact their well-being negatively. However, if (1) is the correct account of pain and it does not involve a fitting attitude, I am not committed to the interesting consequence that pain is intrinsically good. I am instead committed the interesting consequence that pain is not intrinsically bad. In this case, I would repeat the claim that painful experiences would remain *bad for their subjects* and impact their well-being negatively.

On the other hand, suppose that (2) is the correct account of pain. If aversion is a fitting response to the state of *being averse to having some sensation while one is having it*, then I am committed to pain being intrinsically good. If so, I offer the same error theory for thinking otherwise. However, if (2) is the correct account of pain and aversion is not a fitting response to the state of *being averse to having some sensation while one is having it*, then I am not committed to pain being intrinsically good. However, I would be committed to pain's not being intrinsically bad. If so, I offer the same error theory for thinking otherwise. Either way, on option (1) or (2) I am forced to say that pain is not intrinsically bad, and perhaps intrinsically good. This is because pain does not involve an unfitting response. Quite the opposite seems true: when one suffers veridical pain one is getting matters right. One is representing a state as painful and one is right. One believes that one is in pain, and one is right. One represents that one's body is damaged, and one is right. When a relevantly similar state is suffered by another individual, aversion to their being in that state seems fitting and virtuous. But we should treat our unpleasant sensations, all else equal, on a par with the unpleasant sensations of others. Thus, I conclude somewhat reluctantly that pain is likely to be intrinsically good or, less likely, that pain is neither

intrinsically good nor intrinsically bad. It is *bad for us*. It is also often *instrumentally bad* too.[6] Often pain is associated with sensations and thoughts that, as a matter of contingent psychological fact, prevent us from satisfying other desires and also frustrate other desires. This is a cost that defenders of AAIV must pay, but it is a price that I am willing to pay.

Let's turn to consider hedonism. This view entails that episodes of pleasure are the only intrinsic goods, and that episodes of pain are the only intrinsic bads. We now have an argument against hedonism. Typically, hedonists claim that intuitions to the contrary involve conflating intrinsic value with instrumental value. When it seems that a world where the virtuous receive pleasure is better than one in which the vicious receive pleasure, all else equal, the claim is that these worlds have the same intrinsic value since they contain the same amount of pleasure and pain. We find the more just world to be better because we tacitly suppose that justice would lead to more pleasure overall. The same goes for the presence of virtue and knowledge. Worlds that contain more virtue and knowledge are not thereby better intrinsically, but are more likely to have a greater balance of pain and pleasure in the long run because they contain knowledge and virtue. Why do I import this claim into cases which purport to establish the intrinsic value of knowledge and virtue? The conjecture is that we believe this to *actually* be the case in our world. We are thus not appropriately quarantining facts about the actual world when considering worlds like those in Ross's two worlds argument. Rather, we are importing irrelevant details, namely, information about the causal consequences of the presence of virtues, justice, or knowledge. The intuitions generated in Ross's cases get rejected and replaced with a more simple axiology accompanied by an error theory for those intuitions. The error theory, we might add, would serve to undercut the justification the intuitions might otherwise provide—the thought being that we

[6] Thanks to Graham Oddie for discussion of this point.

would likely confuse instrumental and intrinsic value, and so would likely have the sorts of intuitions that Ross predicts even though these intuitions are mistaken. This would mean that the intuitions in such cases are unreliable, thus giving us a reason to doubt their products. But we need to ask whether this error theory is plausible and whether unadulterated pleasure is itself intrinsically good?

Unfortunately, the error theory is not plausible at all and there are clear counterexamples to hedonism. One clear counterexample has already been given: pleasure in the suffering of another is not intrinsically good. Period. The hedonist is confusing what is *good for a subject* with what is intrinsically good simpliciter. Furthermore, it is false that we suppose that virtue leads to, or increases the likelihood of pleasure, all else equal. It is an open question whether the wicked prosper. *We have no reason at all* to suppose that virtue tends towards pleasure, and vice towards displeasure overall. Often just the opposite seems true. There seem to be happy knuckleheads everywhere! And now having made this fact about the actual world explicit, that we should not believe that virtue actually leads to more overall pleasure or vice to more overall pain, we can return to Ross's two worlds case and consider it again. Suppose that virtue and vice in the worlds under consideration are no more likely to lead to pleasure rather than pain. Keep this fact salient. Which world is better? The world where the virtuous are pleased is still the obvious answer. The potentially distorting feature has now been made salient, and the intuitions remain. The hedonist that wants to hold onto her error theory must now accept that her view is counterintuitive, and the same goes for the rest of Ross's cases. And since there is no plausible way to argue for one axiology over another besides by consulting intuitions about cases, this is enough to place the burden squarely on the shoulders of the hedonist.

We can make the error theory under consideration even more implausible. We need only consider a world where the relevant states are obviously causally isolated, and hence, a world where there has been made salient the assumption that the worlds *cannot* differ in instrumental value. So this time place two people on an island, both male, one vicious and the other virtuous. They are the last remaining humans on the planet and with one day left to live. They cannot interact with one another since there is this giant wall that divides them. You see where this is going. We now consider who gets a bit of happiness before death, who gets a little sadness. When making these changes to the worlds that Ross described my reactions don't change a bit. The best explanation is simply that the intuitions, both widespread and persistent, are simply correct.

It is worth pointing out that the hedonist herself needs to offer an explanation for why *she* thinks that pleasure has intrinsic value. Perhaps it's just obvious she might say. But it seems pretty obvious to me that virtue is intrinsically good. It is not obvious that virtue is intrinsically good *for the subject*, which suggests a potential error theory *for the hedonist's own intuitions*. If the hedonist takes intrinsic goods to simply be personal goods, and if hedonism is a plausible account of personal goods, we can see why she might tacitly infer that the only intrinsic good is pleasure. This is not an unreasonable inference, even if unsound. Nonetheless, pleasure in someone else's suffering is not at all good, even though it may be good for the one enjoying pleasure. Here again I hear an error theory in the offing. The next conjecture is that we mistakenly think pleasure in another's pain is intrinsically bad because, as a matter of actual fact, sadistic pleasures are likely to lead to less overall pleasure. And at this point, one can only refine cases and see where the intuitions lie. In my own case, virtue and pleasure always fall out as intrinsically good, and though I am inclined to treat knowledge similarly, the obviousness of

knowledge or justified belief as an intrinsic good is not quite as secure. At any rate, philosophers will stick in their heels. I'm happy to move along and address those that share the sorts of judgments of Moore and Ross, and more recent detractors from classical hedonism that had championed classical hedonism only to reject it because it couldn't accommodate a notion like.[7]

The Problem of Other Goods

More abundant axiologies are much more difficult to reject than hedonism. Initially, it seems reasonable to claim that achievements, loving relationships, freedom and autonomy, diversity and equality, and perhaps even conscious life as such and even beauty all have intrinsic value. No doubt we *say* such things are good. An adherent to AAIV having denied that there are such intrinsic goods has only a few options available to her. She can claim that these purported goods are personal goods, but not intrinsic goods. She can claim that these purported goods are mere instrumental goods. She can claim that we can analyze these purported goods in terms of knowledge, pleasure and virtue. She can claim that these purported goods are goods of some hitherto unidentified kind. That is, she can identify a good of a certain kind and hope to support the hypothesis that an error has occurred when one claims that these purported goods have intrinsic value. That is, intrinsic value has been conflated with value of some other kind. Which response is the right response? The answer is that it depends on the purported good under dispute. There is no reason to think that the same explanation should be given across cases, we simply have to take the cases one-by-one. I will do that albeit very briefly.

Achievements

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[7] See Feldman 2004 and Kagan (2012).

It is fitting to admire the achievements of others. So it is intrinsically good when we admire achievements. We often desire to achieve various things for ourselves, so achievements are often *good for us*. Achievements tend to lead others to have valuable states of mind like the desire to be a better person, so achievements often have instrumental value too. Finally, achievements often result from the manifestation of virtue, and virtues are intrinsically good. This is to say that achievements are closely wed to a variety of values and even intrinsic value. It would not be surprising to conflate the values of achievements with intrinsic value.

Autonomy

Presumably, autonomy is an important condition on the very possibility of *value for* many of us. Most of our desires involve having them freely satisfied. Moreover, the existence of virtue would seem to require autonomy. For a trait the inculcation of which was never up to one hardly seems to be a virtue. Thus, autonomy is bound up with intrinsic value and value for the subject. Again, it would not be surprising to conflate the values of autonomy with intrinsic value.

Equality

Above I suggested that fittingness can be a function of desert. Equality is a matter of people getting what they deserve. Thus, AAIV is compatible with the claim that a more equal distributions is intrinsically better, all else equal. However, we need not say that equality has intrinsic value in order to say that a more equal distribution of intrinsic value is better.[8] It would be easy to confuse these claims as Ross did.

[8] Huemer (2003) presents a devastating critique of the claim that equality has intrinsic value.

Diversity

I suppose proponents of the intrinsic value of diversity mean that the presence of diversity of culture or diversity of perspectives has intrinsic value. However, diversity of these sorts are often correlated with interactions that lead to virtue and desire satisfaction and also knowledge. Enjoying other cultures is often intrinsically good because it is fitting enjoyment, and it is also good for us because it makes us happy. Moreover, diversity has instrumental value because information acquired in diverse cultures tends to lead to greater sensitivity, which leads to more respectful treatment of others.

Beauty and Nature

It is fitting to admire beautiful things and nature. So admiring such things is intrinsically good. However, it is the awareness and appreciation of both that generates value, not the mere existence of either. Here the mistake is very understandable. Nature and beauty are a source of so much value, but a source of value need not have value itself. The appreciation of beauty and nature is central to what makes a life go well, and also what makes the world good. It would be easy to move from the claim that *x* is crucial for so much intrinsic value, to the claim that *x* has at least some intrinsic value.

Consciousness

Consciousness is a condition on the possibility of value. But were there a conscious being only aware of a light with no preferences and no beliefs, the presence of that consciousness would have no intrinsic value. It would not be surprising to conflate the values of consciousness with intrinsic value.

Loving relationships

The existence of such relations involves the presence of virtue and the satisfaction of desire. Thus, loving relationships often involve intrinsic value and value for the subjects in the relationships. But the mere existence of being related to someone I love has no intrinsic value. What has intrinsic value is loving someone I am in a relationship with, and also enjoying the relationship I am in with someone I love.

The Problem of Partiality

I am going to take it as a datum that it is reasonable and fitting to care more about the perceived interests and well-beings of our loved-ones than the interests and well-beings of strangers. The question is how this could be compatible with AAIV. The answer is that fitting degrees of favor are determined by all of those factors that are relevant to fittingness and only *some* of these factors are related to the intrinsic values of objects. However, before considering this solution I want to explain why I reject three purported solutions that have been recently advanced to answer this objection.

Oddie argues that our responses to value should be sensitive to our relation to the objects we value, that is, to our *distance* from these objects (2005, pp. 218-239). On this view, a certain states of affairs is intrinsically good to degree *n*, if and only if, it is fitting for anyone that contemplates *x* at a zero distance from *x* to desire *x* to degree *n* for its own sake, and for anyone at a non-zero distance from *x* to desire it to a degree less than *n* that is inversely proportional to her distance from *x* (Oddie 2005, p. 222 ff). So if something is closer to us, it is fitting to desire it more, all else equal. Moreover, the more value that something has, it is fitting to desire it more,

all else equal. The notion of distance is to be interpreted non-literally. How the notion is to be interpreted is not clear to me, but there are cases that underlie it. My children are at a closer distance to me than strangers, I am at a closer distance to me than strangers, my personal projects are at a closer distance to me than the projects of strangers. Roughly, the more that my life is wrapped up in *x*, the closer *x* is to me.

Lemos (2011) presents a fitting-attitude account of intrinsic value stated in terms of required preference. On his account, we are *prima facie* required to be indifferent between the well-being of our own child and that of a stranger. However, it can be *all things considered* permissible to prefer the well-being of one's own child to that of a stranger. What generates the *prima facie* requirement is the intrinsic values of the states being contemplated. Those other considerations that serve to defeat this *prima facie* requirement, according to Lemos, might involve consequentialist considerations. He writes: "One might hold a broadly consequentialist view that, for example, the practice or disposition of manifesting deeper concern for the welfare of one's own children is, given the sorts of beings we are, our limitations and natural affections, and the sorts of social relations we form, a practice that in general maximizes the good" (2011, p. 708). This is only one sort of reason that might override the *prima facie* reason to be indifferent, but Lemos offers us another potential reason. He goes on to say that "one might hold that standing in the social relation of friendship to another can impose a defeasible ethical requirement to show greater concern for the friend's welfare than the welfare of a complete stranger" (Lemos 2011, p. 709). Perhaps the thought is that we have stronger obligations, *special duties*, that arise in virtue of our relationships to our children that do not exist between us and strangers.

Zimmerman (2010) has provided a rather different response. According to Zimmerman, it is fitting to be indifferent between states of affairs that have the same *basic* intrinsic value. Moreover, a state of affairs has basic intrinsic value to degree *n*, if and only if, it is fitting for anyone who contemplates it to favor it for its own sake to degree *n*. As it happens the state of affairs of the form [Sarah, being Michael's daughter, suffering to a degree 10, now] and [Stella, being a stranger to Michael, suffering to a degree 10, now] are not evaluatively basic states of affairs. The fitting-attitude account of intrinsic value is then silent about which, if either of these states of affairs, it is fitting to prefer. Now, Zimmerman has a sophisticated account of what states of affairs are basic and I do not want to enter into its details, though we will later. The rough idea is simply that a basic state of affairs must have exactly the relevant information needed to assign it a determinate degree of intrinsic value. The states of affairs above, according to Zimmerman, contain *superfluous* information. This superfluous information is the relational information which encodes Michael's relation to Stella and Sarah.

Now to my reasons for rejecting these three proposals. Oddie labels one relevant factor to be distance, but it is not clear what distance is. It cannot simply be a function of what one cares about, otherwise it will turn out that by simply caring a whole lot about a pet rabbit that it would be fitting to prefer its happiness to the obliteration of China. That cannot be right. But then distance seems to have an objective or normative element, and we would then need to know whether fittingness would simply be a function of the value of the object to which an attitude is directed alongside some obligation to pursue the more valuable state of affairs. We rejected this kind of view above. Moreover, I seem to be closer to myself in distance than my friends or family, but it seems fitting to care as much about their interests as my own. If we hold all else equal, this is impossible on Oddie's view. This doesn't seem to me to be a happy consequence.

Lemos casts his account in terms of *prima facie* obligations and other normative reasons that can override these obligations in various circumstances. To be fair, Lemos confesses that he has not solved the problem of partiality. However, his first potential defeater involves a further good, and we saw earlier that it could be fitting to be amused by a joke even should the world end. So such defeaters are unable to handle such cases. Moreover, we could just suppose no overriding moral reason is present in our case. It would still remain fitting to prefer the well-being of one's child to a stranger. Secondly, though it is true that a friendship might generate a special reason to prefer the interests of a friend over that of a stranger, this is merely to relabel the problem rather than answer it. The question is what is so special about friendship such that its presence changes which responses are fitting? Lemos hasn't solved the problem, he relabeled it.

Zimmerman fails to solve the problem too. He claims that it does not arise for evaluatively basic states of affairs, but why exactly? Let S1 be a basic state of affairs involving the suffering of my child and let S2 be an otherwise similar state of affairs involving the suffering of a stranger's child. Now specify S1 and S2 in such a way that they count as having just the right amount of information on Zimmerman's view. He is committed to the claim that it is fitting to be indifferent between S1 and S2, but isn't this commitment exactly what proponents of the partiality problem are denying? Furthermore, *why* can it be fitting to prefer the counterparts to S1 and S2 that contain further and allegedly superfluous information? On Zimmerman's view, these states of affairs lack intrinsic value altogether *because they contain superfluous information*. Setting that aside, presumably the answer is that the stranger is at further distance from the valuer than is his daughter. This point is uncontroversial. What we want to know is why the stranger is at a further distance and how to justify the claim that these states

of affairs are such that it is fitting to favor them differently. Zimmerman hasn't answered these questions.

So how *do* we solve the problem? The degree to which it is fitting to favor an object is not determined by a simple function from the degree to which that object has intrinsic value, and we can accommodate partiality by noting that other factors determine degrees of fit. What are these other factors? Basically, they are exactly those reasons available to us that do not involve the intrinsic values of the well-being of our children and strangers. These reasons are often prudential. Simply because I care more for my child and because I care more about our relationship gives me *some* reason to favor her interest over a stranger. The potential impact of my being indifferent on others matters too. So does the impact on the development of my own character. And perhaps most importantly here, the very fact that a certain attitude would be fitting can give me a *further* reason to have that very attitude. Of course, this is not the sort of reason we would cite in an explanation for why an attitude is fitting. It is quite close to saying that an attitude is fitting because it is fitting. However, at least sometimes when asked whether it is fitting to favor one state of affairs over another, one of the reasons for answering affirmatively will be that it is simply the fitting attitude to have.

This response does not solve the problem, but I hope it deflates the problem somewhat. We possess very different kinds of reasons to favor the well being of those near and dear to us. It does not follow that we *should* so favor them. But fittingness does not entail requirement in the first place, and perhaps the only reason that the problem of partiality struck us as a problem in the first place is that the problem of partiality was set up in such a way that this identification had already been assumed. Once this assumption is rejected, the partiality problem loses much of its force.

Chapter 4

Avoiding Reduction

0 Introduction

If intrinsic value is real, it is not reducible to the non-evaluative. I argued that basic intrinsic value depends on fitting attitudes that are constituents in states of affairs with intrinsic value. These states of affairs serve as candidates for further fitting attitudes, namely, *favor as such*, in such a way that AAIV is compatible with, and helps to fill out fitting-attitude accounts of intrinsic value. That is, so long as the biconditionals used in stating such accounts are not taken to express *analyses* of intrinsic value. Here I want to argue against fitting-attitude accounts that *do* try to reduce intrinsic value to other evaluative facts, and against naturalistic accounts that attempt to reduce intrinsic value to non-evaluative facts. If I am correct, intrinsic value is irreducible even though it depends on the presence of fitting attitudes, and even though these fitting attitudes depend on the existence of various fundamental facts that underlie them.

Fine claims that "what is required is that we *ground* all of the facts which appear to presuppose the reality of the mental or of value in terms of facts which do not presuppose their reality," and goes on to say that "nothing less and nothing else will do" (Fine 2010, p. 3). I agreed with him earlier that the notion of absolute fundamentality is coherent, and then suggested that value is *conceptual* and exists in a *non-fundamental way*. Maybe I was wrong. Maybe intrinsic value simply exists and is non-fundamental. Nevertheless, were Fine correct, we would need to ground facts about value in terms of fundamental facts. One question we should

ask is how we might do this without thereby reducing value to those fundamental facts. According to Fine, *grounding facts about value in the non-evaluative suffices for reduction* (2001, p. 26). If he is right, then evaluative realism is not even an option.

Another question to ask is how we might ground value without simply *saying* that evaluative facts bear some relation to the non-evaluative facts called 'grounding' and leave matters at that. 'Grounding' is a technical term in need of explication, and whether reductionism is plausible is going to depend on which conception of reduction and grounding that one has in mind. For instance, according to one form of reduction, if *x* is both grounded and numerically distinct from *y*, then *x* does not reduce to *y*. This form of reduction requires the *identity* of the reducing and the reduced property. But given that grounding is a dependence relation and such relations are asymmetric, this form of reductionism is unsatisfiable. Fine must not have this form of reduction in mind. Another form of reduction entails that reduction is an *analytic* relation. On this view, *x* reduces to *y* exactly when *x* can be analyzed in terms of *y*. Both *x* and *y* are understood here to be conceptual in nature. However, grounding is typically intended to be a relation between non-conceptual facts. On neither of these conceptions of reduction does the fact that value is grounded entail that value is reducible. Why should we assume that grounding *does* suffice for reduction?

We will discuss purported grounding relations alongside their relation to reduction in more detail, but for now I want to point out that there certainly is room for skepticism here. Oliver (1996, p. 48) says "we know we are in the realm of murky metaphysics by the presence of the weasel words 'in virtue of,'" and Hofweber (2009, p. 261) suggests that "the most common way to be an esoteric metaphysician in practice is . . . [to] rely on a notion of metaphysical

priority: some notion that claims that certain facts or things are metaphysically more basic than other facts or things." [1] What they suggest has some grain of plausibility.

I believe that we can accept that value is grounded and irreducible, contra Fine, and there are a number of ways in which we might do this. For example, if we identify the good as a conceptual property the application conditions of which are partially evaluative we can avoid reduction. More importantly, whether we identify goodness with a universal or a concept, and whether or not goodness exists in a different way than the fundamental, evaluative facts hold *because* of other evaluative facts, which, in turn, will hold *because* of other non-evaluative facts. This chain of dependence involves an asymmetric relation, and thus entails the non-identity of the facts so chained. This then entails the irreducibility of these facts on those conceptions of reductionism that require identity.

In section 1 I will argue for the irreducibility of evaluative properties. There are two ways to understand properties: to be concepts or to be universals. Though I understand evaluative properties as concepts, were goodness to turn out to be a universal the point could be extended to them too. AAIV entails that necessarily, a state of affairs has the property *being intrinsically good*, if and only if, it has the property *containing a subject with an attitude that fits its object*. Fitting-Attitude Accounts entail that, necessarily, a state of affairs has the property *being intrinsically good*, if and only if, it has the property *being a fitting object of favor as such*. But intuitively something is a fitting object of favor *because* it is intrinsically good, and something is intrinsically good because it involves a fitting attitude. Since these various properties stand in an asymmetric relation, they must be numerically distinct. Furthermore, the fact that some state of affairs *contains a subject with an attitude that fits its object* will necessarily co-obtain with those

[1] See Oliver (1996) and Hofweber (2009).

descriptive facts (perhaps specified by an infinite disjunction or conjunction) that serve as its evaluative subvening base.[2] Because the former property is evaluative and the latter is not, these facts are distinct too. As a consequence there are four intimately related layers of property and fact that are necessarily co-extensive. Thus, if necessary co-extension suffices for identity, we would be saddled with reductionism immediately. I will present an argument against the antecedent of this conditional.

In section 2 I will consider five arguments for thinking that necessary co-extension does suffice for identity developed in Frank Jackson (1998), Graham Oddie (2005), and Bart Streumer (2008). Were they right, these purported four levels of property and fact would collapse into exactly one level. Towards being a good property manager, I will argue that the antecedent of this conditional is false as well.

1 Reducibility

I find the concept of reducibility completely unwieldy. Typically, the thought that entities of one type reduce to entities of another gets articulated by the mantra that reduced entities are nothing *over and above* their reducing entities. However, when a reducibility claim is offered a number of different concepts are typically in play. In no particular order, we should ask whether reduction is intended to be: necessary or contingent, a priori or a posteriori, analytic or synthetic, conceptual or linguistic or ontological, identity-entailing or non-identity entailing, dependence-involving or non-dependence involving, between entities of different kinds or entities of the same kind, between entities which are jointly real or entities at least one of which is less real? There could be other relevant concepts worth considering too, and perhaps some of these

[2] For a defense of this claim see Jackson (1998).

distinctions are either pseudo-distinctions or irrelevant to the question of reduction. The point remains that there are many candidate relations that might serve as a reducibility relation corresponding to permutations of the above concepts, and so it is unclear what one means by 'reduction' unless one gets very precise when asserting one thing *reduces to* something else. The question of which of these candidate relations is relevant to the debate over realism about intrinsic value is unclear on account of this fact.

What I will do is consider only a few strands in the debate over reductionism and suggest that fitting-attitude accounts fail to provide a reduction of intrinsic value to the evaluative on these particular strands. The same goes for purported reductions of intrinsic value, or fitting attitudes to the descriptive. Let's begin by getting a statement of reductionism on the table for consideration. Here is Oddie from his recent book:

> Now suppose there is a type-A entity, X, that is not identical to *any* B-type entity. That is, X is neither a basic entity of type B, nor can it be constructed out of basic entities of type B. It cannot be arrived at by applying any type-preserving operations to basic entities of type B. Then the A-domain *does* seem to be over and above the B-domain. If this is right, then we happily dub the sufficient condition for reducibility necessary as well: that is to say, the A-domain is reducible to the B-domain if and only if every A-type entity is identical to some B-type entity. The real work will come in specifying which constructions are legitimate—that is to say, which operations are type-preserving (2005, p. 146).

(Identity Reductionism) Necessarily, entities from some domain X are reducible to entities from domain Y $=_{df}$ Every entity from X is identical some to some entity from Y.

He goes on to claim that logical operations are type-preserving for properties. So if there are properties F and G of type A, there are also properties F v G, and F & G, and ~F of type A. He then claims that value supervenes on the natural, so that there can be no difference in the

evaluative facts in a world without some difference in the non-evaluative facts. Finally, he argues that necessarily co-extensive properties are identical. The notion of *a property* looms large in his discussion. For Oddie argues that the realist can avoid reduction by maintaining that natural properties have a different structure from evaluative properties. What should we say about this account of reductionism?

Initially, this account seems to be subject to serious difficulties. In the next chapter I argue that states of affairs, understood to be concrete entities, cannot be formed by Boolean operations. I also argue that universals, understood to be fundamental properties of individuals, cannot be formed by Boolean operations. Let me premeditate that discussion to extend this worry to properties, understood to be conceptual entities, and suggest that concepts cannot be formed by Boolean operations. Boolean operators are not construction devices. They do not literally build larger entities from smaller entities. Disjunction and conjunction are functions from pairs of truth-values to truth-values.[3] Negation is a function from a truth-value to a truth-value. However, concepts do not have truth-values. Concepts are thus not suited to serve as inputs for logical operators. I suspect there is a temptation to read off of sentences entities that correspond to the constituents of sentences. For example, 'Mitt is wealthy and obnoxious' contains 'and' as a constituent. We might be tempted to take 'and' to refer to an entity that is a constituent of the truth-maker for the proposition this sentence expresses. Thus, we might be tempted to take there to be an entity, a conjunctive property, that corresponds to 'is wealthy and obnoxious' that can be predicated of Mitt. Here I am denying that there is any such property, understood as a conceptual entity, to be satisfied by Mitt. Rather, the logical form of this one sentence is to be captured as a conjunction of two sentences, namely, the sentence 'Mitt is wealthy' and 'Mitt is obnoxious.'

[3] Or perhaps from a set containing a pair of truth-values to a set containing a truth-value, e.g. $\{T,F\} \rightarrow \{T\}$.

Represented this way there is no temptation to postulate a conjunctive property to serve as an ingredient in a truth-maker for either of these sentences, or even their conjunction. The fusion of two states of affairs suffices to make true the sentence pair.

There is another worry for Oddie's account of reduction. Suppose we have some entity from the evaluative domain and then identify it with some entity from the natural domain. Given that identical entities share all the same properties, we are faced with the daunting task of ascribing *being evaluative* to some natural entity, and *being natural* to an evaluative entity. But the domain of the natural and the domain of the evaluative were supposed to be distinct domains, otherwise there would be no threat in telling the realist that the evaluative is nothing 'over and above' the natural since she could respond in turn. Furthermore, reduction would seem to be an asymmetric relation, whereas identity is not. Presumably, if x reduces to y, we do not want to conclude that y is *also* reducible to x. Oddie's proposal flouts this maxim. Of course, there is *some* notion of asymmetry in his account. It allows that some natural things are not evaluative, but prevents there being any evaluative things that are not themselves natural. Thus, we can say of the domain of the natural that it is asymmetrically related to the domain of the evaluative, even though for some fact about an entity from either domain, we cannot say of that fact that it is asymmetrical to its counterpart. On the other hand, we could imagine a world whose only inhabitants are immaterial minds that are always quite happy and virtuous. In such a world every natural fact is evaluative, whereas every evaluative fact is natural. However, we might wish to be evaluative realists about such worlds, and it is unclear whether Oddie's account allows for this possibility. What of a world that contains one necessary and essentially evil being and nothing else? It could be that every state of affairs in that world is evaluative and natural, and essentially so. But does Oddie's account allow us to describe such a worlds as one in which evaluative

realism is true? I don't see how it can. This point can be put in a slightly different way. Oddie's account makes reduction an external relation. Whether a particular fact *a* of type-A reduces to another particular fact *b* of type-B depends on facts external to *a* and *b*. In particular, it depends on whether there is, or could be some *c* of type-B that is not of type-A. This seems counterintuitive to me. Once we have enumerated the intrinsic properties of *a* and *b*, and the internal relations that hold between facts *a* and *b*, the question as to whether one reduces to the other ought to have been settled. Let's now consider an alternative view.

On this alternative, reduced entities are always conceptual in nature.[4] To use a completely original example, one example of analytical reduction would be the reduction of the concept *bachelor* to the concept *unmarried adult male*. This account makes good sense of the mantra that the reduced is nothing 'over and above' what does the reducing, for *being a bachelor* is nothing over and above *being an unmarried adult male*. Traditionally, analytic statements are conceptual and knowable a priori. So anyone that grasps the concept *unmarried adult male* can, at least in normal circumstances while not under the influence, deductively infer and come to know that whatever satisfies *being an unmarried adult male* satisfies the concept *bachelor*. Moreover, these reductions are asymmetric in nature. Something satisfies *bachelor* because it satisfies *unmarried adult male* but not vice versa. Further, the account is not wedded to a Boolean account of concept formation. However, there is some temptation to claim that to be a bachelor *just is* to be an unmarried adult male, which connotes an identity between these concepts. Such an identity is incompatible with there being an asymmetric relation between these concepts. Nevertheless, I suggest that we reject the temptation to infer from the fact that to be x *just is* to be y, that x = y.

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[4] Interestingly, this proposal follows from the account defended earlier according to which all non-fundamental properties are conceptual. Presumably, all fundamental properties are irreducible, and so the only candidates for reduction will be concepts.

For other cases reveal that *just is* is not ubiquitous. For example, *water just is H_2O* though samples of water are composed of, or constituted from, samples of H_2O. Both composition and constitution are asymmetric relations. Though we may *say* that a whole *just is* its parts taken together, strictly speaking, whereas the parts are many, the whole is one. They are not identical. So we have the following alternative.

(Analytic Reductionism) Necessarily, entities from some domain X are reducible to entities from domain Y $=_{df}$ Every entity from X is identical to some entity from Y.

Here the relevant facts are about whether some concept, or concepts would be satisfied. This view of reduction is not without its problems either. There are many purported cases, standard cases of reduction, that would not qualify as reductions on this account. Here are just a few salient cases: samples of water reduce to samples of H_2O, biological facts reduce to chemical facts, facts about wholes reduce to facts about parts and their arrangements, and according to Fine, the non-fundamental reduces to the fundamental. These cases run afoul of analytical reductionism for one of three reasons. First, the relevant facts are not conceptual in nature. The fundamental facts are not conceptual in nature, so this view entails that nothing could reduce to the fundamental. Second, the relevant reducibility is not a priori. We discovered that water is H_2O by making observations, not by doing conceptual analysis. Third, even if the reducibility were a priori, there are some facts that we would not, or could not possess that might nonetheless reduce to something else. This last worry suggests that we qualify 'can be reduced' and say 'can be reduced *in principle*.'

There is a large problem looming for this approach. Often we can infer a priori that some statement is true only against a set of background statements and definitions. For example, that 3 is greater than 2 is arguably a priori deducible from more basic facts and definitions. We can define the *greater than* relation in such a way that 'x *is greater than* y' $=_{df}$ For all x and y, there is some z such that x is the successor of z and y is not the successor of z. Given this definition together with a handful of definitions that identify numbers with sets, we can say the fact *that 3 > 2* reduces to more basic facts about sets and the successor function. This reduction would be both a priori and conceptual in nature. But what do we stay about the status of the most basic definitions that permit this sort of reduction, definitions like the one provided above? They are *stipulative*. Presumably, whether one thing reduces to another should transcend stipulation. There are perfectly general, non-stipulative facts about which things reduce to others, and the present approach appears to flout this basic fact about reduction. On the other hand, if these definitions are not stipulative, but rather partly reveal the nature of the 'greater than' relation, then we are stuck with some non-analytic necessary connection between entities on the left and right-hand side of the definition.

Let's return to the account suggested earlier by Fine. On this view, there is a grounding relation that plays a central role in metaphysics. There are purported cases of grounding we are familiar with.[5] For example, facts about mental states are grounded in facts about brain states, facts about meaning are grounded in facts about use, intention and causal relations, facts about regularities in nature are grounded in facts about causal relations, facts about dispositional properties of objects are grounded in facts about their categorical properties, facts about determinable properties are grounded in facts about determinate properties, facts about properties

[5] These examples are taken from Schaffer (2010).

of wholes are grounded in facts about properties of their parts, facts about the identities of sets are grounded in facts about the existence of their members, and finally, facts about truth are grounded in facts about being.

I will discuss grounding in the next chapter. For now, we need not claim that there is a unique grounding relation that underwrites these cases, or even that these cases all involve some form of grounding. What matters is that there is some notion of *ontological* dependence that is different from causal dependence. One can think of this relation as one-way supervenience, though the presence of the intended relation is supposed to explain why supervenience holds in particular cases. So this relation is synchronic and *explanatory* and will inherit formal properties that govern explanatory relations quite generally. For instance, grounding will be a transitive relation: if x grounds y and y grounds z, then x grounds z.

(Grounding Reductionism) Necessarily, some fact about entities from domain X are reducible to some fact about entities from domain Y $=_{df}$ Every fact about some entity from X is grounded in some fact about entities from Y.

Value realist as well as realist about *anything that is non-fundamental* should pause to photograph this account of reduction. According to Fine, only the fundamental is real because grounding suffices for reduction and only the fundamental is not itself grounded in the fundamental. Why does Fine think this? Because he endorses an absolute conception of fundamentality. To see what such a conception consists in we can contrast it with its rival. According to this rival account, the fundamental is just that which is more fundamental than everything else. That is, there is an existence-entailing relation *being more fundamental than*, or

being more basic than, such that whenever an entity x stands on "the left hand side" of this relation to something and never on "the right hand side" of this relation to something, then that entity is fundamental. In fact, the rival account says that this is what being fundamental consists in, so that *being fundamental* reduces to these more basic comparative facts. Fine and others have denied this conception.[6] On the absolutist conception, there is an absolute notion of reality *as it is in itself*, but there is also a grounding relation that plays a role analogous to the role that the comparativist's relation of *being more fundamental than* plays.

Interestingly, this conception of reduction both succeeds and fails to capture the mantra of the reduced being *nothing over and above* the reducing entity. On this view, the grounded is not real. This account collapses nihilism about some domain of entities into reductionism about that domain. This is a bad consequence. Because one thinks that water is reducible to H_2O, it doesn't follow that one should thereby deny the reality of water. The good consequence is that by appealing to an explanatory relation to characterize reduction, we can actually see why the reduced would be *nothing over and above* what reduces it. For if x explains y and y explains z, then x explains z. In this case y turns out to be explanatorily idle. We can generalize this point to entities the existence of which are explained by facts that ground them: facts about these entities add nothing to the explanation of anything whatsoever. For an entity to be *over and above* another entity would, at first blush, seem to require it to have some role in the explanation of at least something, but on this account there is no such role for grounded entities.

Our question is now whether intrinsic value is reducible on any of these accounts of reduction. In particular, do those four levels mentioned above collapse into one? Recall those four levels:

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[6] See Sider (2012).

(Base Level) The relevant fundamental descriptive facts

($Level_1$) The fact that S takes a fitting attitude A towards O

($Level_2$) The fact that that S's taking a fitting attitude A towards O is intrinsically good

($Level_3$) The fact that it is fitting to favor S's taking a fitting attitude A towards O as such

First, I claim that ($Level_3$) holds because ($Level_2$) holds, but not vice versa; that ($Level_2$) holds because ($Level_1$), but not vice versa; and that ($Level_1$) holds because (Base Level) holds, but not vice versa. Second, I argued earlier that the facts at (Base Level) are non-conceptual, but facts at all the other levels are conceptual. Third, I claim that these claims are all necessary in the strongest sense. Fourth, I tentatively accepted Fine's absolute notion of reality and the claim that the explanatory connections between these levels is some form of grounding, or ontological dependence. Finally, I hypothesized that the way in which things exist at (Base Level) is fundamentally different than the way in which things exist at other levels, though I did not accept that this guarantees that entities at "higher levels" are less real. I left this as an open question. So does Moorean Realism succumb to reduction?

First, given that explanation is an asymmetric relation, Moorean Realism does *not* succumb to Identity Reductionism. Each level is distinct because they stand in an explanatory relation to one another. Second, Moorean Realism *does* succumb to Analytic Reductionism, at least for levels 1 through 3. In fact, I claim to have deduced a priori level 3 from level 2, and level 2 from level 1. Thus, I think that level 3 is an analytic consequence of level 1, though not an analytic consequence of (Base Level). However, two things are worth mentioning: if this is correct, fitting-attitude accounts of intrinsic value that purport to be analyses are mistaken. This

is because they have gotten the order of explanation backwards. Something is not intrinsically good because it is fitting to favor it as such, rather it is fitting to favor something as such because it is intrinsically good. This sounds extremely plausible. Moreover, since facts at levels 1 through 3 are all in some sense evaluative, there is no threat of reducing facts about value to non-evaluative facts at these levels. Furthermore, there is no threat of level 1 being an analytic consequence from facts that describe (Base Level). This is because these facts are descriptive and fundamental. One would have to do research, actual empirical investigation to uncover these facts. Thus, the entailment would not be knowable a priori. This is especially plausible given that these facts are not conceptual in nature, whereas Analytic Reductionism holds only for facts that *are* conceptual in nature.

Third, Moorean Realism does succumb to Grounding Reductionism. On my view, everything is reducible *in Fine's sense* to the fundamental. This holds for everything non-fundamental too, just as Fine suggests, because everything is grounded in the fundamental. The question is whether Finean reduction threatens Moorean realism? It does not. This is because chairs are clearly real and so if value turns out to be just as real as a chair, this form of realism makes value real enough for me. More importantly, I argued that value exists in a different way than the fundamental. Even if value reduces, in Fine's sense, its reality is in no way threatened by being grounded. Fine doesn't accept that there are different ways for things to exist, so perhaps he cannot say this. But we are not forced to follow him here. Furthermore, I suggested that the application conditions for the concept goodness are evaluative. The concept applies just when virtuous, or otherwise competent and sensitive thinkers intuit that the concept would apply. This makes goodness remarkably different from fundamental facts and properties. What it takes for something to instantiate a fundamental universal is determined non-evaluatively and solely by

nature or reality as it is in itself. What it takes for something to satisfy an evaluative concept is determined evaluatively and partly by mental states of subjects. Granting Fine his account of reduction, we should be happy to admit that value reduces to the fundamental. But this sort of reduction is compatible with full-blooded realism.

But, of course, Fine likely has something much stronger in mind when he claims that grounding suffices for reduction. He takes grounded entities to be *nothing over and above* what grounds them. He is offering an account of reduction, isn't he? In fact, he argues that if "something" is grounded, it is not real at all (2001, pp. 26-29). However, if this is the case, I will happily retract my claim that Moorean Realism is compatible with Grounding Reductionism. My realist believes that value is real, just differently real from the fundamental reality that anchors it. And, again, even if this view of existence is wrong, my realist will claim that value exists in some univocal sense of 'exists,' but has a fundamentally different kind of property than those fundamental properties Fine countenances as real. In this case evaluative facts would be *over and above* whatever fundamental facts may exist because these facts possess an evaluative property of a fundamentally different kind than the sorts of properties that fundamental facts possess, even though the evaluative ontologically depends on the non-evaluative in some sense of 'depends.' However, on this option the realist should deny that the sense of 'depends' is explanatory in the sense that what it is to be good consists in, or is nothing over and above, the non-evaluative. Instead, they should claim that evaluative properties are brute, that is, they do not succumb to a deeper explanation even if their existence depends on some non-evaluative properties.

None of these accounts of reductionism threaten the irreducibility of value. However, there is a threat from another direction. If evaluative facts are identical to facts that can be adequately described without evaluative language, there is some sense in which value has been

reduced. A quick argument poses a threat to realism: necessarily co-extensive properties are identical. The properties in ($Level_3$) through (Base Level) are necessarily co-extensive. Thus, they are identical and value is reducible after all. So grounding is not asymmetric after all, or else these levels are not grounded in one another the way I suggested that they are. Let's now turn to this worry.

2 Necessary Co-extension and Property Identity

Initially, there would seem to be direct counterexamples to the claim that necessary co-extension suffices for the identity of properties. There are "impossible properties." The property of *being a counterexample to Goldbach's Conjecture* and *being a counterexample to the Riemann Hypothesis* are different properties though, assuming these mathematical claims are true, these properties are essentially possessed by nothing.[7] There are "necessary properties." The property of *being such that 2 + 2 = 4* and the property of *being red or not being red* and the property of *being such that God exists*, assuming that God exists and is necessary, are different properties. These properties are necessarily possessed by all and only the same things, namely, everything. There are "grounding properties." The property of *being identical to Fred* and the property of *being a member of the singleton set {Fred}* are different properties. However, these properties are necessarily possessed only by Fred. Or consider the state of affairs of *Fred's being pleased*. The property of *being identical to the state of affairs of Fred's being pleased* is a different from the property of *being the truthmaker for the proposition that Fred is pleased*. However, these properties are possessed, and necessarily, by all and only the same things, namely, the state of affairs of *Fred's being pleased*. There are "intrinsic properties." The property of *being identical*

[7] Thanks to Graeme Forbes for suggesting a similar example.

to Fred is intrinsic, whereas *being numerically distinct from anything not-identical to Fred* is extrinsic. These properties are possessed, and necessarily, only by Fred. Surely these properties are not identical since the former is intrinsic and the latter is not. The property *being the sole member of the singleton-set {Obama}* is extrinsic to Obama whereas *being identical with Obama* is intrinsic. These properties are necessarily possessed only by Obama. Finally, there are "indexed properties." For example, the property of *being identical to Plato* and *being the actual philosopher who I am considering right now* are distinct if we suppose 'actual' serves as an indexical. The latter involves me and the former property does not. Nonetheless, these properties are necessarily possessed only by Plato.

Let me present a short argument towards explaining why I believe the answer to be no. I hinted at a quick argument against reductionism earlier, but here it is spelt out in more detail. First, suppose (1) that some predicate 'F' is necessarily co-extensive with 'G.' Let 'F' and 'G' pick out properties q and r respectively, where necessarily, x has q if and only if x has r. Second, suppose (2) that necessarily co-extensive predicates express the same property. From (1) and (2) it follows that $q = r$. Third, suppose (3) that the property expressed by 'F' grounds the property expressed by 'G.' From (1) and (3) it follows that q grounds r, or, in terms of facts, the fact *that x has q* grounds the fact *that x has r*. Grounding is asymmetric. To illustrate: Obama exists and is the sole member of the singleton set {Obama}. The fact *that {Obama} exists* is grounded in the fact *that Obama exists*, but not vice versa. From (1) and (2) it follows that 'F' and 'G' express the same property q, and from (3) it follows that q grounds q. Because grounding is asymmetric it follows that $q \neq q$, and because identity is symmetric it follows that $q = q$. Contradiction.

Next, substitute any pair of levels for 'F' and 'G' and run the same argument. This leaves us with three options: deny that any pair of these levels is grounded in the other, deny that

necessarily co-extensive properties are identical, or else deny that explanatory relations are asymmetric. According to this argument, we should do a Moorean shift on the quick argument I offered at the end of the last section. We should reject the claim that necessarily co-extensive properties are identical. This argument, together with those intuitive counterexamples, seem to show that necessary co-extension does not suffice for property identity. This is a good thing since this claim is the primary threat to the irreducibility of intrinsic value. Let's now consider five objections.

The Problem of Fine-Grained Numbers

> Take the cube root of 729 and the square of 3. It seems that one could be focusing on the former without focusing on the latter, and one could focus on both without focusing on the number 9...What we have here, in addition to the number 9, are not mysterious fine-grained numbers, but two ways of arriving at the number 9, two different intellectual procedures which yield that number (2005, 149-51).

Here Oddie is clearly correct that nine is not associated with some fine-grained numbers, but rather, that we have different ways of specifying nine. He challenges us to then explain why we shouldn't say *exactly the same thing* for expressions like 'is intrinsically good' and 'is fitting to favor as such' and whatever predicate purportedly describes the non-evaluative base for states of affairs that are intrinsically good. Why shouldn't we conclude that these expressions pick out the very same property but simply in different ways.

To answer this challenge let's suppose that, in addition to the property of *being the number nine*, there is an individual number nine, which is the only thing in the world with this property. If we interpret the expressions 'the cube root of 729' and 'the square of 3' as singular referring expressions, alongside Oddie, I think that these expressions clearly refer to the number nine. However, if we nominalize these expressions to 'being the cube root of 729' and 'being the

square of 3,' so that these expressions denote some property, not an individual that has some property, we should ask whether these expressions denote the property of *being the number nine* or *two different properties*. Presumably, if Oddie's argument is going to work, these expressions must denote the very same property. Do they denote the same property? I don't think so. Consider the expressions 'being my favorite color' and 'being blue' and suppose, as is true, *that blue is my favorite color*. We have two expressions that *can* pick out the same property, namely, *blueness*. But these expressions can pick out distinct properties too. For example, the property of *being my favorite color* is clearly different from *being blue*. The former property is a second-order property of *being blue* whereas the latter is a first-order property of blue things. Moreover, it is a contingent truth that blue is my favorite color, whereas it is a necessary truth that blue is blue.[8] When nominalized, the expressions 'my favorite color' and 'blue' can denote different properties. Similarly, the predicates 'is the square of 3' and 'is the cube root of 729' can pick out the number nine if we interpret them as singular referring expressions, and they can pick out different properties too. One property involves the squaring function as a constituent and the other does not. Thus, there are two different properties possessed, necessarily and only by the number nine.

Intuitively, with the number nine there is exactly one number that can be referred to in multiple ways, and so we can rightly deny that the fact that there are multiple ways of specifying the number nine yields additional fine-grained numbers. However, this intuition is lacking in the case of nominalized predicates that pick out properties instead of individuals. On the contrary, such cases seem to involve predicates that can pick out the same individual in one mode, but can attribute different properties to the individual they have selected.

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[8] These properties are not necessarily co-instantiated since I could have had a different favorite color. To avoid this worry we can instead consider the property of *being my actual favorite color*.

The Problem Multiplying Properties

> However, even if properties can consist of parts, the predicates 'is a closed figure that has three sides' and 'is a closed figure that has three angles' could both ascribe a single property that consists of the same three parts: being a closed figure, having three sides, and having three angles. If non-reductive realists deny this, they seem to assume that we can read off the composition of a property from the composition of the predicate that ascribes this property. If this were the case, the predicates 'is a closed figure that has three sides,' 'is a closed figure that has three angles,' 'is a triangle,' 'is a Δ,' and 'is a closed figure that has six half-sides and six half-angles' would ascribe five different properties. And, surely, these predicates do not ascribe five different properties (2011, p. 344).

What should we make of Streumer's argument? First, he is correct that one needn't assume that the composition of a property can be read-off from predicates that ascribe them. Second, as mentioned above, if these predicates are intended to pick out an individual we could agree that each picks out the very same individual, namely, a particular triangle. Third, we have been offered nothing more than a bold assertion that we do not have five different properties here. I think we do have five different properties and that there are infinitely many more properties to be found in their vicinity. Again, I am understanding the relevant properties to be concepts that can be specified in different ways.

Perhaps Streumer means to defer to some slogan like "we shouldn't multiply entities beyond necessity" when giving his argument. If this is what he intends, the argument given at the beginning of this paper provides one good reason for multiplying properties, namely, because such properties ground one another. At any rate, perhaps the blow of multiplication can be softened as follows: First, the relevant properties are not fundamental. Second, we are already committed to uncountably many properties, namely, those identity properties that correspond to each of the real numbers. We are not multiplying fundamental properties and we are likely stuck

with uncountably many concepts anyways. What I suspect is that the "don't multiply" intuition behind Streumer's argument would be more compelling were it aimed at fundamental properties. However, the only fundamental properties countenanced here are those that describe the non-evaluative base for evaluative properties and even Streumer accepts their existence.

The Problem of Interpretation

> First, it is hard to see how we could ever be justified in interpreting a language user's use of, say, 'right' as picking out a property distinct from that which the relevant purely descriptive predicates pick out, for we know that the complete story about how and when the language user produces the the word 'right' can be given descriptively (1998, p. 127).

Let's consider 'is intrinsically good' rather than 'right' while supposing that "interpreting a language user's use" of the expression 'is intrinsically good' is just to interpret what she *means* by so using this expression. Here then is what I mean when using the expression 'is intrinsically good' to attribute a property to a state of affairs: (1) The state of affairs has this simple property, (2) the possession of this property is grounded in the non-evaluative features of the state of affairs, and (3) the possession of this property makes the state of affairs fitting to be favored by those aware of it. Of course, the relevant descriptive predicate picks out a property that *lacks* some of these features. The relevant descriptive predicate does *not* pick out a simple property, but either purports to pick out a massively disjunctive one, or instead picks out a complex fusions of descriptive properties. Moreover, the descriptive predicate picks out a property that grounds value, but is not itself grounded. So I don't think it is hard to see how we could be justified in interpreting a language user's use of the expression 'is intrinsically good' to be

picking out a different property than she would using the relevant descriptive predicate. I have just provided one story of how such an interpretation might go.[9]

The Problem of Idlers

> Secondly, it is hard to see how the further properties could be of any ethical significance. Are we supposed to take seriously someone who says, 'I see that this action will kill many and save no-one, but that is not enough to justify my not doing it; what really matters is that the action has an extra property that only ethical terms are suited to pick out'? In short, the extra properties would be ethical 'idlers' (1998, p. 127).

This argument may sound familiar. Ethical properties, were they anything other than the descriptive properties associated with them, would be epiphenomenal. All the explanatory work that needs to be done by appealing to evaluative properties can be done without reference to evaluative properties. Thus, evaluative properties would be explanatorily idle.

One response to this argument would be to accept the claim that ethical properties are idlers. Perhaps *being intrinsically good* is needed neither to explain why some state of affairs has ethical significance, nor does this property enter into any causal relations. Suppose that we do accept that evaluative properties are idlers in this sense. What follows? Nothing *obviously* follows since it is not obvious that we should believe in x only if the existence of x is required to explain something we antecedently believe in. There is nothing incoherent in the idea that there

[9] For a similar response See Michael Huemer (Ibid.) pp. 207-208. Huemer writes, "When we think about certain kinds of events (say), we see intuitively that they have this further, evaluative property in addition to their natural properties, and we intend our word 'good' to refer to that property. We intend to refer to the supervenient property, not the subvenient one; to the property the recognition of which inherently constitutes a reason for action; to the simple property that explains what [the natural properties] have in common."

are properties that simply don't explain. In any event, much more needs to be said about why this response would be a bad response.[10]

But I do not believe that *being intrinsically good* is idle. It plays an important role unifying states of affairs that it is fitting to favor as such. Additionally, it unifies pleasure, knowledge, and virtue. Thus, *being intrinsically good* is not an idle property in this sense. Moreover, *being intrinsically good* plays a role justifying a course of action. Suppose someone says this time that "I see that this course of action causes situations that are intrinsically good, and I see that there are no ways in which it is at all bad, but this doesn't help to justify my performing this action." This speech sounds no less strange than Jackson's own. Arguably, the fact that we are aware that some action has what we take to be good consequences gives us reason to perform it. We can be aware of this fact while being totally *unaware* of the relevant fundamental facts associated with the action's consequences.

The Problem of Twinning

> And, finally, we can distinguish a more and a less extreme view. The extreme view says that for every (contingent) descriptive way there is, there is a quite distinct, necessarily co-extensive non-descriptive--ethical as it might be--way there is. This extreme version is hard to take seriously. It seems an absurdly anti-Occamist multiplication of properties: for *every* descriptive property, we have a corresponding non-descriptive one! But if the idea is that the duplication only happens occasionally, where is the principled basis for saying when it happens and when it does not? What is special about the descriptive properties that have twins from those that do not? It is hard to give a non-arbitrary answer to this question. What is more, it is hard to see how we could be assured that the twinning occurs when and only when we use ethical terms (1998, p. 127).

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[10] For an extended response to this objection see Russ Shafer-Landau's (2003) p. 98-115. According to Shafer-Landau, evaluative properties *inherit* causal powers from their base. Thus, evaluative properties figure into causal explanations.

There is an easy answer to the question "when does twinning occur?" It occurs exactly when some state of affairs obtains and has value. Hedonists argue that twinning occurs just when a state of affairs that involves pleasure obtains. The pluralist may say that twinning occurs just when a state of affairs involving knowledge, virtue, or pleasure obtains. As I put matters earlier, twinning occurs just in case there is a state of affairs that contains a subject that takes some fitting attitude towards some object. The principled basis that Jackson is looking for, unless I am misreading him, is nothing other than the general axiological question of "What has intrinsic value?" However, a good question does not constitute a good objection.

Were this objection sound it would cast doubt on the existence of non-fundamental properties that are not possessed by everything. For example, some non-fundamental things are chairs and others are not. When does twinning occur for chairs? I don't have an analysis on hand, but I suspect that being unable to answer this question by filling out necessary and sufficient conditions in no way impugns the existence of furniture.[11] Of course, those working in axiology will disagree about the conditions under which things have intrinsic value and what, if anything, does have intrinsic value. These questions are open and not, I think, incoherent or unanswerable.

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[11] Notice that if the connection between value and its grounds were contingent, Jackson's question would be both difficult and crucial to answer. Like Jackson, I believe that evaluative properties twin when their non-evaluative bases twin. However, if twinning were contingent, so that it can fail to occur even when the relevant non-evaluative grounds are present, we should wonder why it occurs when it does. It's hard to see how we could answer this question in a satisfactory way. Nonetheless, I do *not* think that the relation between value and its ground is a contingent one since, as I suggested above, a modal principle for grounding is plausible, i.e. if x grounds y, then necessarily, if x exists, then y exists.

There is, however, one worry lurking. I claim that intrinsic value is grounded in fitting attitudes. So intrinsic value is grounded in attitudes. So intrinsic value is grounded in consciousness. In a world without consciousness, there wold be no intrinsic value. If there could be worlds that are duplicates at the fundamental level that are not themselves duplicates with respect to facts about consciousness, that is, if consciousness is an emergent property, then intrinsic value would likewise be emergent and Jackson's argument could be pushed along. How we answer this question will depend on how we answer the hard problem of consciousness. It is a hard problem that I cannot deal with here.

Chapter 5

Metaphysics for Intrinsic Value

0 Introduction

Moore endorsed three kinds of pluralism. He accepted that there are different ways to exist. In chapter 1 I attempted to articulate these different ways. He accepted that there are different kinds of things that have intrinsic value, claiming that knowledge, pleasure, and virtue generate intrinsic value. In chapter 2 I attempted to unify these intrinsic goods, claiming that their common core involves having a fitting attitude. Moore also accepted that there are different kinds of *bearers* of intrinsic value. He claimed that individuals, states of affairs, and properties can have intrinsic value. The first two kinds of pluralism Moore defended are very plausible. This latter form of pluralism is widely rejected for good reason. Philosophers working in value theory nowadays endorse monism about value bearers. Here is Ross's early statement of this view:

> The difficulty can, I think, be removed by ceasing to speak simply of pleasure and pain as good or bad, and by asking more carefully what we mean. Consideration of the question is aided if we adopt the view (tentatively adopted already) that what is good or bad is always something properly expressed by a that-clause, i.e. an objective, or as I should prefer to call it, a *fact*. If we look at the matter thus, I think we can agree that the fact that a sentient being is in a state of pleasure is always in itself good, and the fact that a sentient being is in a state of pain always in itself bad, when this fact is not an element in a more complex fact having some other characteristic relevant to goodness or badness (1930, p. 136).

Interestingly, Moore later endorsed Ross's account. This was the right thing to do. Attributions of intrinsic value to entities other than facts can be explained away. Happiness is not

itself good, but it is good when individuals are happy. Jon Stewart is not himself intrinsically good, but it is good that Jon Stewart exists. On their own, properties and individuals are too lightweight to bear the weight of the good, so they must somehow bear it together. The received view is that either states of affairs or facts are the unique bearers of intrinsic value.[1] However, the distinction between facts and states of affairs is a matter of terminology rather than substance. For example, *Smith's being happy* serves as a candidate bearer of intrinsic value and it would get called a state of affairs. *The fact that Smith is happy* is likewise a candidate bearer of intrinsic value and it would get called a fact. Were Smith to be happy, we would not need to accept two instances of intrinsic value. That would, perhaps to Smith's chagrin, lead to double-counting Smith's happiness and its value. So I will assume that fact-talk and states-of-affairs-talk center on the same kind of entity. Such talk centers on entities that somehow involve individuals and n-place properties that together play the role of making true various statements of fact.

Intuitively, both experiences and lives can have intrinsic value. Were one to accept this claim, would it commit one to the view that different kinds of entity have intrinsic value? Lives are one thing and experiences are quite another. The received view might thus be committed to pluralism after all.[2] It doesn't. Lives, worlds, and the outcomes of our actions are all states of affairs. In particular, if these further entities are merely fusions of states of affairs and fusion is a type-preserving operation, these entities are all of the type. I think this is what we should say. If something has exactly two states of affairs as proper parts, it is a state of affairs itself. This picture of value bearers is familiar and plausible. Recall that realism requires that goodness be an objective property that is sometimes satisfied. So the good must have something to bear it. If

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[1] See Carlson (1997), Zimmerman (2001), Lemos (1994), and Feldman (2000) to name a few.

[2] Feldman argues pluralism is trivially true (2005) because lives have intrinsic value as well as experiences.

there are no states of affairs to have value, then defenders of realism will need to find adequate surrogates with which to replace them. Neither individuals nor universals can achieve this task in isolation. For if AAIV is a plausible account of the grounds of the good, then the presence of fitting attitudes require both properties and individuals. Though I have not given a metaphysics of properties understood to be concepts, we can understand them to be either similar to universals or tropes. On this question, I take no stand. What is important is that the reality of states of affairs has been challenged. An account of intrinsic value must address these challenges head on and that is the project of this chapter.

In section 1 I outline an account of states of affairs as mereological fusions of individuals and properties. Accordingly, all atomic states of affairs are wholes that contain their constituents as mereological parts, and all non-atomic states of affairs are formed by fusion. Whenever there is some plurality of states of affairs, there is a whole that contains exactly these states of affairs as proper parts. In section 2 I offer three reasons for thinking this account is mistaken. First, Bradley's regress entails that there is nothing to convert a mere fusion of individuals and universals into a genuine unity, which would be required were states of affairs to be composed of their parts. Second, the possibility of self-exemplifying properties is incompatible with supplementation principles entailed by the parthood relation. Third, with non-symmetric relations like *John's facing Mary* and *Mary's facing John*, we have distinct wholes that share the same parts. This would be impossible were a whole the fusion of its parts. In section 3 an account of states of affairs emerges according which atomic states of affairs lack parts and are therefore simple. That is, if mereology offers the only mode of composition, we should accept that atoms are simple. I explain how this account avoids hitherto unnoticed problems in value theory. For example, it avoids *the problem of the many* for evaluatively basic states of affairs. In

section 4 I provide an account of intrinsicness for intrinsic properties. Moore claimed that intrinsic value can be had in absolute isolation and that it must be shared between duplicates. I offer an account that rejects these claims, but allows intrinsic properties the flexibility they need to meet the demands of the good. Finally, in section 5 I consider and answer a couple of worries.

1 A Standard Account

There are two lines of thought when it comes to understanding states of affairs. One can take them to be *concrete* along the lines of Armstrong (1997), or else one can take them to be *abstract* a long the lines of Chisholm (1971) and Plantinga (1974). This is assuming that there is a difference between being concrete and abstract. Distinguishing matters this way should already raise eyebrows. If there are abstract things like the number 2, isn't there a state of affairs *2's being even*? Does a defender of states of affairs as concrete count that state of affairs as concrete? There are two chairs in front of me. The state of affairs *there being two chairs in front of me* seems concrete, but it involves the number two. Does that make it abstract? Perhaps defenders of states of affairs deny abstracta. However, states of affairs involve properties. Never mind what a property *is*, the state of affairs of *there being no square circles* seem abstract. Perhaps defenders of states of affairs deny that negation can be among their constituents. The more examples one gives the more one feels that defenders of states of affairs as concrete are pushed to accept further, more controversial claims to make it clear how their view differs from defenders of states of affairs as abstract. But I said I don't really understand the difference between the concrete and the abstract, so I will let these issues pass. I'm going to assume that states of affairs are concrete. I'm going to stipulate that what I mean when I say this is that all states of affairs exist, are actual, and obtain. They are literally pieces of physical reality, even if they can involve numbers (if such

there be). They are non-repeatable entities. One and the very same state of affairs never exists at different times, or at different locations. I take myself to be following Armstrong (1995) at least in these respects.

States of affairs are introduced to play a number of roles. First, states of affairs get introduced to serve as truthmakers for true propositions. *That Smith is happy* serves as the proposition associated with the sentence 'Smith is Happy' and as the content my belief *that Smith is happy*. Supposing *that Smith is Happy is true* is true, there is something that makes true this proposition, namely, the state of affairs *Smith's being happy*. Second, states of affairs get introduced to serve as the objects of attitudes, i.e. they are what beliefs are directed towards. Looking over the quad at Western Washington University, I now believe *that the pavement outside is wet*. There is a true proposition, *that the pavement outside is wet*, that serves as the content of my belief, but my belief isn't *about* this proposition. My belief is not about something abstract or linguistic even if the vehicle by which I enjoy this belief is a proposition My belief is at least about pavement and wetness. Third, states of affairs are relata of causal relations. The state of affairs *the match's being struck* against background conditions: *oxygen's being present in the room*, and *the match's being dry*, etc. are states of affairs the occurrence of which cause an effect, namely, the *match's being lit*. Moreover, it is plausible to think these causal relations obtain precisely because these states of affairs have constituent universals that stand in nomic relations to one another. On such a view, particular causal facts are grounded in more basic facts about causal laws.

Against this backdrop of assumptions, how should we understand relations that states of affairs bear to their constituents? According to one account, an account that I will call 'Compositionalism,' a state of affairs is simply a whole composed of parts. David Lewis gets

quoted as saying that "the idea of non-mereological composition is mysterious." If he is correct, this suggests that, if states of affairs have constituents and if we aim to uncover some non-mysterious account of how states of affairs are related to these constituents, we should endorse Compositionalism (See Armstrong 1997, p. 187). Not everyone agrees with Lewis (See Armstrong 1997). On this alternative to Booleanism, all atomic states of affairs are fusions of individuals and properties—and, perhaps an instantiation relation, but more on that later—whereas complex states of affairs are fusions of atomic states of affairs. By 'fusion' I mean that these entities are parts of some further entity, while that entity has no further parts not among them. The notion of a fusion is central to the Compositionalist's account of parthood. They also claim that all fusions are unique, and no collection of entities composes distinct objects at the same time. Finally, they take the parthood relation to be transitive: if x is a part of y and y is a part of z, then x is a part of z. This account leaves no room for conjunctive or disjunctive states of affairs, and it offers a maximally simple account of the way states of affairs of all variety are constructed. It leaves open the question as to whether the direction of dependence goes from whole to part, or from part to whole.

Understanding constituents of states of affairs to be parts promises to shed light on the nature of states of affairs. Furthermore, the view entails three plausible principles regarding states of affairs, namely: *x's being F* exists only if F exists; *x's being F* exists only if x exists; and also that if *x's being F* exists, then x satisfies or instantiates F. Moreover, Compositionalism is compatible with claiming that the fact that *x's being F* exists depends upon the fact that F exists; and the fact that *x's being F* exists depends upon the fact that x exists. It is compatible with the direction of dependence going in the other direction too. This is to say that Compositionalism offers us a relatively straightforward way of thinking about states of affairs. The question is

whether it will work? My worry is that if this account doesn't work, then replacement accounts will be subject to problems that may render the notion of a state of affairs suspect. It would do the good no good to let its fate rest on a shaky notion.

2 Problems for a Standard Account

Compositionalism is beset with problems. Dodd claims that "[w]e have found no single theoretical need which states of affairs alone can meet" and concludes that we should "exile states of affairs from our ontology" (1999, p. 146). Simons in an aptly titled paper "Why there are no States of Affairs" suggests that "on balance the reasons favour the view that there are no states of affairs." Lowe recently claimed that "'states of affairs' are the product of a lazy approach to ontology" (2009, p.). These are heavy-handed criticisms. Exactly what problems should give us pause when positing states of affairs? There are at least three. Let's begin by considering *Bradley's Regress*.

Bradley's Regress

Can a state of affairs be a fusion of an individual and a property? According to this regress argument, the answer is no. Interestingly, there is not just one argument deserving of the name, but many. So let's consider two recent statements of the regress. Here is Lowe:

> Here the problem is to explain what *unifies* the constituents of a state of affairs within that state of affairs, such as *this apple* and *redness* in the state of affairs of this apple's being red. If one posits an 'exemplification' relation between the apple and redness as performing this unifying role, it will be objected that this is just to identify a third putative constituent within the state of affairs, leaving us with essentially the same problem as before: to explain what unifies all three within that state of affairs. The solutions that have been proposed to this apparent problem are many, including the 'Fregean' idea that universals are 'unsaturated' entities, needing no metaphysical 'glue' to

> adhere them to their individual bearers and Gustav Bergmann's idea . . . that exemplification is a *connector* (now sometimes called a 'non-relational tie') rather than a relation (that is, rather than a relational universal). There is, however, a slightly *ad hoc* air about such putative solutions, as well as an apparent reliance upon inadequately discharged metaphors (2009, online).

The explanandum for Lowe is how states of affairs get *unified*. Lowe's thought seems to be that in order for a state of affairs to exist at all, for it to be a genuine whole, its constituents must be unified. A state of affairs is no mere collection, or mere fusion. Moreover, goes the objection, there is simply nothing in nature's furniture that could unify the constituents of a state of affairs. Adding another constituent to a fusion of a universal and individual involves adding more of the same, just another constituent among the many. But another constituent as such is unfit to unify *itself* with other constituents so as to generate a unity. Nothing has within itself the power to make itself and others a *one*. Nature does not provide metaphysical glue in the form of universals or individuals, but advocates of states of affairs require some sort of "non-relational tie" to connect individuals to universals so as to have a unified state of affairs of something's *having* a universal. Here is one other statement of Bradley's Regress by Simons:

> If a thing has a quality, as in a simple state of affairs, the thing and the quality have to be related, e.g. by instantiation, for otherwise it would be wrong to say the thing in fact *has* the quality. The thing and the quality could perfectly well exist separately without being so connected, as when Gordon and Englishness both exist without Gordon being English. Likewise John, Mary and facing may coexist without John facing Mary, or Mary facing John. To have the state of affairs, the things have to be suitably connected, and the state of affairs only exists when the parts indeed *are* so connected. If we take the connections themselves to be relations, we immediately slide into a vicious infinite regress, since for them to relate, they need to be related to their relata, and so on. This argument is one of Bradley's lasting contributions to metaphysics.
>
> To avoid Bradley's regress, several expedients have been tried. One is to say that the universal and its terms in a state of affairs are connected not by a relation but by a "nexus" or "non-relational tie." To the extent that these are intelligible, they seems to mean a relation that is not a relation, which *is* intelligible, but inconsistent. Or they may

> mean that there is no connection, but we talk as if there is. But then it remains unclear how the things are connected themselves (2009, manuscript).

Simons also suggests that nothing in nature's furniture can convert a fusion of an individual and a universal into a state of affairs. Rather than focus on the unity, he asks whether sufficiency conditions for the existence of states of affairs can be met, and then claims that no fusion is sufficient for the existence of a state of affairs. This is because the fusion of these entities can exist *even when a corresponding state of affairs does not*. To illustrate: the property purpleness exists as does the relation of instantiation. I thankfully have a left foot. Given Compositionalism, there is a fusion that has this property and my foot as its only parts. But neither of my feet are purple, and so there is no state of affairs *my left foot's being purple*. Thus, *my left foot's being purple* cannot be a fusion of a property and my foot. Moreover, so the argument goes, adding another property or individual into this fusion, one intended to appropriately relate these individual to their properties, a "connector" as it were, will repeat the difficulty again. We can ask, with respect to this further putative connector property, what connects it to the entities it is connecting? If we posit a further connector of the connector, we wind up with a regress. Thus the name.

The Problem of Non-Symmetric Relations

Here again is Lowe:

> An aspect of this problem is illustrated by the case of two states of affairs containing a non-symmetrical relation holding in different 'directions' between the same relata, such as the states of affairs of Mary loving John and John loving Mary. These states of affairs must certainly be regarded as *different* and yet they supposedly contain exactly the same constituents: *Mary*, *John*, and the relation of *loving*. But then what *makes* them different, given that their constituents do not? One may be inclined to reply: the *order* in which Mary and John enter into the loving relation. Such a reply might be adequate if the problem were, instead, to explain what constitutes the difference between the written *sentences* 'Mary loves John' and 'John loves Mary,' because here we literally have a

> difference in the *spatial* ordering of the same words, but nothing analogous seems to be so readily on hand in the case of states of affairs . . . Perhaps the ultimate lesson of this example is that 'states of affairs' are the product of a lazy approach to ontology: one which attempts to 'read off' the elements of being from the structure of language -- in this case from the structure of *sentences*, of which 'states of affairs' seem to be the mere shadows (2009, online).

I am going to switch to a different example. Instead of using the state of affairs *Mary's loving John*, I will use *Mary's facing John*. It is not even clear that loving Mary would entail that there is some Mary that is loved. Compositionalism seems to be forced into identifying *Mary's facing John* with *John's facing Mary* because these states of affairs certainly seem to have exactly the same parts, and Compositionalism is committed to the uniqueness of composition which claims that for any Xs, if the Xs compose Y, then for any Z, if the Xs compose Z, then X = Y. Here then is a quick way to state the argument. There is a state of affairs *Mary's facing John* and *John's facing Mary*. Suppose, for reductio, that these states of affairs are distinct. These states of affairs have exactly the same parts. By unrestricted composition these parts compose some wholes. Given the uniqueness of composition, for all X and Y, if the Zs compose X and the Zs compose Y, then X = Y. Thus, these states of affairs are not distinct. However, there are states of affairs only if *Mary's loving John* is distinct from *John's loving Mary*, in which case, there are no states of affairs.

Allegedly, certain relations have "direction" somehow built into them, but it is unclear how a defender of states of affairs can recover this "direction" by appealing only to individuals, properties, and their fusions. Here is one recent attempt to recover directionality that clearly does not work. Zimmerman argues that *Mary's facing John* can be understood as having the following form: [{Mary, John}, $_1$Facing$_2$, t].[3] This state of affairs is distinct from *John's facing Mary* which

[3] See Zimmerman (2001, 72 ff.). I changed his example and replaced 'loving' with 'facing.'

has the following form: [{John, Mary}, $_1$Facing$_2$, t]. Here the loving relation receives numbered gaps that somehow have an order built into them by way of this subscript. This account has two problems. Mary is both the first member and second member of an ordered pair. From the fact that Mary and John face each other, it follows from unrestricted composition that Mary faces herself. That is an interesting predicament. Second, as Zimmerman himself points out, the ordered pairs {John, Mary} and {Mary, John} are distinct ordered pairs. It follows that [{John, Mary}, $_1$Facing$_2$, t] is distinct from [{Mary, John}, $_2$Facing$_1$, t]. But these states of affairs are not distinct. Though states of affairs are fine-grained, there is nothing in the world to ground the difference between these states of affairs. Thus, if there are non-symmetric relations, it is not at all clear how *Compositionalism* can accommodate them as literal parts of states of affairs.

The Problem of Self-Exemplifying Universals

Some universals exemplify themselves. Let 'Fred' name the property *being a property*. Fred is a property. So we now have the state of affairs *Fred's being a property*. At first blush, this state of affairs seems to have two proper parts that are numerically identical. This is impossible given *Non-identity Supplementation* which is a consequence of Compositionalism. According to this principle, for all kinds of parthood, if y is a proper part of x, then there is something non-identical with y that is a proper part of x. The conclusion is that states of affairs that involve self-exemplifying properties cannot have their constituents as mereological parts. Here is the argument put forward by Bynoe:

> Now, Armstrong maintains that a kind of parthood holds between a fact and each of the entities it 'ties' together. By *Non-identity Supplementation*, it follows that if y is a part of some fact, x, then x has a part that is not identical to y. This rules out the possibility of universals that instantiate themselves. Consider a universal, F, that instantiates itself. If

> there is such a universal, the Compositionalist will posit the fact that is the 'tying' of F to itself. The fact that F is F would have only one part: F. By Non-identity Supplementation, there can be no such fact. So the Compositionalist must deny that F exists. Therefore, Compositionalism is incompatible with the possibility of self-instantiating universals (2011, p. 93).

Bynoe argues that there are plenty of self-instantiating universals to go around. *Being a property is one*, but there are others: *being multiply located*, *being instantiated*, and *being identical to*. If we want a unified account of states of affairs, we cannot construe their relations to their constituents as mereological in nature. In short, here is the argument. Suppose, for reductio, that there are states of affairs. If there are states of affairs, then Compositionalism is true. If Compositionalism is true, for all kinds of parthood, if y is a proper part of x, then there is something non-identical with y that is a proper part of x. *Fred is a property* exists. If *Fred is a property exists*, there is a y that is a proper part of x, and there is nothing non-identical with y that is a proper part of x. So Compositionalism is false. Thus, there are no states of affairs.

Given the objections just raised, Compositionalism seems badly off. We either get counterexamples to plausible remainder principles, or counterexamples to the uniqueness of composition, or we are left without an account of what converts a mere fusion of properties and individuals into a unified state of affairs. Now, there are many responses one might give to these three objections. For starters, one might jettison classical extensional mereology.[4] The statue and the lump case might very well support an alternative conception of part and whole. For wherever there is a lump of clay that composes a statue it appears that we have two things: a statue that cannot survive being smashed, and a lump that can, whereas these two things have all the same parts. Moreover, maybe there are multiple fundamental parthood relations that cases like those we have discussed support. Armstrong argues that parthood is not the only composition relation

[4] See Mcdaniel (2009).

and that states of affairs have their constituents not as parts (1997). Perhaps there are no non-symmetric relations, strictly speaking;[5] and perhaps there are genuine external relations that can serve as metaphysical glue for constituents of states of affairs;[6] and perhaps there are internal relations that can "tie" properties to individuals somehow;[7] and perhaps it can be a brute fact whenever some individual and property compose a state of affairs;[8] and perhaps self-exemplifying properties are compatible with remainder principles after all.[9] The potential solutions to these problems are many-faced. This would be a long chapter indeed were I to consider each of these options and argue against them. Nonetheless, rather than consider these suggestions one by one, I want to instead outline an account that I find plausible and explain how it solves those three objections just raised. Though I am proposing a solution to these objections, there may be some *better* solution. Some solution is better than no solution, however.

3 Simple States of Affairs

The solution to these problems is actually very simple: states of affairs are simple. The simple solution deserves its name as it involves treating atomic states of affairs as *simple* entities the existence of which is partially grounded in the existence of individuals and properties. States of affairs are not literally composed of individuals and properties, but are instead metaphysically

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[5] See Dorr (2004).

[6] See Vallicella (2000).

[7] See Meinertsen (2008).

[8] See Leerhoff (2008).

[9] Thanks to Hud Hudson for this suggestion. Either the exemplification relation is a part of the states of affairs *Fred's being a property* or it is not. If it is not, then since the fusion of A with itself is always identical to A, it follows that Fred is identical to *Fred's being a property*. This is compatible with *Weak Supplementation*. However, if the exemplification relation is a part of *Fred's being a property*, then *Weak Supplementation* is satisfied.

dependent on them. Consider an analogy. On one account of the nature of mind, the mind is a metaphysically simple entity that depends for its existence on a highly complex organ, namely, the brain. The mind is not composed of the brain, but nonetheless it does depend upon the brain. The brain itself does have parts. The hypothesis I want to put forward is this: states of affairs are relevantly similar to the mind on the hypothesis that the mind is simple. Both entities are simple entities that nonetheless depend, either causally or metaphysically, on some more complex entity for their survival. Both entities can be misidentified with those complex entities on which they depend. This hypothesis has wider application too. Perhaps knowledge is simple.[10] Perhaps propositions are simple entities.[11] For each entity seems to be complex at first blush, but on more careful metaphysical analysis nothing forces us to accept these first appearances. Simons was no friend of states of affairs. He writes:

> Probably the best way for the friend of states of affairs to avoid the transcategoriality, regress and insatiability problems is to treat universals not as letters of the alphabet of the universe, needing somehow to be glued together with other things to yield states of affairs, but as derivative entities somehow abstracted out over particulars, including states of affairs, taken as basic. In this way states of affairs are no longer seen as compounded of other, prior entities, but as entities of first priority (2009, manuscript).

Simons is correct about one thing but wrong about another. A plausible way for defenders of states of affairs to avoid the objections discussed above is to treat states of affairs as simple. That is, they are not composite entities with parts. However, defenders of states of affairs are not forced to claim that states of affairs are "basic" entities or "entities of the first priority." One might hold that states of affairs depend for their existence on properties and individuals, but not

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[10] See Williamson (2002).

[11] See Bealer (1998).

the other way around. Thus, states of affairs can be simple and not fundamental. They might be of second priority and not the first. In any case, if we do take atomic states of affairs to be simple, we immediately avoid those objections raised above. Without parts, there can be no worry that the existence states of affairs will involve violations of any axioms of mereology. Simple entities need no "non-relational tie" or "connector" or "metaphysical glue" to hold their parts together to form a unity. Being held together suggests that things can come apart. But there are no parts to come apart on this view, and there are no parts to be held together either. Thus, the hypothesis that states of affairs are simple entities offers a clear and clean escape route for defenders of states of affairs. This is one important argument in favor of the hypothesis that states of affairs are simple.

However, we must still ask *how* states of affairs are related to those properties and individuals they involve. I do not know how to prove the hypothesis I will be suggesting, but it strikes me as plausible. If *Smith's being happy* exists, then so too must Smith and his happiness. The mere fusion of Smith and happiness, even together with the existence of the satisfaction or exemplification relation, do not suffice for the existence of *Smith's being happy*. So the state of affairs depends for its existence on these two entities and these entities are somehow unified. My suggestion is that such unification is achieved by way of the fact that the existence of the satisfaction relation that Smith bear to happiness depends on the existence of *Smith's being happy*. Thus, the simple state of affairs *itself* grounds the existence of the relation which relates Smith to his happiness. Then these entities in turn ground the existence of *Smith's being happy*. Here we posit metaphysical glue to hold together the entities in question, but this glue is the familiar glue provided by the grounding relation, or metaphysical dependence, that we are already committed to when we say value is grounded in the non-evaluative. The upshot is that

Bradley's Regress can be stopped at the very first level. We do not need to posit some further tie to tie the exemplification relation to particulars and their properties. Simple state of affairs perform that task alone.

Any solution to these problems is going to have costs and mine has two. First, *Smith's being happy* has the appearance of complexity. I claim this complexity is to be cashed out in terms of grounds, but it may seem that grounds are insufficient to capture these appearances. Second, we have what appears to be a trope misleadingly described as a state of affairs. The satisfaction relation so grounding by Smith's being happy is no universal. It literally sees Smith and his particular episode of happiness. It is thus non-repeatable, making it ineligible for universal status. I concede both points. If there is a better solution to these problems for Compositionalism I am all ears. Admittedly there may be better alternatives all things considered. To appropriately address this issue would require considering an account of states of affairs that employed a non-mereological mode of composition. To put my cards on the table, one way of cashing out this idea seems *prima facie* incoherent to me. If X composes, or partially composes Y, then X is a part of Y. If one denies this claim, I don't understand what the denier takes herself to be denying. However, if one gets sophisticated and employs a non-standard account of parthood, an account with modestly different axioms than those described above, then it seems to me that we have a deep question about the nature of parthood that deserves its own dissertation. So I will move on.

On my account, states of affairs are numerically distinct, if and only if, there is a partial ground that one has and the other lacks. States of affairs are identical, if and only if, they are not numerically distinct. This holds for all states of affairs. Or rather, if wholes depend on their parts, this holds for all states of affairs. For simple entities, matters must be this way: we can only

distinguish the simple by way of relations they bear to other things.[12] Recall that I am claiming that atomic states of affairs are simple and that whenever a complex state of affairs has a part, that part must also be a state of affairs. A partial ground is something the existence of such states of affairs depends on, and in the *ontological* sense of 'depends' discussed earlier. Such grounds are partial rather than full because whenever something is partially grounded in them, there must be something else that whole is partially grounded in. We can illustrate talk of grounds in terms of parts and wholes, even though the notion of ground is a more general notion than part. The existence of my body is partially grounded in the existence of my nose, but there are other parts that partially ground the existence of my body too, for example, my feet and ears, and their compliment too.

This is the view: For any states of affairs S_1 and S_2, there is a state of affairs that is identical to their fusion. The only states of affairs there are are simple atomic states of affairs and fusions of them. How fine-grained are states of affairs? Exactly as fine-grained as the individuals and properties upon which they depend. To answer the question of what states of affairs exist, we need to answer the question of what things and properties exist. But answering this question is a delicate affair, as we have seen. So atomic states of affairs do not share parts, whereas complexes overlap by sharing states of affairs. Sharing of grounds is sufficient for identity, and complex states of affairs are formed by way of fusion.

4 Intrinsicness

Simple states of affairs are the bearers of basic intrinsic value. We need to have an account of intrinsicness before we go any further. To be intrinsically good is to be one of two

[12] Unless states of affairs possess haecceities, or thisnesses. I prefer to avoid this option.

things: it is either to have the property *goodness* intrinsically, or it is to have the property *intrinsic goodness*. I opt for the latter and here is why. We can understand the concept goodness without understanding the concept intrinsic goodness. We can understand the concept goodness for a person without understanding the concept intrinsic goodness. We can understand the concept instrumental goodness without understanding the concept intrinsic goodness. The best explanation for these facts is that there is a concept goodness that we understand, and moreover, that there are many ways for this property to be satisfied. Sometimes the good is intrinsic and impersonal, sometimes it is personal, and sometimes something is good because of its effects or because of its relations to other things.

Moore claimed that intrinsic goodness was *not* an intrinsic property (1965) only to later retract this claim and suggest that he had earlier reserved the expression 'intrinsically X' for properties that were jointly natural and discoverable by way of observation. In order to specify what we mean when we say that goodness is intrinsic, or possessed intrinsically, we need to have a general account of the conditions under which some property is possessed in this way. Here I will follow Rosen:

F is an *intrinsic* property iff, as a matter of necessity, for all x: (1) If x is F in virtue of y's being G, then y is a part of x, and (2) if x is not-F in virtue of y's being G, then y is a part of x (2012, p. 118).

Intuitively, intrinsic properties are properties the possession of which does not depend upon the existence of material objects distinct from their possessors. For example, *having n parts*, *being square*, *being self-identical*, and *having n units of mass* are good candidates for

intrinsic properties. My thought is that we should have an account of intrinsicness that underlies these intuitive cases. However, this view can be motivated by its ability to adequately classify "trouble cases" too. For example, it counts haeccetistic properties as intrinsic. If I have the property of *being self-identical*, it is not in virtue some fact regarding something that is not a part of me. The account is compatible with counting *being such that a cube exists* and *being a rock* as extrinsic. According to Sider (2006), we must count such properties as extrinsic to help to avoid the problem of the many. For wherever there is a rock, there are many rock-shaped proper parts that have just what it takes to be a rock. Yet where we see a rock we see one, not many. To exclude the many, properties like *being a rock* must turn out to be extrinsic. So something is a rock only if it is not a proper part of a rock and this sensitivity to surroundings makes *being a rock* extrinsic. Rosen's account counts *being lonely* as extrinsic. Whether something is lonely, the only thing in existence, depends on whether there are other things. Moore's view incorrectly counted this property as intrinsic. For he claimed that intrinsic properties are properties that can be had in isolation (1965). However, the property *being lonely* could be had in isolation and is extrinsic. Rosen's account counts this property as extrinsic because *being lonely* is equivalent to *not being accompanied*, and whether something is not accompanied does not hold in virtue of facts about something's parts. The account counts *being such that God exists* (supposing God exists necessarily) or *being such that 2 + 2 equals 4* as extrinsic even though both of these properties are shared between duplicates. Again, Moore's account incorrectly counted such properties as intrinsic, at least given one way that he stated his account, since he claimed that intrinsic properties are those that must be shared between duplicates. Rosen's account counts these properties as extrinsic. Things do not possess these properties in virtue of facts about their parts.

So what it takes for a property to be intrinsic must appeal to the grounding relation.[13] However, there are many dependence relations. Mental states depend on brain states in one way, but whether a mental state exists non-causally depends on whether there are laws that connect the mental to the physical. If there are conservation laws such that no concrete thing would persist without them, then the instantiation of *any property whatsoever* by a concrete thing will depend, in some sense of 'depend,' on the presence of conservation laws. If this is so, we should not respond by relegating shape, mass, and having *n* parts to the extrinsic. That would be the wrong reaction in the face of conservation laws. The right reaction would be to conclude that, as a matter of fact, whether x has an intrinsic property of a certain sort can depend, in some other sense of depend, on the existence of laws extrinsic to x. There is no good reason to treat normative laws differently than natural laws here. Whether something is intrinsically good might also depend on the presence of normative laws. If what I suggested earlier is correct, whether something is intrinsically good *does* so depend.

5 Some Worries

The first worry is that states of affairs can be more or less similar. The same intuition motivates the acceptance of properties, which are among the grounds of states of affairs. For instance, *my being pleased while drinking a margarita* is more similar to *your being pleased while drinking a margarita* than it is to *your being disgusted while drinking a margarita*. However, if atomic states of affairs are simple, how does my view explain these similarity facts? We cannot appeal to sharing of parts to explain their similarity.

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[13] For another recent attempt to capture intrinsicness with the grounding relation see Witmer, Butchard, and Trogdon (2005).

The second worry is that exemplification facts are supposed to be fully grounded by simple states of affairs. In particular, there is a universal relation of exemplification that relates an individual *i* to a property F exactly when there is a state of affairs *i's being F*. The existence of the state of affairs *fully grounds* the existence of that exemplification relation that relates *i* to F. The relata of the exemplification relation, *i* and F, pay their respects by *partially grounding* the existence of the state of affairs *i's being F*. We thus arrive at an intimate two-way grounding that respects the asymmetry of the grounding relation, while violating the irreflexivity of the partial-grounding relation. The consequence is that *i's being F* is *partially* grounded in *i* and F, but it is also partially grounded in *itself*. No explanatory relation permits reflexivity.

A third worry is that Rosen's account of intrinsicness is both subject to counterexample and excludes genuine possibilities. First, it could be that certain fundamental properties are extrinsic. For example, *being between x and y* or *being earlier than* could be fundamental extrinsic spatial or temporal properties. Second, consider the property F that is defined as *being intrinsic or not being intrinsic, or being lonely*. Since the negation of this property is an impossible property, everything possesses F. Yet something could possess F in virtue of *being lonely*, which is extrinsic. This means *being F* is extrinsic. Rosen's account counts this property as intrinsic and so the account will not work.

The response to the first worry is straightforward. If states of affairs are simple and partially grounded in properties and individuals, sharing of ground makes for similarity. If two things depend on a third, they are similar. I can't see why the sharing of a part would make for similarity, whereas the sharing of a ground would not. This point becomes especially acute if one thinks that parthood is a species of grounding (a view which strikes me as very plausible). Second, I argued earlier that Boolean operations do not construct entities from other entities.

They are merely functions from truth-values to truth-values. So 'F' fails to pick out a property. The other worries are more difficult to handle. I think it is a problem for Rosen's account that it makes all fundamental properties intrinsic. This might turn out to be the case, but the existence of some intrinsic property should not entail that this *is* the case. This suggests that another clause needs to be added to his account. I confess that I do not know what form this clause should take. If it takes the form "unless X is fundamental and extrinsic," then we have a cheat. Let's call this an area for future research. Finally, do explanatory relations have to be irreflexive? This is a huge issue and I can hypothesize that they do not. I offered one such case where explanation does not have to be irreflexive, but that is not a defense of that particular case. Are there others? According to Fine (2008) there are a few others. The fact that something exists partially grounds itself. For it is a fact itself, and so is among the instances that ground the generalization. Unfortunately, I denied that there is any such purely existential fact by way of banning Boolean facts, so I cannot help myself to Fine's example. So I hate to punt, but it may simply be that the best solution to Bradley's regress posits a unique kind of grounding. I say better to have a unique kind of ground when we already have grounding, than to have some unique metaphysical glue which is not a form of grounding at all.

Chapter 6

Adding Goods

0 Introduction

Addition is not a terribly interesting operation when applied to numbers. But when applied to other kinds of things it can be downright mysterious whether its application is appropriate. The reason is that adding entities other than numbers often requires combining them, while the manner in which such entities are combined often involves arranging them, or even mixing them. But value doesn't exactly move around and the relative proximity of its bearers seems to be irrelevant to its combination. So *if* goods can be added, adding goods looks to be a rather different animal than adding numbers or milk with coffee. What's more, different quantities are not all alike. For example, gallons of water, or yards of length, or even degrees of IQ seem to behave in strikingly different ways. We cannot combine IQs but we can certainly combine portions of water. So *if* goods are quantitative or properties that permit of degrees, then locating goods amongst the more familiar kinds of quantity should be possible. But whether value is more like water or instead more like IQ in this regard is just not obvious, however. Is intrinsic value quantitative? Can goods be added?

In this chapter I outline an account according to which, first, intrinsic value is quantitative like water is quantitative, and, second, intrinsic value can be combined without arranging its bearers. Furthermore, addition literally takes us from numbers which represent the intrinsic values of experiences, for example, to numbers which represent overall intrinsic values of

wholes that include these experiences as parts or grounds. On this view, the *existence* of these wholes results from combining states of affairs, while the overall *intrinsic values* of these wholes results from adding the intrinsic values of those of its parts or grounds that have intrinsic value in a fundamental or basic way. This view is subject to multiple challenges. The first challenge involves (1) isolating basic intrinsic value states, (2) determining the intrinsic values of these states, and then (3) describing how combination of these states occurs. The second challenge involves (4) isolating the relevant wholes that result from these combinations, and then (5) determining the overall intrinsic values of these wholes. Together with the axiology and metaphysics defended earlier, we can generate plausible value assignments to the things we care about. We can answer challenges (1) through (5) satisfactorily.

In section 1 I briefly reconsider central features of the views defended in earlier chapters. In particular, I discuss what has intrinsic value and the nature of states of affairs and their formation. In section 2 I consider a recent defense of the additivity of intrinsic value by Zimmerman (2001). His account has two interesting features: first, it more closely resembles the account defended here than any other account; and second, it's also the most rigorously articulated additive view in the literature. In section 3 I raise a number of worries for Zimmerman's account. In section 4 I articulate and defend a novel account of the conditions under which goods can be added, and I argue that the axiology and metaphysics defended earlier allows us to provide an argument for additivity. In section 5 I briefly discuss the zero, or neutral point for intrinsic value, and I discuss some principles of evaluative reasoning that are closely wed to additivity. These bare-difference principles, earlier appealed to in our discussion of Rossian arguments for value pluralism, can be vindicated if additivity can be vindicated.

As a brief aside, I have never run across an argument for the additivity of intrinsic value, though I have encountered many arguments against it. For instance, Zimmerman writes that "I've offered no argument for this at all. But I submit that the idea that intrinsic value can be computed by summation is so deeply attractive that it is to be abandoned only if there is a compelling reason to do so" (2001, p. 160). So I actually agree with the sentiment behind Zimmerman's claim, for if not by adding goods, how would one compute the values of wholes? It seems so clear that how terrible a tragedy is, for example, increases as the number of victims increases. The more suffering the worse the situation. How much worse? It would certainly seem to depend on exactly how much suffering occurred, and hence, how much suffering, or badness is being added to the situation. Comparison with another magnitude might bolster Zimmerman's thought. Isn't is just obvious that the weight of an object is equal to the sum of the weights of its parts? Disassemble a car and weigh its parts carefully enough, then their weight should be the same as the car they composed. Return to intrinsic value and ask whether it's as obvious that the value of an life is equal to the sum of the values of some relevant group of its parts? If we could disassemble a life and weigh the values of its parts, as it were, wouldn't its overall intrinsic value be their sum? An affirmative answer here certainly has initial plausibility.

1 Background

In earlier chapters I argued for a number of claims. First, that intrinsic value is real in the sense that it is both objective and irreducible. There are facts about the intrinsic values that things possess independent of their relationships to other things, and while being universal, these facts are numerically distinct from any non-evaluative, or natural facts. I also suggested that intrinsic value might exist in a fundamentally different way from those more fundamental facts that

generate intrinsic value, and I suggested that we can capture this thought by introducing different kinds of quantifiers. But even if this thought is mistaken, intrinsic value should nonetheless count as a fundamentally different kind of property than fundamental properties. This is to say that we cannot understand *what it is* to be intrinsically good by way of understanding claims that lack evaluative import. It is also to say that *what it is* to be intrinsically good does not consist in having some non-evaluative property. I also argued that evaluative properties are in some sense conceptual and that their application conditions are given by intuitions that competent and virtuous thinkers would have. In this way we secured a source of a priori knowledge of evaluative facts without reduction. For such knowledge is of a piece with our knowledge of hard to discover mathematical truths: evaluative claims are conceptual in nature, though deep and difficult to discover. What it is to be a virtuous thinker is partly grounded in one's ability to intuit that inculcating the virtues, or helping those that are suffering, or treating others with respect are each good things. And since evaluative concepts are required to characterize the virtuous thinker as such, namely, as thinkers disposed to respond *fittingly* to the world, we avoided reducing the evaluative to the non-evaluative.

I went on to claim that there remains a perfectly respectable sense in which value is reducible, though not to any non-evaluative facts. Intrinsically valuable states all involve a fitting response to an intentional object that lacks intrinsic value. As one consequence we can unify the pluralist's goods of knowledge, pleasure, and virtue. As another consequence we can unify the virtues and vices, thus explaining what makes a virtue both intrinsically good and a *virtue*. Furthermore, we can explain how intrinsic value states can have more or less intrinsic value, and this is because intrinsic value is a function of degrees of fittingness. The more an attitude fits its object the better is that state of affairs that includes that attitude. The less the fit, the worse the

state of affairs. This account left open exactly how valuable these states of affairs are in themselves and how to compute values of wholes that include these states of affairs, but that is the question we consider in this chapter. Nonetheless, it is these states of affairs that will serve as our basics.

In chapter 4 I then discussed the metaphysics of these states of affairs. There I argued that concrete states of affairs are the unique bearers of intrinsic value, as opposed to abstract states of affairs, and also that evaluatively basic states of affairs are mereologically simple. We saw that this was compatible with attributing a very rich structure to these states of affairs. For the possession of structure does not require the having of parts but rather ontological grounds, where the ontological grounds of a state of affairs are individuals and universals which are not to be counted among the parts of states of affairs. One motivation for this view was Bradley's regress. In order to unify states of affairs, i.e. to explain what holds its constituents together, as it were, required that we posit an ontological ground for them because mere fusions of individuals, properties and relations fail to be basic states of affairs. There I also suggested that, whenever there is a plurality of states of affairs, there is also a fusion of them. Given unrestricted composition, then, states of affairs form a unique fusion even if these fusions exist highly disjointedly across both space and time. Here I rejected the standard view according to which complex states of affairs are formed by Boolean operations, and reserved those compositional relations for propositions and propositional functions.

Finally, I suggested that dependence comes in various forms and that intrinsic value was compatible with its possessor depending for its intrinsic value on external normative laws. Because whether an attitude is fitting to its object can depend on laws regarding how we ought to reason, to act, and what kinds of people we should be, whether an attitude is fitting can depend

on some relevant external facts. Here I parted ways with Moore and claimed that intrinsic value is an intrinsic property of states of affairs. Nonetheless, I argued that this was compatible with a broadly Moorean conception intrinsic value as the sort of value that a thing could have in isolation from other material objects. There's the recap. Let's turn to a different background metaphysics and consider one account of intrinsic value and its computation.

2 The Nature of Intrinsic Value

In his book *The Nature of Intrinsic Value* Michael Zimmerman provides a metaphysics and an axiology in the service of the additivity of intrinsic value, and I believe that his account is the most viable competitor to the accounted defended here. So let's begin by considering motivations for the notion of an evaluatively basic states of affairs, a notion which figures heavily in his account of additivity. It is these basic states of affairs that are supposed to determine the intrinsic values for all other states of affairs, both on Zimmerman's view and on my own.

Consider a complex whole W composed of three intrinsic goods, X, Y, and Z and suppose that the intrinsic value of X = +10, Y = +20, and that Z = +30. We might compute the intrinsic value of W as (10 + 20 + 30) so that W has an intrinsic value of +60. There is something intuitive about such an assignment, and as a first pass, we might try to capture this assignment by claiming that the intrinsic value of a whole is equal to the sum of the intrinsic values of its parts. But this clearly won't do. Since W is an improper part of itself, if we included *all* parts of W into our calculation of W's intrinsic value, then the intrinsic value of W = +120. This estimation would involve double-counting. Of course, to avoid double-counting we could instead sum only the *proper* parts of W. However, (X + Y) is a also proper part of W, as is (X + Z) and (Y + Z).

Their sum is +120 and if we include them into our calculation, the intrinsic value of W would be +180. This again yields the wrong result since we have double-counted again. Zimmerman writes that "[t]he general idea is this. In the sort of example just given, each of X, Y, and Z is to be construed as having basic intrinsic value; if any combinations or parts of X, Y, and Z have intrinsic value, this value is not basic; and the value of W is to be computed by appealing only to those parts of W that have basic intrinsic value." So avoiding double-counting gives us one reason to appeal to evaluatively basic states of affairs. I think Zimmerman is clearly right.

Here is another reason to appeal to basics. Feldman asks us to consider the purported state of affairs of *S's being happy to degree +3 at t,* an experience that is a part of S's life (2001, p. 398). Assuming a simple form of eudaimonism, the intrinsic value of this state of affairs = +3 even though there are, seemingly, many states of affairs in its vicinity with intrinsic value. For example, there is *S's being happy to degree +3 at t while 2 + 2 = 4*, *S's being happy to degree +3 at t while 3 + 3 = 6*, *S's being happy to degree +3 at t as a result of what happened to the chickens*, and so on. Including these further states of affairs into the calculation of the intrinsic value of S's life, giving each some positive intrinsic value, would then yield an overestimation of the intrinsic value that this experience contributes to S's life. So these states of affairs must be excluded. One way to do this is to classify all but *S's being happy to degree +3 at t* as non-basic and to include only the evaluatively basic states of affairs in S's life when calculating its intrinsic value. This is Feldman's route, and accordingly, every basic state of affairs involves only "a pure attribution of a core intrinsically valuable property or relation" and only one of these states of affairs involves such an attribution.

Feldman then has us consider the purported state of affairs of *Bob's reading at 9:00PM on Monday evening*. Suppose that while reading Bob is happy to degree +10 at 9:00PM.

Intuitively, the intrinsic value of this state of affairs = +10. But, again, there are purportedly many states of affairs in its vicinity that are seemingly intrinsically good, but also involve pure attributions of a core intrinsically valuable property to Bob. For example: *Bob's being happy while reading*, *the man in Bob's easy chair being happy to degree +10*, *Bob's being happy to at least degree +9*, and so on. If we countenance these states of affairs as distinct from *Bob's being happy to degree +10*, perhaps by way of countenancing more fine-grained states of affairs, we again overestimate the intrinsic value that these experiences contribute to Bob's life. So they must be excluded. Again, we manage this task by classifying *Bob's being happy to degree +10 at t* as basic, while classifying these other states of affairs as non-basic. So without evaluatively basic states of affairs we get immersed in double-counting or overestimating the intrinsic values of various wholes.

Before considering Zimmerman's proposal, I want to consider a few proposals that don't work. One might think the intrinsic value of a whole is equal to the sum of the intrinsic values of the basic states of affairs that its existence *entails*. For instance, Chisholm claimed that "[t]o assess the intrinsic value of a given state of affairs, we determine the amount of good and evil that the state of affairs guarantees to every possible world in which it obtains, and then we weigh its "best" against its "worst."" (2005, p. 4). Elsewhere Gilbert Harman writes that "[s]omeone's getting pleasure at noon today might have intrinsic value in the most basic way, whereas my getting pleasure at noon today *in this room* may have intrinsic value only in a derivative way, because it entails something that has value in the most basic way" (2005, p. 354). Harman then claims that the intrinsic value of a state of affairs, S, equals the sum of the intrinsic values of the basic states of affairs that S entails. One problem with these two accounts is that neither actually gives us a characterization of the evaluatively basic states of affairs. They also simply assume

that value is to be summed. Another problem is that each leads to the overestimation of intrinsic value for certain wholes. For example, suppose that I'm right and possessing a virtue is intrinsically good. If it is necessary that God exists and is virtuous at t, then every state of affairs entails the existence of this basic intrinsic value state. It would then follow that this state of affairs makes every whole *intrinsically* better. But clearly how intrinsically good my life is should not be determined by a state of affairs like *God's being virtuous at t*. Of course, perhaps are there are no such necessarily existing states. A further problem is that for mereologically small wholes like W it could well be that its entails the existence of X, Y, Z and (X + Y), etc. But we shouldn't add all of these goods to compute the intrinsic value of W on pains of double-counting again. Of course, Harman might insist that (X + Y) is non-basic, but we would still need an explanation of why. And there is yet another problem with overestimation too. Consider again the fact that *Bob's being happy to degree +10 at t* entails that *someone is happy to degree +10 at t*. But we shouldn't include this entailed state of affairs (if there is such a state of affairs) into the calculation of the intrinsic value of Bob's life. We could, again, insist that *someone's being happy to degree +10 at t* is non-basic or non-existent, but we need an explanation of why. Then there is one final worry. The intrinsic value of my life *could have been different*. So for any of the particular evaluatively basic states of affairs that it contains as parts or grounds, it could have lacked these states of affairs. Given the entailment views on the table, it would then follow that the whole which is my life doesn't entail the existence of these states of affairs. As a consequence, both Harman and Chisholm's view entail that my life lacks intrinsic value. Nothing short of mereological essentialism could salvage their views from this objection, but the claim that my life could not have gone any better or worse is simply too high a cost to retain the entailment view, and especially given that it already has other problems. In short, we need a way

to exclude various entailments and the entailment view doesn't provide us with a guide for doing so. So it doesn't provide us with an adequate account of evaluatively basic states of affairs.

Lemos goes further towards meeting these worries. He provides an account of parthood for states of affairs (1991, p. 33-34). On his account, a state of affairs S_1 is a part of a state of affairs $S_2 =_{df.} S_2$ is necessarily such that (1) if S_2 obtains, then S_1 obtains, and (2) whoever entertains S_2 entertains S_1. Again, clause (1) involves an entailment account of parthood. For example, *something's being red and round* is a state of affairs that has as a part *something's being red* since the former entails the latter. We can then define proper parthood: S_1 is a *proper part* of $S_2 =_{df} S_1$ is a part of S_2 and S_2 is not a part of S_1. Thus, *something's being red* is also a proper part of *something's being red and round*. Though we typically talk about entertaining propositions and not states of affairs, let's suppose that we can entertain a state of affairs. Arguably, whoever entertains the latter state of affairs must entertain the former. We could add to this view, an addition that Lemos would reject for reasons having to do with organic unities, that the intrinsic value of a complex state of affairs is equal to the sum of the intrinsic values of just those states of affairs that have intrinsic value and it contains as proper parts, but lack proper parts with intrinsic value. In any event, this view would avoid some of those worries that faced the entailment view, and we now have something like an account of evaluatively basic states of affairs. For instance, it's not true that whoever entertains my life entertains God's being virtuous, and so that entailment is excluded, and we need not include (X + Y) in our calculation of the intrinsic value of W.

As good as it might sound, this sort of view will not work either. First, there appear to be complex states of affairs, human lives for example, that contain proper parts that we do not (perhaps could not?) entertain when entertaining that entire life. For example, my life contains

good experiences that I cannot even recall that, nevertheless, have made my life a better life. Second, there is once more the problem of mereological essentialism. Clause (1) says that if the whole obtains, then the relevant part obtains. So, if my life is a very large state of affairs, for each state of affairs that is a part of my life, if the former obtains, then so does the latter. But my life could have gone rather differently. So this clause is much, much too strong. This is to say we need an alternative method for computing value and Zimmerman offers us one that betters those just considered. But first a bit of background metaphysics. Zimmerman offers the following identity conditions for non-combinative (atomic) states of affairs:

Necessarily, a state of affairs S1 of the form [x, P, t] = a state of affairs S2 of the form [y, Q, t'] iff (a) x = y, P = Q, and t = t,' and (b) necessarily, every ontological ancestor of S1 is an ontological ancestor of S2, and vice versa.

First, Zimmerman has in mind concrete states of affairs, not abstract states of affairs, along the lines of the states of affairs developed in Armstrong (1997). States of affairs are identical only when their constituents are identical, which include individuals, properties, and times. Here the properties are intended to include relations. What it takes to be an ontological ancestor of a state of affairs needs explaining. So consider the state of affairs of *John's being pleased at t*. It is of the form [John, being pleased, t]. This state of affairs is not fully determinate in the sense that there are many ways for a state of affairs of this form to obtain. For example, John might be very pleased at t, or slightly pleased at t, or he might rather be pleased by the meal he is eating at t or pleased that the Lakers lost the Finals at t. Thus, there are more determinate ways for states of affairs of this form to obtain, and if it obtains, it obtains *in virtue of* one of

these more determinate states of affairs obtaining. States of affairs are identical, when, and only when, their constituents are identical and when the more determinate states of affairs in virtue of which they obtain are identical. Zimmerman proceeds to give identity and existence conditions for combinative states of affairs:

Necessarily, [S1 & S2] exists (or occurs) iff S1 and S2 exist and are distinct.
Necessarily, [S1 & S2] = [S3 & S4] iff either (a) S1 = S3 and S2 = S4, or (b) S1 = S4 and S2 = S3.[1]

Zimmerman also accepts that states of affairs are closed under Boolean operations, namely: negation, disjunction, and conjunction. Complex states of affairs are literally constructed from these operations. So conjunctive states obtain in virtue of all of their conjuncts obtaining, disjunctive states of affairs obtain in virtue of at least one of their disjuncts obtaining, and negative states of affairs obtain in virtue of the obtaining of certain positive states of affairs that entail them. Let me ignore this last claim. We arrive at the following account of parthood for states of affairs:

Necessarily, S1 is a *part* of S2 iff either (a) S1 = S2, (b) S2 is an ontological ancestor of S1, (3) S2 is a combinative state of affairs and S1 is one of its conjuncts, or (4) S2 is a combinative state of affairs and one of its conjuncts is an ontological ancestor of S1.

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[1] The conjuncts in these states of affairs must be restricted to basic states of affairs, otherwise there is a counterexample to these identity conditions. Let S1, S2, and S3 be basic states of affairs, and define S4 as S2 & S3, and S5 as S1 & S2. Then [S1 & S4] = [S5 & S3], but not according to Zimmerman's identity conditions. Thanks to Michael Tooley for pointing this out.

Very briefly, clause (a) accounts for improper parthood; clause (b) tells us that a less determinate state of affairs, like *John's being pleased at t*, that obtains in virtue of a more determinate state of affairs, like *John's being pleased to degree +20, for 20 minutes, at t*, is a part of that more determinate state of affairs; clause (c) tells us that conjuncts are parts of the combinative states of affairs that contain them; and finally, clause (d) tells us that a combinative state of affairs of affairs has, as a part, any less determinate states of affairs that any of its conjuncts contain as an ontological ancestor. Zimmerman goes on to claim that **combinative states of affairs contain their conjuncts essentially**; conjuncts of combinative states of affairs may, but need not be conjuncts of them; when S2 is an ontological ancestor of S1, S1 is essentially a part of S2; and finally, when S2 is an ontological ancestor of S1, S2 may, but need not be such that S1 is a part of it. Thus, essentiality goes in one direction, from whole to part, but not in the other direction, from part to whole. Though I do not know if this is Zimmerman's reasoning for this claim, it would make sense were one to accept an entailment constraint on parthood. For *John's being pleased that the Lakers lost the finals at t* entails *that John is pleased*, and the latter is a part of the former.

Zimmerman then aims to identify features that an evaluatively basic state of affairs must possess. Important are the claims that they cannot be evaluatively *inadequate* or evaluatively *superfluous*. The idea here is that evaluatively basic states of affairs must contain *exactly* that information which is necessary and sufficient to assign them some determinate value. For example, *John's being pleased at t* is evaluatively inadequate since it lacks relevant information about the duration and intensity of his pleasure. *John's being pleased for 20 units of time, with an intensity of +2, at t while 2 + 2 = 4* is evaluatively superfluous since it contains irrelevant information for assigning value to it. However, and simply assuming for the sake of the example

that mere hedonic states of affairs have intrinsic value, *John's being pleased for 20 units of time, with an intensity of of +2, at t* contains exactly the information that is necessary and sufficient for assigning basic intrinsic value to it. Zimmerman goes on to claim that though evaluatively inadequate states of affairs lack actual intrinsic value, they have what he calls 'virtual intrinsic value.' For example, *John's being pleased at t* is *virtually* intrinsically good, but not actually intrinsically good. Furthermore, the virtual intrinsic value of a state of affairs is given by the actual intrinsic value of the states of affairs that contain them as parts.

S1 is *virtually intrinsically good to a certain degree* $=_{df}$ For some state of affairs S2, (a) S2 is actually intrinsically good to that degree, (b) S1 is a part of S2, and (c) S1 has no actual intrinsic value.

For example, suppose that *John's being pleased at t* obtains in virtue of *John's being pleased for 20 units of time, with an intensity of +2, at t*. Since the former is an ontological ancestor of the latter, the latter contains the former as a part. If the actual intrinsic value to *John's being pleased for 20 units of time, with an intensity of +2, at t* = +40, the product of the intensity and duration of the experience, the virtual intrinsic value of *John's being pleased at t* = +40. This is assuming that it does not have actual intrinsic value, a claim that is supported by the thought that *John's being pleased at t* is evaluatively inadequate, i.e. that it does not contain enough information to assign it any actual intrinsic value. This puts us in a position to give an account of basic and non-basic intrinsic value, and for computing the intrinsic values of non-basic states of affairs.[2]

[2] I'm ignoring Zimmerman's discussion of temporal parts. I think that it can be safely set aside for my purposes.

DEFINITION ONE: S1 has *basic intrinsic value to degree n* $=_{df}$ (a) S1 has actual intrinsic value to degree *n*, and (b) no proper part of S1 has actual intrinsic value.

DEFINITION TWO: S1 has *non-basic value to degree n* $=_{df}$ (a) S1 has actual intrinsic value to degree *n*, and (b) S1 does not have basic intrinsic value.

SUMMATION: For any state of affairs S1 that has non-basic intrinsic value: if (a) S2,...S_n are proper parts of S1, (b) S2,...S_n have no parts in common, (c) S2,...S_n have basic intrinsic value, and (d) there is no proper part of S1 that has basic intrinsic value and which is not a proper part of [S2 & ... & S_n], then the intrinsic value of S1 = the sum the intrinsic values of S2,... S_n.

Consider the following states of affairs: (a) *John's being pleased at t*, (b) *Bob's being pleased at t*, (c) *John's being pleased, for duration = 20, with intensity = +2, at t*, and (d) *Bob's being pleased, for duration = 20, with intensity = +1, at t*. The states of affairs (a) and (b) are evaluatively inadequate since each lacks actual intrinsic value. However, both (a) and (b) are ontological ancestors of the latter two states of affairs, (a) of (c), and (b) of (d), and so, (a) is a part of (c) and (b) is a part of (d). The virtual intrinsic value of (a), inherited from (c) is +40 and the virtual intrinsic value of (b), inherited from (d) is +20. The basic intrinsic value of (c) is +40 and the basic intrinsic value of (d) is +20. Neither (a) nor (b) has basic intrinsic value because neither has any actual value. Now consider the states of affairs (c) and (d). Since states of affairs are formed by conjunction on this view, there is a state of affairs [c & d] and let's call it S1. S1 does not have basic intrinsic value since it has proper parts, (c) and (d), that have actual intrinsic value. Moreover, if we assume that any conjunction of only basic states of affairs also has actual

intrinsic value, a claim implicit in Zimmerman's discussion, then [c & d] is a non-basic state of affairs with actual intrinsic value.

Accordingly, Zimmerman would have us add the values of (c) and (d) to arrive at the non-basic intrinsic value for [c & d] which would be +60. Next, consider the states of affairs (a), (b) and (c), and their conjunctions [a & b], [a & c], and [b & c]. What are their actual intrinsic values? Neither [a & c] nor [b & c] has basic intrinsic value since they contain (c) as a proper part and (c) has actual intrinsic value. Moreover, [a & b] lacks both basic value and non-basic value since it lacks actual intrinsic value and lacks any parts with actual intrinsic value. Thus, the intrinsic value of [a & b] = 0. But this leaves open whether [a & c] or [b & c] have non-basic intrinsic value since it leaves open whether either has actual intrinsic value. Do combinative states of affairs that contain proper parts, some of which have basic value, and others of which only have virtual value, have actual value? How do we compute their values? Zimmerman doesn't say, but if we suppose that such combinative states of affairs have actual value, Zimmerman's formula for computing the values of non-basic states of affairs implies that the intrinsic value [a & c] = the intrinsic value of (c), and the intrinsic value of [b & c] = the intrinsic value of (c), namely, +40. This is so even though both combinative states of affairs contain proper parts, (a) and (b) respectively, that have only virtual intrinsic value. This is a plausible result. Again, we are only to consider the non-overlapping proper parts that have basic value when computing the actual intrinsic values of those states of affairs that contain them. So far so good.

At this point we have neglected an important question: what *are* the evaluatively basic states of affairs according to Zimmerman? His answer is an interesting one. They have no less than the following form: **[John, being pleased, for duration = +20 with intensity = +2, in a**

way that is neither deserved nor undeserved in any respect at something for its own sake that is intrinsically neutral and that exists and that pleases him for duration = +20 with intensity = +2 and that he believes is intrinsically neutral, at t1]. Pause and reread that. Zimmerman goes on to suggest that we may need to add *even more* content into our evaluatively basic states of affairs to accommodate the importance of distributional properties. The upshot is that Zimmerman claims that something very much like fitting pleasures (modulo his claim that he is ignoring other potential value states) are the source of all value. Pleasures taken in the right sort of thing for the right sorts of reasons and under just the right conditions generate intrinsic value. Whenever we have an episode that meets these conditions, we have some basic intrinsic good. Whenever there is a whole that includes these basics, that whole is thereby bettered. The value of that whole is simply the sum of the intrinsic values of the basic intrinsic value states that it contains as parts. And that's all there is too it. Moral computation requires only simple mathematics.[3]

3 Problems for Zimmerman's Account

There are potential problems. Before considering them I want to first mention a few worries and then set them aside. Zimmerman doesn't defend an account of parthood and there is quite a bit of disagreement about how we ought to think of this relation, and especially as it applies to states of affairs. Do just any collection of things have a fusion? If so, is this fusion unique? He doesn't say, even though these questions arise for any theory that employs the notion of *part*. Zimmerman also doesn't tell us when evaluatively basic states of affairs are parts of the wholes we care about. We know that if these basics are a part of something or other, then they

[3] He doesn't deny that knowledge and virtue are intrinsic and basic goods. He claims that he will "focus on" just pleasures and displeasures (2001, p. 190). I don't know what to make of this suggestion.

make for an evaluative difference to that thing. But what does it take for some states of affairs to constitute a life or the outcome of something I do? Again, the answer is not obvious. Moreover, Zimmerman doesn't defend his summation principle, but rather assumes it. It would be good to have an argument for this principle.

Here is an initial problem: Recall (b) *Bob's being pleased at t*, and (d) *Bob's being pleased, for duration = 20, with intensity = +1, at t*. Now consider the following state of affairs: (e) *someone's being pleased at t*.[4] This is a less determinate state of affairs than either (a) *John's being pleased at t*, or (c) *John's being pleased, for duration = 20, with intensity = +2, at t*. On Zimmerman's account, (e) is an ontological ancestor of both (a) and (c). Thus, (e) is a part of (a) and (c). But notice that (e) is also a part of (b) and (d) for the same reason. So we cannot, as I suggested above, compute the value of [c & d] as the sum of the basic intrinsic values of (c) and (d). This is because *they have a part in common*, namely, (e), and clause (b) in SUMMATION excludes adding the values of states of affairs that have a part in common. This is how Zimmerman's account was able to cope with the problem of double-counting. Nevertheless, I think that Zimmerman can avoid this problem by dropping clause (b) in SUMMATION. Recall that clause (c) *S2,...S_n have basic intrinsic value*, guarantees that the proper parts from which the value of the wholes that include them are computed are basic states of affairs. Basic states of affairs can't have proper parts with actual intrinsic value. Overlap or not, distinct basic states of affairs cannot share a part that has actual intrinsic value, and so a double-counting problem cannot be generated by dropping clause (b).

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[4] We could also consider: (f) *John or Bob's being pleased at t*. Zimmerman claims that there is such a state of affairs formed by disjunction and that it has *Bob's being pleased at t* and *John's being pleased at t* as proper parts, but that (f) would only have virtual intrinsic value.

There is a more difficult problem. Zimmerman appeals to virtual intrinsic value as a way of assigning value to evaluatively inadequate states of affairs like *John's being pleased at t*. The idea was that such states of affairs lack the relevant information for assigning them determinate intrinsic value, while we could make sense of ascriptions of "value" to them by talking about the intrinsic values of those states of affairs in virtue of which they obtain. They have "value" in that sense. At any rate, why does *John's being pleased at t* lack the relevant information for assigning intrinsic value to it? In particular, can't we assign it exactly the same value as the state of affairs in virtue of which it obtains, namely, +40? Let me put things this way. It seems to me that the relevant information for assigning intrinsic value to these less determinate states of affairs is available. It's the information about the values of those states of affairs in virtue of which they obtain. The same goes for combinative states of affairs like [c & d] and the parts in virtue of which they have their intrinsic values. Facts about the basic states of affairs in virtue of which these complex wholes have their value suffices for assigning intrinsic value to them, i.e. actual intrinsic value to them. Zimmerman accepts that we have the relevant information in these cases, but then why don't we have the relevant information for assigning non-basic intrinsic value to *John's being pleased at t*? We have, after all, the same kind of information in both cases. The value assigned would be non-basic intrinsic value and so we wouldn't include it when computing the intrinsic value of John or Bob's life. But then I don't see why we should say that these less determinate states of affairs lack intrinsic value altogether, rather just the opposite seems right.

So Zimmerman's account makes distinctions in "value" that aren't really there. For virtual intrinsic value is not a kind of value at all. Moreover, his account entails that those more determinate states of affairs in virtue of which their less determinate neighbors obtain have them as parts. But this is surely an odd consequence. If we abandon the idea that entailment is

revelatory of parthood for states of affairs, it's hard to see why we should think *John's being pleased at t* is literally a part of *John's being pleased, for duration 20, of intensity +2, at t*. It's true that the obtaining of one of these states of affairs guarantees the obtaining of the other, but so what? Furthermore, it's counterintuitive to think that *John's being pleased at t* lacks value altogether. If intrinsic value is tied to fitting attitudes as Zimmerman suggests, it's fitting to value this state of affairs as such. But then we have some, though perhaps overrideable, reason to assign it actual intrinsic value. Lacking information about the duration of this pleasure or its intensity may keep us from assigning this state of affairs a *particular amount* of intrinsic value, but this fact doesn't exempt *John's being pleased at t* from having intrinsic value. The presumption should be that it has intrinsic value and it would be better to have an account that preserves this thought.

There are still other worries for Zimmerman's account too. As mentioned earlier, we should have an account of wholes that permits them survive some loss of parts. Zimmerman explicitly accepts mereological essentialism, and so the claim that complex states of affairs have their parts essentially. This is highly counterintuitive. It is especially counterintuitive when we consider the entire world. For if change in the world requires some change in its parts, then Zimmerman's account would entail that the world is the way it is necessarily. Even if this turns out to be correct, it's certainly counterintuitive.[5] Earlier I argued against the view according

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[5] We could instead consider the life one actually lives, where 'actually' rigidly designates the fusion of states of affairs that are parts of one's life in the actual world. This whole has it's parts essentially. This view is controversial. I'm inclined to think 'my life' and 'my actual life' have the same semantic content, and so, whatever one of these expressions refers to is what the other refers to. Since my life could have had different parts, so too could my actual life. Perhaps the right conclusion to draw from this suggestion is that 'actual' is not, in fact, an expression which converts expressions to which it attaches into rigid designators.

Instead, we might distinguish the claim *that I could have had a different life* from the claim that *my life could have been different*. We could accept the claim that the latter is false, whereas the former is true. The latter if false because lives lives have their parts essentially, as Zimmerman claims. The former is true because individuals don't have their lives essentially. Perhaps his is correct even if sounds terribly odd.

which states of affairs are formed by logical operations. If I was right, then Zimmerman's account of states of affairs is mistaken. Finally, the evaluatively basic states of affairs on this view are wildly complex and conjunctive. In its place I offered a much simpler alternative according to which evaluatively basic states of affairs are simple and non-conjunctive, and all involve a fitting attitude. This account has all the resources of Zimmerman's account but without the messiness. So let's now consider an alternative.

4 Adding Goods

Let's start afresh. What we need is a clear account of summation, and one that is compatible with and supported by the metaphysics and axiology defended earlier. Following Hölder (1901), let's say that an attribute Q is *additive* if and only if the following conditions are satisfied for Q:

1. Given any two magnitudes, a and b, from Q, one and only one of the following is true:
    a. $a = b$
    b. $a > b$
    c. $a < b$
2. For every magnitude a from Q, there exists a b in Q such that $b < a$.
3. For every ordered pair of magnitudes, a and b, from Q, there exists a c in Q such that $a + b = c$.
4. For all a and b in Q, $a + b > a$ and $a + b > b$.
5. For any a and b in Q, if $a < b$, then there exist an x and y in Q, such that $a + x = b$ and $y + a = b$.
6. For all a, b, and c in Q, $(a + b) + c = a + (b + c)$.
7. For every pair of classes of magnitudes in Q, ϕ and ψ, such that
    a. each magnitude in Q belongs to one and only one of ϕ or ψ
    b. neither ϕ or ψ is empty, and
    c. every magnitude in ϕ is less than each magnitude in ψ, there exists a magnitude x in Q such that for every x' in Q, if $x' < x$, then x' belongs to ϕ, and if $x' > x$, then x' belongs to ψ.[6]

[6] See Mitchell [1999].

These clauses specify mathematical relationships that magnitudes in Q bear to one another. Specifically, when there is a class of magnitudes of a particular attribute that stand in these relations, we say that the determinable attribute is additive and that the set of magnitudes that includes its determinates is an *extensive structure*. To guarantee that intrinsic value is additive a few other conditions are required. Let Q pick out the determinable attribute of *being intrinsically good,* and let a, b, c, etc. pick out the determinates of Q. Let '$\geq$' denote the *at least as great as* relation and '$\succeq$' denote the *at least as intrinsically good as* relation. We have the following additional conditions:

8. There is a function f such that for all a and b in Q, $a \succeq b$ if and only if $f(a) \geq f(b)$.
9. There is a function f such that for all a and b in Q, $f(a \circ b) = f(a) + f(b)$, and
10. There is a function f and a function f' such that f' satisfies (8) and (9) if and only if $f(a)$ can be obtained from $f'(a)$ by multiplication with a positive number.[7]

What (8) entails is that every magnitude of intrinsic value can be assigned a number that represents it. One magnitude of intrinsic value is at least as good as another just in case the number which represents it is at least as great as the number that represents the other magnitude. Earlier I suggested that quantities involve relations to numbers and attempted to deflate this claim, at least somewhat, by identifying both with concepts and with objects in the domain of a non-fundamental quantifier. If we like, we can now instead relax that assumption to the claim that quantities can be *represented* by numbers. I leave it an open question whether 'being represented by n' expresses a relation that is internal to a magnitude. But presumably, whatever

[7] See Carlson [2001]. I'm ignoring discussion of the Archimedean axiom for quantities that prohibits infinite and infinitesimal magnitudes from occurring in Q.

representation consists in, things do not consist in the way they get represented. So quantities, if this view is correct, need not consist in some relation to a number.

Strictly speaking, the variables in (1) through (7) will range over numbers arrived at via (8) and (9) even if the magnitudes themselves do not incorporate numbers. Notice as well that I am assuming that magnitudes of complex states of affairs, not the entities which possess these magnitudes, stand in the relevant relations. The symbol '$\circ$' in (9) denotes the concatenation operation, and so what (9) entails is that if two magnitudes of intrinsic value are in some way combined, the value of the combination of these magnitudes is equal to the sum of the intrinsic values of these magnitudes. It is the interpretation of '$\circ$' that matters here. For Zimmerman, as far as I can tell, '$\circ$' would be interpreted as conjunction. However, I think the correct interpretation of '$\circ$' has it pick out the relation of mereological fusion. States of affairs are the bearers of intrinsic value and they are formed by mereological fusion, not by Boolean operations. Magnitudes are fused because they are born by the fused states of affairs that instantiate them. Moreover, '$f(a \circ b)$' denotes a number under an assignment of magnitudes to a and b. However, '$(a \circ b)$' denotes a combination of magnitudes. It's natural to think that this combination will be a *whole* that contains only the bearers of a and b as proper parts. Finally, condition (10) amounts to the claim that intrinsic value is measurable on a ratio scale, so that it makes sense to claim that one magnitude of intrinsic value is twice as great as another.

Let's return to the background metaphysics. First, when computing value here we are computing intrinsic value, so it was important to have an adequate account of intrinsicness. I suggested Moore was on the right track when he claimed that something has intrinsic value in virtue of its nature and that it could have its value in isolation. Intuitively, intrinsic properties are properties the possession of which does not depend upon the existence of anything distinct from

its possessor. For example, *having n parts*, *being square*, *being self-identical*, and *having n units of mass* are good candidates for intrinsic properties. My thought was that we should have an account of intrinsicness that underlies these intuitive cases, as well as intuitive principles that govern intrinsicness, to apply to an account of intrinsic value so as to yield an adequate account of it. Following Rosen, I offered the following:

F is an *intrinsic* property iff, as a matter of necessity, for all x: (1) If x is F in virtue of y's being G, then y is a part of x, and (2) if x is not-F in virtue of y's being G, then y is a part of x (2012, p. 118).

Applied to states of affairs and goodness, if a state of affairs is intrinsically good to a certain degree, this is solely in virtue of its parts having certain properties. Now turning to states of affairs, it is simply not true that if there are states of affairs, S1 and S2, then there are states of affairs [S1 or S2], not-S1, and [S1 & S2], and so on. It is propositions, not states of affairs, that are closed under Boolean operations. Were we to treat state of affairs like propositions we might be tempted to think otherwise, but this would be a mistake. It would likewise be a mistake to think that we need disjunctive states of affairs, for example, as truthmakers for true disjunctive propositions. It is sufficient to have an obtaining a state of affairs that corresponds to either of its disjunct for this.[8] Nonetheless, we do need something *like* a "conjunctive" states of affairs to serve as truthmakers for conjunctive propositions. For example, suppose that it is true that John is pleased at t and Bob is pleased at t. What we need is the mereological fusion of two states of affairs, namely, *John's being pleased at t*, *Bob's being pleased at t*, and this fusion is guaranteed

[8] Negative propositions, and universal propositions generate interesting problems that I cannot go into here. It has been suggested that we need totality facts, in addition to positive states of affairs and their fusions, to serve as truthmakers for them. I want to concede that this is an important problem, but I simply do not have the space to address it adequately here.

by Classical Extensional Mereology (CEM) as applied to states of affairs,[9] and this is what I suggest that we do accept. Recall that CEM entails that composition is unrestricted. Whenever there are some states of affairs, there is a fusion of them: the world being the most inclusive of these. Second, it entails that it never happens that the same states of affairs have different fusions. So any collection of states of affairs has a unique fusion. Finally, it entails that parthood is a transitive relation. Thus, if x is a part of some part of y, then x is a part of y. Other mereological concepts like disjointness, overlap, proper parthood, complementation, summation, and atomicity can then be defined in terms of parthood alongside these axioms, where parthood is assumed to be a transitive, irreflexive, and asymmetric relation. Though the domain of CEM is usually applied to material objects (though formally left unrestricted), I suggested that we apply it to states of affairs as well. And it is fusions of states of affairs that are to be identified with lives, outcomes, and worlds. The world is the fusion of all basic states of affairs. The outcome of an action is the fusion of all the states of affairs that are effects of that action. A life is the fusion of all states of affairs that contain the subject of a life as the subject of the state of affairs.

Finally, there is the important notion of metaphysical grounding. This is the relation expressed by 'in virtue of' as it occurred in the above account of intrinsicness. I claimed it is a familiar notion. For example, the fact that the existence of sets are grounded in the existence of their members, propositions are true in virtue of states of affairs obtaining, the existence of a whole is grounded in the existence of its parts, determinable features are grounded in determinate features, the possible is grounded in the actual, the hypothetical is grounded in the categorical, and as argued earlier, the moral features are grounded in the descriptive features of the world. Thus, there are intuitive instances of metaphysical grounding, for example, as when we say that

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[9] See Kathrin Koslicki "The Structure of Objects" (2008) for a nice presentation of CEM.

something is colored because it instantiates a particular shade of blue. But there are also formal principles that help to pin this relation down. Earlier I claimed that grounding is like parthood in that it is a irreflexive, asymmetric, and transitive relation, but I left open the question as to whether there is a unique grounding relation or whether there is a family of grounding relations. Here I want to suggest that grounding has another role to play: it can help with the characterization of evaluatively basic states of affairs and properties.

First, we characterize property families where the idea is that a family of properties is an exhaustive and exclusive collection of properties that are determinates of a common determinable. For example, *having 1 unit of mass*, *having 2 units of mass*,...*having n units of mass* are all determinates of *having mass*. The collection of these properties is a family. The same goes for magnitudes of intrinsic value: *having +1 units of intrinsic goodness*, *having +2 units of intrinsic goodness*,...*having n units of intrinsic goodness* are all determinates of *being intrinsically good*. Moreover, if something instantiates a member from this family at t, then it cannot instantiate another member of this family at t (exclusivity). And all particular units of such properties are members of the relevant family (exhaustivity). Next consider P_1 and Q_1, where each property is a member of a family of properties, the Ps and the Qs respectively, families with those features just mentioned.

DEFINITION ONE: An intrinsic property P_1 from amongst the Ps is *more basic than* an intrinsic property Q_1 from amongst the Qs $=_{df}$ Necessarily, for all x & y, if y has an intrinsic property Q_1, there is an x that has some intrinsic property P_1 from amongst the Ps such that y's having Q_1 is grounded in x's having P_1.

DEFINITION TWO: An intrinsic property P is *evaluatively basic* $=_{df}$ Necessarily, (1) P is an intrinsic evaluative property, and (2) if x has P, there is no y that has Q, where (i) Q is an evaluative property, and (ii) x's having P is grounded in y's having Q.

DEFINITION THREE: An intrinsic property P is *evaluatively non-basic* $=_{df}$ Necessarily, (1) P is an intrinsic evaluative property, and (2) if x has P, there is a y that has Q, where (i) Q is an evaluative property, and (ii) x's having P is grounded in y's having Q.

DEFINITION FOUR: A state of affairs S1 of the form [x, P, t] is *evaluatively basic* $=_{df}$ There are x, P, and t such that (1) S1 is an instance of [x, P, t] and (2) P is an intrinsic evaluatively basic property.

DEFINITION FIVE: A state of affairs S1 of the form [x, P, t] is *evaluatively non-basic* $=_{df}$ There are x, P, and t such that(1) S1 is an instance of [x, P, t] and (2) P is an evaluatively non-basic property.

SUMMATION: For any state of affairs S1 that is evaluatively non-basic: if (1) S1 has its intrinsic value grounded in S2,...Sn, and (2) S2,...Sn are intrinsically and evaluatively basic, then the intrinsic value of S1 = the sum of the basic intrinsic values of S2,..Sn.

It could be that, for typical wholes, what grounds their non-basic intrinsic values are the basic intrinsic values of their parts. This is certainly how Moore thought of things. It is how

philosophers since Moore have thought of things.[10] The point is that there is a broader notion of a ground that includes the notion of parthood, and stating matters in terms of this broader notion captures traditional accounts of additivity while also accommodating views which aim to assign non-basic intrinsic value to states of affairs that obtain in virtue of states of affairs that have basic intrinsic value, where these states of affairs are not parts. But notice that SUMMATION does not tell us to look to all of the proper parts of a complex state of affairs, to identify those proper parts that have basic intrinsic value, and then to add their values together. To see why consider the fusion of (a) *John's being pleased at t* with (b) *Bob's being pleased at t*, calling it S1. It is consistent with SUMMATION that S1 has non-basic intrinsic value, that is, has its value grounded in the evaluatively basic states of affairs in virtue of which it obtains, and yet, that these states of affairs are not parts of S1. Recall: (c) *John's being pleased, for duration = 20, with intensity = +2, at t*, and (d) *Bob's being pleased, for duration = 20, with intensity = +1, at t*. It's plausible that (a) is a determinable of a more determinate (c), and that (b) is a determinable for a more determinate (d). Thus, it's plausible to think (a) obtains in virtue of (c) and (b) obtains in virtue of (d). Given SUMMATION, the intrinsic value of S1 = +60. That's the correct result and there was no mention of these determinable states of affairs serving as parts. Furthermore, since (a) and (b) have non-basic intrinsic value, they are not included in the calculation of the intrinsic value of either Bob or John's life. Unlike Zimmerman's view, we achieved this result without appealing to virtual intrinsic value, and, again unlike Zimmerman's view, we assigned intrinsic value to non-basic states of affairs uniformly, whether their value is non-basic because they have parts with basic value or whether they have their value in virtue of the obtaining of states of affairs with basic intrinsic value. Thus, we achieve a kind of uniformity lacking in his view.

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[10] With exception of Dancy (2003) who defends a view similar to the one presented above.

Notice that SUMMATION also does not tell us that complex states of affairs with intrinsic value that have proper parts with value, also have their intrinsic value grounded in their parts that have value. SUMMATION is formally consistent with value holism, the view that the intrinsic values of certain wholes is prior to, i.e. not grounded in, the values of their parts. SUMMATION takes no stand on the direction of determination of the grounding relation for parts and wholes. We need independent reasons for locating intrinsic value in the states of affairs that are parts of certain wholes, lives, for example, if we are to determine its overall value by adding their values. This is a substantive question that must be answered by delving into axiology, but it is not to be answered by appealing to a formal account of basic and non-basic value. I think this is the right result. I happen to believe that parts are more basic than the wholes they compose, but given that holism seems to be a coherent position, it's preferable to have an account of value computation that is compatible with holism.

Notice also that this simple account answers the original problems, namely, of double-counting and overestimating intrinsic value. Plausibly, W is going to be basic or X, Y, and Z are each going to be basic. Either way, on this view, (X + Y), (X + Z), (Z + Y) will be non-basic since they will obtain in virtue of X, Y, and Z obtaining, or in virtue of W obtaining. So they do not contribute additional value to W. Recall those states of affairs that were supposed to lead to overestimating the value that Bob's reading at 9:00PM contributes to his life: *Bob's being happy while reading*, *the man in Bob's easy chair being happy to degree +10*, *Bob's being happy to at least degree +9*, and so on. It's plausible that these less determinate states of affairs obtain in virtue of the more determinate state of affairs, *Bob's being happy to degree +10, for duration +1 unit, at 9:00PM on Monday evening* obtaining. Thus, they are non-basic and don't contribute intrinsic value to Bob's life, as seems right. This means that we have uniform answers to the

problems raised. We can answer other problems too. Much ink has been spilt over how to assign intrinsic value to disjunctive states of affairs. According to my account, there simply aren't any. There are disjunctive propositions about states of affairs with intrinsic value that, when true, involve the obtaining of non-disjunctive states of affairs with intrinsic value. As far as I can see, SUMMATION gives a plausible determination of their value too. The account avoids the problem of necessarily obtaining states of affairs with basic intrinsic value too. The intrinsic value of my life may, for argument's sake, entail the state of affairs of *God's being virtuous at t*, but *God's being virtuous at t* doesn't ground the intrinsic value of my life nor is it a part of my life, and so, just as it seems, this state of affairs is irrelevant to its intrinsic value.

Summation is only part of the picture. For the *intrinsically better than* relation orders states of affairs with intrinsic value and we need to know more about how summation is related to this fact. Luckily the connection is straightforward. The *intrinsically better than* relation is analyzable in terms of degrees of intrinsic value and a *greater than* relation. So x is *intrinsically better than* y $=_{df}$ x has *n* units of intrinsic value, y has *m* units of intrinsic value, and *n* is greater than *m*. Then everything in our extensive structure stands in determinate ratios to everything else in that structure. Furthermore, given that it is states of affairs whose formation is governed by CEM in this structure, for any collection of states of affairs, there is a fusion of them. If these states of affairs have basic intrinsic value, then there is a sum of their values. So there will be a very large number of wholes whose values can be determined rather simply, and so all the wholes we could care about will get included.

But can one argue for this view? As I mentioned before, I've never seen an argument for the additivity of value. For that matter, I've never seen an argument for the additivity of anything. We could lean on analogies, but the force of such arguments leaves something to be

desired. Perhaps intrinsic value is like weight and perhaps not. It would be nice if our analysis of *is intrinsically better than* could furnish us with an argument too, but it does not. For *density* is not additive, but *is more dense than* can be given a relevantly similar analysis to the one above. That is, just because magnitudes can be ordered by an *is more dense than* relation that preserves clauses (1) through (7), and even if the values of these magnitudes are thus real-valued, without some clause like (9) this is insufficient for the property to count as additive. Combining dense objects does not increase density, period.

Why is this though? Pointing out that density is intensive whereas mass and volume are extensive quantities doesn't show us *why* we cannot combine duplicate dense things to get more density, as opposed to more objects with the same density. But there is something here. For intensive quantity Q, how much Q there is in a world is insensitive to the number of things there are that possess Q. For example, by adding more dense things to the world would not increase the overall density in the world, nor must it entail that there is a new thing with greater density. This is not so for extensive quantities like mass, volume, or weight. If we added a massive object the world its mass would increase. Were we to take away a part from a body, say, an arm, the weight of the body would decrease. Given that only the extensive quantities are susceptible to additivity, this suggests that if something's intrinsic value *is* dependent on the number of relevant parts it possesses, *prima facie*, its intrinsic value will be extensive. Moreover, there is good reason to think value is so dependent.

A longer life has more temporal parts. Assuming that a temporal, or spatiotemporal part has positive intrinsic value, then, adding such parts increases the value of a life. All else equal, a longer life is a better life. The same goes for increasing the *number* of lives. There being two happy people, all else equal, is better than there being one. So adding a life increases the intrinsic

value of a population, all else equal. Adding parts increases intrinsic value. But does adding parts increase value *in proportion to* the intrinsic values of those parts added? There is a general principle that suggests the answer to this question is yes.

Intrinsic value is conserved through duplication Necessarily, for any x, if x is intrinsically good to degree *n*, then duplication of x entails that there is a y distinct from x, such that y has intrinsic value to degree *n*.

Because intrinsic value is determined by the intrinsic properties of its bearer, it follows that duplication conserves intrinsic value. For duplication entails duplicating those properties that determine something's intrinsic value, and so there could be a failure of conservation only if the intrinsic value of something did not so depend on its intrinsic properties alone.[11] This might seem to be a mundane and uncontroversial point. However, it does point to an interesting fact about extensive quantities, namely, that they obey this principle. The same does not hold for intensive quantities. We can duplicate the intrinsic properties of a car and its duplicate could be moving faster than its intrinsic duplicate. This is not to suggest that satisfying this principle is sufficient for additivity. To do that we would need to say something else since duplicating an object with density *d* entails that its duplicate would possess density *d* as well.

Perhaps we can begin by noting that duplicating a state of affairs with intrinsic value n, increases the number of states of affairs, and by unrestricted composition, there is a fusion of states of affairs both with intrinsic value n. Given our principle, the intrinsic values remain post duplication. Next, given that intrinsic value, unlike mass, permits negative value and positive

[11] Earlier I claimed that intrinsic value might depend on normative laws. Here we are considering duplication in the same world, so this fact is irrelevant to whether intrinsic value would be conserved through duplication.

value, we can introduce a few axioms to Holder's that are compatible with them. Let C{x,y} be the value grounding-property of the fusion of states of affairs with value-grounding properties x and y respectively. First we have three definitions:

(1) *a* is a **positive** value-grounding property = def C{*a*, *a*} > *a*.
(2) *a* is a **negative** value-grounding property = def C{*a*, *a*} < *a*.
(3) *a* is a **neutral** property = def C{*a*, *a*} = *a*.

What (1) says is that when a state of affairs has property that generates positive intrinsic value, then duplicating that state of affairs, and thus duplicating that property, generates a value-generating property that generates more value that the prior value-generating property generates. More simply, positive value increases when things that have it grow in number and negative value decreases as things with negative value grow in number. We then add the following:

2. Given any two value-grounding properties,
    (1) If *a* and *b* are positive value-grounding properties, C(*a, b)* > *a*.
    (2) If *a* and *b* are negative value-grounding properties, C(*a, b)* < *a*.
    (3) If *a* and *b* are neutral properties, C(*a, b)* = *a*.
    (4) If *a* is a positive value-grounding property and *b* is a negative value-grounding property, that C(*a, b)* < *a* and C(*a, b)* > *b*.

When we combine distinct positive value-grounding properties, adding a positive to another positive value-grounding property generates a value-grounding property that is intrinsically better than either value-grounding property alone, but when adding a negative value-grounding property to another negative, either value-grounding property alone is intrinsically better than the value-grounding property so generated. Adding neutrals makes matters neither better nor worse.

3. Given any three value-grounding properties, *a*, *b*, and *c*:
    (1) if *a* = *b*, then C{*a, c*} = C{*b*, *c*}.

(2) if $a > b$, then $C\{a, c\} > C\{b, c\}$.

(3) if $a < b$, then $C\{a, c\} < C\{b, c\}$.

*We can then derive the following corollary of 3 as follows:

(a) if $a = b$, then $C\{a, c\} = C\{b, c\}$.

(b) setting $a = c$ we have: if $a = b$, then $C\{a, a\} = C\{b, a\}$

(c) if $a = b$, then $C\{a, c\} = C\{b, c\}$.

(d) setting $c = b$ we have: if $a = b$, then $C\{a, b\} = C\{b, b\}$

(e) $C\{b, a\} = C\{a, b\}$, so we have: if $a = b$, then $C\{a, a\} = C\{b, b\}$

Here we see that *intrinsically better than*, *intrinsically worse than*, and the *exactly equal in intrinsic value to* relations are preserved under permutations value-grounding properties. Again, this is just what we would expect if the value-grounding properties are intrinsic and thus conserved under recombination with distinct value-grounding properties. Let '*Fna*' refer to the value-grounding property of the fusion of n things with some value-grounding property a. Then we have just shown he following:

(f) if $a = b$, then $F2a = F2b$.

What (f) shows is that if two value-grounding properties have the same intrinsic value, then any fusion of these properties that have the same number of value-grounding properties with the same intrinsic value as these value-grounding properties also have the same intrinsic value. More generally, the following can then be derived:

4. Given any two value-grounding properties, a and b, and any number n, if *Fna* is the value-grounding property of the fusion of n things with value-grounding property a, then

(1) $a = b$ iff $Fna = Fnb$

(2) $a > b$ iff $Fna > Fnb$

(3) $a < b$ iff $Fna < Fnb$.

I will leave open the question as to whether we should add a further Archimedean axiom above.[12] If intrinsic value satisfies the latter postulates, then intrinsic value can be quantified and additivity follows. However, a few comments are in order. First, I have referred to value-grounding properties as standing in evaluative relations, like *intrinsically better than*, to one another. Strictly speaking, this must be interpreted as shorthand for saying that the magnitudes grounded in these value-grounding features stand in these respective relations. Second, note that there is no appeal to numbers in the account above. We can appeal to Holder's clauses (8) - (10) to introduce numbers and numerical relations straightforwardly. Third, there is one worry for this account that we need to address before moving on.

This account requires that we increase value in the world by adding or subtracting further parts or grounds with value-grounding properties to the world (positive or negative, respectively). Differences in value must be accounted for in terms of differences in numbers of value-grounding parts. This is incompatible with there being two entities with the same number of value-grounding parts, where each part generates the same intrinsic value, but where these

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[12] One might add the following Archimedean axiom:

5. Given any two value-grounding properties, a and b, such that $a > b$, then

(1) If a and b are positive value-grounding properties, there is some number n, such that $Fnb > a$.

(2) If a and b are negative value-grounding properties, there is some number n, such that $Fna < b$.

(3) If a is a positive value-grounding property and b is a negative value-grounding property, then there is a number m such that that $C(Fna, b) > a$, and there is a number n such that that $C(Fnb, a) < b$.

Whether this axiom holds for intrinsic value is up for debate. On the one hand, if time is dense and it is instantaneous states of affairs that have basic intrinsic value can have positive or negative intrinsic value, then we should accept that there could be infinitesimal magnitudes of intrinsic value. If so, we should reject this axiom. On the other hand, if there could be infinitely many states of affairs that have positive or negative intrinsic value, then there could be infinite value. If so, we should reject this axiom. In any case, thanks to Michael Tooley for serious assistance on this issue and formalizing the proof for additivity from these axioms.

parts have *different* intrinsic values. However, in one special case this does seem to be possible, namely, in the *simple* case. Earlier I argued that atomic states of affairs are mereologically simple, and thus, that evaluatively basic states lack proper parts. In the case of mass, any two material objects without proper parts would have the same mass necessarily. These objects would be point-particles with 0 units of mass. However, with intrinsic value matters are different. Couldn't two instantaneous states of affairs have different intrinsic values? Consider some interval, or some instant associated with *Mitt Romney's enjoying watching his stocks double in value*, and contrast this with a similarly sized interval or instant, of some *poor child's enjoying riding his first bike*. Isn't the former state of affairs worse than the latter? Take a slice out of these states of affairs, or take some interval of temporal slices that have some value. We cannot account for the differences in the values of either by appealing to the differences in intrinsic values of their parts. This is either because both lack temporal parts for being instantaneous and have different intrinsic values, or else it is because they have the same number of parts and each instantaneous part has the same intrinsic value. The worry, then, is that intrinsic value is not like mass after all.

This objection rests on a mistake. We should *first* take some interval, say ten minutes, and compare the intrinsic values of these states of affairs over this interval. We then conclude that Mitt's experience is worse than the child's experience. This judgment then constrains assignments of intrinsic value to proper parts of these states of affairs. Similarly, we don't conclude that a two-foot pole is equal in length to a one-foot pole by *first* noting that they have the same number of parts and that these parts have the same length, namely 0 units of length. That would be absurd, even though it is plausibly true. We assign value from the bottom up and add, but not from the very bottom! The lesson is that units of intrinsic value are not built up from

atoms that have 0 units, or even infinitesimal units of intrinsic value. We start with atoms that have 1 unit of intrinsic value, and then we work our way down. The same goes for everyday quantities like mass, length, and volume.

We assume additivity in everyday reasoning about value, both personal and impersonal. How much worse is it, all else equal, for five people to die rather one? How much worse is it for me, to suffer two hours of agony rather than one hour of similar agony? Intuitively, it is exactly five times worse in the first instance, and twice as bad in the second instance. Such judgments, if correct, strongly support the claim that intrinsic value and personal value is additive.[13] So there are intuitive considerations, some analogies with other additive quantities, a metaphysics that supports the claim that value is additive, and now proof that value is additive. I mentioned that I have yet to come across an argument for the additivity of value. Well, that was until now.

Let's move on to consider two final issues. We need some unit of value, even if it is arbitrary. How do we select a unit for intrinsic value? To have a ratio scale for intrinsic value, a scale that orders states of affairs with intrinsic value by real numbers that represent these values, we need a zero point, or a neutral level of intrinsic value. How do we get a zero point? Let's turn to these questions.

5 Absolute Zero and Bare-Difference Reasoning

At this point we have an account of how to determine the intrinsic values for fusions of evaluatively basic states of affairs. However, in order to have ratio scale we need to have an absolute zero and an arbitrary unit for degrees of intrinsic value. That is, we must be able make

[13] Kagan (1988) argues against the additivity of value, but in so doing, he presents many cases of everyday reasoning that presuppose it.

sense of the claim that some state has zero units of intrinsic value, and it must also make sense to have 1 unit of intrinsic value. How might this project be carried out?

At first blush the answer for such an account might seem obvious. A state of affairs S1 has 0 units of intrinsic value, if and only if, S1 exists and it is fitting to be indifferent between the existence of S1 as such and its absence. Or differently, a state of affairs S1 has 0 units of intrinsic value, if and only if, S1 exists and it is not intrinsically better that S1 exists rather than not. This would follow from the more general claim, argued for earlier, that the fitting response is indifference to states of affairs that possess the same intrinsic value, and with greater favor as such for the intrinsically better state of affairs. The simple thought is that our concerns should be aligned with perceived value and proportionally so. On the other hand, this is only a schema. What might we substitute for S1 on this view? Initially, we have two options: we can substitute a state of affairs that lacks value, or one that possesses zero units of intrinsic value. The difference here is an important one, even if not obvious there is a difference. This is because it is one thing for it to be fitting to neither desire nor be averse to a state of affairs, and quite another for it to be positively fitting to be indifferent between a state of affairs and its absence. Here indifference might be construed as an attitude of its own kind, an attitude distinct from both desire and aversion.[14] To the extent that an intrinsically neutral state of affairs, our zero point, calls out for indifference, whereas a state of affairs that lacks value only calls out for the absence of desire or aversion, then such states might come apart.

The question, then, is which kinds of state of affairs fall into either category if there is a difference between them? Intuitively, the intrinsically neutral state involves consciousness of an

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[14] Both Lemos (1994) and Zimmerman (2001) argue that we need to distinguish indifference from lack of preference. According to Zimmerman, if one has never seen some movie X, one should not be indifferent towards X, one should have no attitude whatsoever towards X. On the other hand, if one is confronted with a state of affairs that is intrinsically neutral, one should be indifferent to its presence.

intentional object that is neither fitting nor unfitting, whereas a state that lacks intrinsic value is one that lacks consciousness as a constituent. So *there being rocks* lacks intrinsic value. Similarly, the number 2 lacks a temperature. On the other hand, it is difficult to see what kind of state could be intrinsically neutral as opposed to lacking value, unlike there being certain regions that can have 0 degrees of temperature, without lacking temperature. If all conscious states can be assessed for correctness, or fittingness, then for any given conscious state we select it will be to some degree fitting or unfitting, and hence, the intrinsic value of that state will either be positive or negative.[15] Are there conscious states such that being in them is neither fitting nor unfitting? If not, we may have a problem. Our neutral state, on this view, would be completely unlike states with positive and negative intrinsic value.

There are two responses. First, we might take some state of affairs that lacks a fitting attitude as a constituent to be our state of affairs with zero degrees of intrinsic value. In this case, the neutral state would correspond to a state with an absence of positive and negative properties. Second, we might take some state that has an attitude that has the potential for positive or negative intrinsic value, but lacks both to be our state of affairs with zero degrees of intrinsic value. I prefer the latter option for uniformity. Perhaps the following state will work: someone's being indifferent towards something that lacks intrinsic value, and is such that it is neither fitting nor unfitting to favor it. The obvious worry for this proposal is that it looks as if indifference is a fitting response to the perceived object because it is neither fitting nor unfitting to favor this perceived object. If this thought is right, then we should take a sate of affairs with the absence of a fitting attitude as our neutral point. If this objection is incorrect, then we should place indifference and the absence of favor or disfavor on a par. That is, if we are aware of some object

[15] Zimmerman (2001, p. 202) commits himself to a similar view.

such that it is neither fitting to favor it nor fitting to disfavor it, then it is fitting to take no attitude whatsoever towards it (if this is possible) or else to be indifferent towards it. Which escape route is best I leave to the reader.

How do we fix a unit of the good? The unit for any quantity is arbitrary because the standard that determines a unit is arbitrary. There is nothing special about one-yard, for example, other than the fact that things that measure one-yard are purportedly equal in length to the distance between the tip of Henry I of England's nose and the end of his thumb. We can simply stipulate that someone's believing that they themselves exist to have a unit of intrinsic value. Two such experiences would then have 2 units. Next, we can abstract away from the particular value generating property, fitting belief, and extend this account to virtue and pleasure. So if x fittingly bears Φ to object X to degree 1, then the state of affairs of x's fittingly bearing Φ to object X to degree 1 has an intrinsic value of 1 intrinsic value unit. Here we can substitute any of our fitting attitudes for 'Φ.' Perhaps there is no least degree, or greatest degree of fit. This would be no more problematic than the fact that there is no least degree of intensity of pleasure, or least degree of mass. Whatever the answer, this problem is above my pay grade. On the other hand, this problem is a general problem for anyone that accepts that value comes in degrees. We all must select some state that we cannot observe alongside others, some state that doesn't involve an object that will fit between our finger and our nose. But value isn't observable in the first place, so perhaps we should have expected all along that fixing a unit of unobservable unit value would seem to be a great deal more stipulative than fixing units for observable quantities.

One problem for this proposal is that the possession of a virtue seems to have more intrinsic value than a mere pleasurable experience. However, this shouldn't be a problem for a few reasons. First, we don't ordinarily attribute a virtue to someone unless it is settled, in which

case it persists over time, and in which case, over time its possession accrues in intrinsic value. It will also typically have more instrumental value. So virtue typically has more value than a mere sensation. Second, a constraint on a pleasure's being fitting in the first place is that its subject has some degree of virtue. So it wouldn't be surprising if we placed more value on virtue than pleasure, for virtue is intrinsically good while also serving as a constraint on pleasure's value. In that sense, we could say virtue is also extrinsically good in a way in which pleasure is not. Virtue is a feature that is relevant to our assessments of other states as valuable. We could say that an action has "extrinsic value" when it is performed from a virtuous motive. We could say this without saying that extrinsic value is another kind of value, but that the expression is shorthand for saying the action was caused by a valuable state. So actions and virtue have extrinsic value in the sense that an action has a good-making feature, the virtue that causes it, and that virtue has a good making feature in addition to being intrinsically good, namely, that it constrains the goodness of other states. More importantly, particular units of the good are just not given to us in experience. As far as I can tell, there is no experience we could have beyond stipulating that something has a precise degree of intrinsic value that would reveal a precise degree of value to us in experience. Instead, what is given to us are comparisons of value. We can only consult our intuitions about particular cases to discover which of two cases would be better. But this is compatible with there being a fact of the matter as to how valuable a state is, and even if the unit by which its value is measured would be arbitrary.

Moving on. Rossian arguments for pluralism are quite powerful. If we can derive the principles of reasoning behind his arguments by way of an appeal to additivity, that would have important axiological implications. Following Oddie (2001) we can distinguish between two kinds of principles:

Bottom-up bare-difference: For any parts [x,y] such that x is intrinsically better than y, and for any wholes w and w,' such that w has x as a part and w' has y as a part, if w and w' differ only over whether they contain x rather than y as a part, then w is intrinsically better than w.'

Top-down bare-difference: For any whole [w,w'] such that w is intrinsically better than w,' and for any parts x and y, such that w has x as a part and w' has y as a part, if w and w' differ only over whether they contain x rather than y as a part, then x is intrinsically better than y.[16]

These principles are quite plausible. Let's call their conjunction *separability*. Here is the idea behind top-down: If we isolate some difference between two wholes and note that this difference is the *only* difference between them, and if we then note that one whole is intrinsically better than the other, we learn that the presence of that difference in one whole is better than its absence in the other whole. It's important to be careful here. The claim is not that if the one whole is intrinsically better than the other, then the presence of that part is better than *its* absence. For the only difference between the two wholes in question could be that one contains a horrendous part, whereas the other contains a slightly less bad part. The world could be better without both. Here the differences are attributes to differences in the values of parts, but they need not be. Recall: if we compare two worlds that each contain the same virtuous and vicious people, while differing only with respect to their distributions of pain and pleasure, we would judge the world where the virtuous receive the pleasure to be better than the world where the vicious do. So we might infer that there is a part of the former that is intrinsically better than

[16] Oddie states these principles in terms of *factors*, a notion more general than that of a part. As we'll see, this difference is important.

some part of the latter. But also recall that Ross denied that there is any such part, for he envisioned this differing distributional property as a feature of the world and not of any part of it. What this means is that bare difference reasoning has to be done with care.

On the one hand, this is because we can isolate the axiological atoms by using barely different cases. The case above, I argued earlier, suggests that pleasures as such neither have nor lack intrinsic value because we must first determine whether they are fitting. In this way we can retain additivity by denying that, in the two worlds case above, the only evaluative difference between these worlds is some distributional property. In one world there are goods, and in the other none. However, if we first assume that a certain axiology is correct and *then* employ bare difference reasoning, we might be inclined to reject additivity— in this case, because these worlds have different intrinsic values though they contain the same basic intrinsic values states as parts. Thus, the order by which we proceed when employing bare difference reasoning matters: either we work on the assumption that value is additive and learn that axiological atoms are more complex than we might have thought, or else we assume these atoms are simple, and then learn that additivity fails in such cases. In fact, matters are even slightly more complicated than this. If we permit less determinate states of affairs to have intrinsic value and that they get their intrinsic value from grounds that are not parts, then this opens up the possibility that in such two-world cases some grounds are making a difference in value that differs between worlds, where these grounds are not themselves a part of the worlds under consideration.

This is why it is important to see whether additivity and separability go hand-in-hand. For Ross rejects additivity and accepts bare difference reasoning. Were this option incoherent, we would have a powerful argument for accepting both and for accepting the more complex axiological atoms his cases seem to generate. So can we have additivity without bare difference

principles, or vice versa? For reductio, assume additivity is true and that separability is false. Let a whole W have an intrinsic value +5 with two parts, x and y, with basic intrinsic values +2 and +3 respectively. Let another whole W' have an intrinsic value +7 with two parts, x' and y,' with basic intrinsic values +2 and +5 respectively. W' is intrinsically better than W. From additivity W' must have a part with an intrinsic value greater than the intrinsic value of some part in W. But if separability is false, it's not the case that W' must have a part with an intrinsic value greater than the intrinsic value of some part in W. We have a contradiction. The other direction is, however, more difficult to prove.[17] In any case, to the extent that we have reason to accept additivity we have reason to accept bare-difference reasoning. We assess philosophical theories on the basis of their consequences. Thus, to the extent that bare-difference reason seems plausible we have further confirmation of additivity.

Similar arguments can be given for the more general notion of a ground or factor, that is, were we to state separability in terms of grounds rather than parts.[18] So if we have vindicated additivity we have gone some way towards defending Ross's axiology, that is, if one shares the intuitions his cases are intended to evoke.

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[17] See Oddie (2001) for a discussion of this point.

[18] Essentially, duplicate everything said above with the term 'ground' in place of 'part' and reserve grounds for parts or for those states of affairs with intrinsic value in virtue of which states of affairs with intrinsic value obtain.

Chapter 7

The Myth of the Organic Unity

0 Introduction

According to additivity, the intrinsic value of a whole is the same as the sum of the values of those of its parts that have basic intrinsic value. The most common purported counterexamples to additivity are purported wholes with intrinsic values that, intuitively, differ from the sum of the intrinsic values of their evaluatively basic parts. Moore famously claimed that "*the value of a whole must not be assumed to be the same as the sum of the values of its parts*" (2004, p. 28). Ross raised doubts about Moore's particular examples of organic unity, but still endorsed Moore's doctrine claiming that "its truth in the abstract seems unquestionable" (1930, p. 122). Recently, a number of very good philosophers have carried Moore's torch forward by providing additional cases of purported organic unities.[1] This chapter argues that organic unities are a myth. I argue that Moore and his torchbearers are all mistaken. Together, the axiology and metaphysics defended earlier will allow us to see why.

In section 1 I consider one recent argument in support of organic unity by Brown (2007). Identifying where his argument fails will help to reveal which properties organic unities would have to possess, were they to be genuine. In section 2 I consider other purported cases of organic

[1] See Lemos (1998), Brown (2007), and Hurka (2005).

unity and consider Moore's response to his own purported cases of organic unity. Though Moore's metaphysics required that he embrace organic unities, he nearly solved the problem he coined. In section 3 I briefly consider an approach to intrinsic value that entails intrinsic value is *conditional*, that is, that it can vary from context to context. Though this account escapes organic unities, its costs are too high. In section 4 I outline an account that avoids organic unity. When AAIV is wedded to the metaphysics discussed previously, we can dissolve purported organic unities and explain away the temptation to embrace them. Finally, in section 5 I consider two worries for this account. Lemos (1998) and Hurka (2005) argue that we must embrace organic unities to accommodate the fitting attitudes we should take towards states of affairs that involve wicked pleasure. These states require us to have mixed emotional responses to wholes that include both. This seems to entail pleasure remains good *even when enjoyed by the wicked*. I explain where this worry goes wrong. Dancy claims that those external conditions that enable the generation of intrinsic value can depend on other material objects. This is incompatible with the value they enable being intrinsic. I explain where this objection goes wrong too.

1 What Organic Unities Couldn't Be

Some purported organic unities have an intuitive pull. Others do not. Brown opens his paper with the following case:

> As the opinions of competent judges will attest, gravy complements chips, yet spoils ice-cream. That is, chips with gravy is better than chips alone, but ice cream with gravy is worse than ice-cream alone. On an 'atomistic' view of value, these judgements are puzzling. The sole difference between chips with gravy and chips alone is the gravy. So any difference in value between these two must be the value of the gravy. But just the same is true of ice-cream with gravy and ice-cream alone: the only difference is the gravy, and so any difference in value must be the value of the gravy. The difference in value between the first pair is, therefore, the

> same as that between the second pair. In particular, chips with gravy is better than chips alone if and only if ice-cream with gravy is better than ice-cream alone. This conclusion contradicts the opinions of competent judges. So something must have gone wrong in our atomistic reasoning. But what? (2007, p. 456).

Brown asks "what went wrong?" First, chips and gravy do not have intrinsic value, so they lack basic intrinsic value. The whole identical to the mereological fusion of chips and gravy lacks intrinsic value too. What went wrong is that Brown's case involves neither a whole with intrinsic value, nor parts with basic intrinsic value. Both are required for the existence of an organic unity. Some philosophers are hesitant to countenance instances of knowledge and virtue as evaluatively basic states of affairs. However, I have never heard of a philosopher willing to include chips or gravy into their axiology. Brown's argumentative strategy has an important defect. For imagine someone arguing as follows: "Well, clearly the mass of a whole is not equal to the mass of its parts. Consider two objects, one with a density of 2 units and another with a density of 3 units. Given additivity, the whole that has just these objects as parts has a density of 5 units. But that is false. Density does not work that way. Therefore, the mass of a whole need not equal the sum of the masses of its parts." Brown's argument is strikingly similar to that terrible argument. He draws a conclusion about whether intrinsic value is additive on the basis of some case that does not involve intrinsic value at all.[2]

What is the take-away lesson? The lesson is not that chips tastes good with gravy (though fries and gravy are quite good together). Rather, we can stay clear of this kind of mistake by first identifying a whole that would seem to possess intrinsic value, and then identifying those of its parts that seem to possess intrinsic value in a basic way. Only when we have an intuitive case

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[2] Perhaps Brown is confusing value with valuing. Plausibly, we can value x to degree n and y to degree m, but reasonably not value their fusion to degree r, where r = m + n. However, the relevant whole in his case is not a mere fusion, but a mixture of gravy and ice cream.

where the intrinsic value of such a whole diverges from the sum of the intrinsic values of its parts do we have a candidate for an organic unity. Doing this requires making axiological choices for sure. It requires making mereological choices too. However, the only way to motivate a putative organic unity requires that these choices be made.

2 Purported Examples of Organicity and Moore's Mooreanism

However, promising cases of organic unity are easy to find. In no particular order, the following examples have shown up in the literature on organic unity:

Uphill and Downhill Lives

Consider two distributions of some fixed amount of the good. In distribution 1, Smith's life begins poorly, constantly improves, and then Smith dies. In distribution 2, Smith's life begins wonderfully, constantly deteriorates, and then he dies. Suppose the total amount of good distributed amongst Smith's candidate lives are the same. Intuitively, Smith's life goes better in distribution 1 even though his life in distribution 2 has the same number of parts with the same intrinsic values as in distribution 1.

Egalitarianism

Consider two distributions of some fixed amount of the good. In distribution 1, two people are given nearly all of the good, and what is left over is divided randomly among 98 others. In distribution 2, the good is distributed equally among each of these 100 people. Suppose the total amount of good distributed amongst these two populations is the same. Intuitively, distribution 2 is intrinsically better than distribution 1 even though both distributions contain the same basic intrinsic value states.

Punishment

Smith has done something bad and deserves to be punished. Jones has done something good and deserves to be rewarded. Consider two distributions of some fixed amount of the bad in the form of punishment. In distribution 1, Smith receives the punishment and Jones does not. In distribution 2, Jones receives the punishment and Smith does not. Intuitively, distribution 1 is intrinsically better than distribution 2. For it is better when bad actions are punished than when good actions are punished, all else equal. Yet the only difference between distribution 1 and 2 is

who gets punished and not the amount of intrinsically bad states of affairs that are present in each distribution.

Schadenfreude

In case 1, Smith is pleased when watching Jones suffer. In case 2, Smith is displeased when watching Jones suffer. All else is equal. Intuitively, case 2 is intrinsically better than case 1. For it is better to pained at someone's suffering than to be pleased by it. Yet the only difference between these cases is that case 1 has a good part, Smith's being pleased, that the other lacks.

Justice

In world 1, the population is evenly divided. Half of the population are evil, and the other half are virtuous. World 2 is exactly like world 1 in this respect. However, in world 1 the evil people are happy, and the virtuous people are miserable. In world 2, just the reverse is the case: the virtuous people are happy, and the evil people are miserable. Intuitively, world 2 is intrinsically better than world 1.

These cases of purported organic unity have something in common. In each there is a factor responsible for some comparative difference in intrinsic value, and these factors do not seem to count as parts of these wholes. For example, the temporal order of the goods in a life is not itself a proper part of a life. The manner in which goods are distributed in a population is not itself a proper part of a population. Whether some punishment is deserved is not a proper part of the experience of being punished. A causal relation between one's pleasure and another person's pain is not itself a proper part of someone's being pleased by another's pain. The manner in which pain and pleasure are distributed among evil and virtuous people is not a proper part of situations in which such people are pleased and pained. What appears to be going on is this: we get differences in the intrinsic values of wholes without any difference in the intrinsic values of their parts. However, this is impossible if it is *only* proper parts that can make for differences in the intrinsic values of the wholes that have them, or even states of affairs that are determinates of less determinate states of affairs that have intrinsic value.

Moore often leaned on another kind of case. He argued that a beautiful object has little, or no intrinsic value. In various places, he also seemed willing to say the same for consciousness. However, Moore consistently maintained that being conscious of a beautiful object has great intrinsic value. We thus have a whole, some*one's being conscious of a beautiful object*, though its parts have little or no value, the whole that includes them has great intrinsic value. So we cannot always sum the intrinsic values of the parts of a whole to determine its intrinsic value. Later in his *Principia*, Moore distinguished the intrinsic value of a whole *as a whole* from the intrinsic value of a whole *on the whole* (2004, p. 214). Moore accepted that parts can interact with one another, or stand in various relations to one another, which can make for differences in the intrinsic values of the wholes of which they are parts. This additional intrinsic value or disvalue generated from such interactions was to be attributed to the whole itself because none of the parts could rightfully claim to possess this value. This makes perfect sense given Moore's commitments too. The value that arises from the interaction of a whole's parts cannot properly be said to be intrinsic to them[3] and there is only one candidate entity in their neighborhood to which such additional value can properly be said to be intrinsic, namely, the whole that contains these interacting parts. Moore argued that all value is either intrinsic or instrumental. Given that the presence of the relations in question do not *cause* their wholes to have more, or less intrinsic value, the value these relations contribute had to be intrinsic. Moore said this additional intrinsic value was the value of a whole *as a whole*. Importantly, when added to the intrinsic values of the parts of some whole, Moore claimed this additional value could be summed with the intrinsic values of these parts to yield the intrinsic value of the whole *on the whole*. Thus, as long as we

[3] The value would be, in modern jargon, *internal* to the pair of parts, but internality is insufficient for intrinsicness. Moore didn't recognize internal value as a kind of value anyway.

are willing to admit this further kind of intrinsic value in addition to the intrinsic values of parts, Moore claimed that we can avoid organic unities.

It would be nice not to multiply kinds of intrinsic value if we do not have to. Perhaps defenders of additivity need only to accept a broader notion of *part* to avoid organic unity.[4] Perhaps the features of these wholes which are making for differences in their intrinsic values could be considered to be parts of it. Can we exclude properties from being parts? If we did, leftover would appear to be a semantic dispute over whether some entity deserves the label 'part' or not. Parthood has recently been granted to various kinds of entity by metaphysicians working on mereology, for example: structures, properties, and Aristotelian forms.[5] We might follow their lead and add Moore's holistic properties to the list. I mention this option only avoid it, however. Earlier I argued that it is only states of affairs with basic intrinsic value that can make for evaluative differences to their wholes, and besides, we needn't mess with parthood to solve the problem of organic unity.

Let's get clear on Moore's exact reason for accepting organic unities. First, he gave intuitive cases. Second, he accepted a principle of *essentiality* and a principle of *universality* for intrinsic value. Both of these principles place constraints on the computation of intrinsic value. Here is Moore:

> The part of a valuable whole retains exactly the same value when it is, as when it is not, a part of that whole. If it had value under other circumstances, its value is not any greater, when it is part of a far more valuable whole; and if it had no value by itself, it has none still, however great be that of the whole of which it now forms a part (2004, p. 30).

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[4] I read Dancy (2003) to suggest exactly this alternative.

[5] For example, see Koslicki (2005) argues that *structures* are proper parts of the material objects they inhere in.

Moore was committed to the claim that intrinsic value is invariant across wholes: if some x has intrinsic value to degree *n* as a part of whole W, for all other wholes W*, if x were a part of W*, x would have intrinsic value to degree *n* as a part of W*. Additionally, Moore claimed that if x has intrinsic value to degree *n*, necessarily, if x exists, x has intrinsic value to degree *n*. To say that a property is essential, on this account, is to say that it is impossible for the object to exist and lack that property. Modern commentators have interpreted Moore as intending metaphysical necessity. Given these metaphysical underpinnings of Moore's account we can see why he embraced organic unities. Consider the following states:

(1) Pleasure combined with virtue.
(2) Pleasure alone.
(3) Pleasure combined with vice.
(4) Pain combined with virtue.
(5) Pain alone.
(6) Pain combined with vice.

For simplicity, suppose that we assign +10 units of intrinsic value to pleasure and -10 units to pain, while assuming the intrinsic values of these states are invariant across wholes. Suppose next that we assign +20 units of intrinsic value to virtue and -20 to vice, while also assuming the intrinsic values of these states are invariant across wholes. Finally, assume that there are no other parts to these wholes than these states of pleasure, pain, virtue, and vice. These "modest" assumptions are jointly incompatible with Moore's intuitive ordering of (1) through (6), unless there are organic unities. Assuming that intrinsic value is additive and that (1) through (6) can be factored only into states of pleasure, pain, virtue, and vice, we get the following value assignments: (1) = +30, (2) = +10, (3) = -10, (4) +10, (5) = -10, and (6) = -30. Let 'x > y' mean that x is intrinsically better than y. Moore accepted that (6) > (3) and that this claim served as a

constraint on any plausible ordering of the intrinsic values of (1) through (6). He claimed that it is intrinsically better if vice is rewarded with pain than if vice is rewarded with pleasure. Rewarding vice with pleasure would make an already bad situation *worse*. However, additivity yields the values -30 for (6) and -10 for (3). Thus, the intrinsic values of (3) and (6) cannot equal the sum of the intrinsic values of their parts. More precisely, assuming that (1) > (4) and that (2) > (5), there is no invariant assignment of intrinsic values to the states in (1) through (6) that is compatible with additivism and the claim that (6) > (3). It is additivity, according to Moore, that must be rejected.[6]

There are a number of responses one might give to this argument. For example, one might deny that (6) > (3) and attempt to explain away intuitions to the contrary. Hedonists reject the claim that virtue adds intrinsic value and that vice subtracts intrinsic value. Accordingly, each of (1) through (3) have the same intrinsic value, as do each of (4) through (6) have the same intrinsic disvalue. This response involves making a controversial axiological choice by restricting the class of intrinsic goods to pleasures and pains, but it is nonetheless an option. As I mentioned above, whether we should accept some purported organic unity will depend on the axiology and metaphysics that we accept. Since I reject hedonism, this particular solution to the argument is not open to me. Nevertheless, even a pluralist about intrinsic value can reject those intuitions meant to support the claim that (3) > (6). Perhaps rewarding vice with pleasure does make matters intrinsically better, while rewarding vice with pleasure makes matters worse only *instrumentally*. The thought is that we are confusing intrinsic value with instrumental value. Again, what one says will depend on the axiology one accepts. Because I accept the view that

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[6] Proof: Let pleasure = m, pain = n, virtue = o, and vice = p. Assume that $m > n$ and $o > p$. By additivism, (3) = $m + p$ and (6) = $n + p$. Given that $m > n$, it follows that (3) > (6) given invariantism. But (6) > (3) given the Moorean ranking. We have a contradiction.

pleasure must be fitting to generate intrinsic value, that taking pleasure in another's suffering is never intrinsically good, this option is also not open to me.

In the next section I will consider a different response. One might reject *universality* and allow that the intrinsic value of pleasure and pain can change from whole to whole. Perhaps we are working with the wrong notion of intrinsicness and the intrinsic properties of parts of wholes can depend on the properties of their wholes. One might respond to purported cases of organic unity by rejecting certain background *metaphysical* assumptions, rather than background axiological assumptions.

3 Conditionalism

According to conditionalism, when circumstances surrounding the occurrence of an episode of pleasure change, the valence of that pleasure's intrinsic value can change too. That is, pleasure can go from good to bad, or from bad to good. When taken at an object that is fitting for it, say, while strolling along the beach contemplating Goldbach's Conjecture, an episode of pleasure generates intrinsic value. When taken at an object that is unfitting for it, say, while watching someone suffer undeservedly, an episode of pleasure state generates negative intrinsic value. In this way, we can accept Moore's claim that (6) > (3), namely, that it is intrinsically better if vice is rewarded with pain than if vice is rewarded with pleasure.

This view is committed to a few interesting claims. First, that pleasures and pains are not to be individuated by their contents. One and the same pleasure can be taken in different sorts of thing. There are good reasons to doubt this commitment. In the case above don't we have two *different* pleasures: one in suffering and the other in contemplation? Second, the object to which a pleasure is directed is a contextual feature that can vary and alter the intrinsic value of the

pleasure state. That is, as the content of the pleasure changes, the intrinsic value generated by the pleasure itself, not the pleasure with its content, also changes. One can imagine various additions to this simple proposal. Perhaps as the reasons for taking the pleasure change, so too might its intrinsic value. Perhaps as the character of the agent enjoying the pleasure change, so too might its intrinsic value. Perhaps as the intensity of the pleasure becomes more, or less proportionate to the purported intrinsic value of its object, so too might its intrinsic value. The orderings generated when considering cases like those above may even help to reveal which contextual factors are relevant to degrees of intrinsic value. Conditionalism is a very flexible theory. As a consequence, once one rejects Moore's claim that degrees of intrinsic value depend solely on the intrinsic nature their bearers, his overall conception of value is compatible with additivism. We need only let go of some of his metaphysical baggage.

How does this account handle those purported cases of organic unity described above? That is, supposing that we take the intuitions the cases evoke at face-value and aim to accommodate these intuitions, what should a conditionalist say about those cases? Perhaps the responses might go something like this. In the first case, the intrinsic value of an episode of pleasure or pain seems to depend upon its temporal relations to other pleasures and pains that occur in the life of their recipient. One might then build an episode's relative temporal ordering into the context that determines the degree to which a state of affairs is intrinsically good. In particular, the intrinsic value of an episode is increased if it follows an episode that has less intrinsic value, and it is decreased if it follows an episode that is intrinsically better. In the second case, the more fair distribution of goods seems to be intrinsically better. This case is more difficult to assess. We can look to the parts of these wholes and vary their intrinsic value according to external distributional facts, or else we can look at the whole itself and vary its

intrinsic value according to internal distributional facts. As far as conditionalism goes, both options are available, but which option is preferable is unclear. So let's build into the context of some pleasurable experience, say, facts about the distribution of the pleasurable and painful experiences of other people. One's episode of pleasure increases the closer it approximates the average level of well-being enjoyed by some relevant group of people. In the third case, the disvalue of some episode of suffering seems to depend on whether the suffering is deserved. This time we allow facts about desert to enter into the context. The more deserved some episode of suffering is, the less intrinsically bad is that suffering. Or for the Augustinians out there, the more deserved is some episode of suffering, the *more* intrinsic value that suffering possess. Similarly, the more deserved some episode of pleasure, the more intrinsic value that the enjoyment of that pleasure generates. In the fourth case, an episode of pleasure seems to vary in accordance with that to which the pleasure is directed. Perhaps we can say one of two things in this case. First, we can say that the better the object, the more intrinsic value an episode directed at that object generates. Similarly, the worse the object, the less intrinsic value, or the more intrinsic disvalue some episode of pleasure taken in that object generates. Second, we can say that the more fitting it is to take pleasure in some object, the more intrinsic value that episode of pleasure generates. The less fitting it is to take pleasure in some object, the less intrinsic value that pleasure generates. Here the thought is that cases of *schadenfreude* reveal that a contextual feature relevant to the intrinsic values of pleasures and pains states is some degree of fittingness that such states bear to their objects. In the fifth case, Ross's two worlds case that we discussed earlier, the conditionalist can again appeal to desert. Intuitively, better people deserve to enjoy experiences with greater intrinsic value, and worse people deserve to "enjoy" experiences with

less intrinsic value. We can then build into the context facts about a person's character and then adjust the intrinsic value of episodes of pain and pleasure accordingly.

This is to say that conditionalism has the resources to solve the problem of organic unity. For wherever there appears to be an instance of organic unity, the conditionalist can introduce, or appeal to some contextual factor to dissolve it. Sounds too good to be true. And in fact it is. Conditionalism rescues additivity at the cost of making intrinsic value unlike every other extensive magnitude there is, and it also gives up the notion of intrinsic value altogether. What kind of quantity is intrinsic value on the conditionalist's view? One would have thought that it was the sort of quantity where we could claim that duplicating one of its possessors would duplicate some amount of intrinsic value, but the conditionalist cannot say this. For duplication makes a difference to some contextual fact which, in turn, can make a difference to the intrinsic value of the object and its duplicate. One would also have thought that to the extent that value is real and objective, it would follow that the death of five people is exactly five times as intrinsically bad as the death of one, holding all else equal. And it is not even obvious how to understand the phrase, 'holding all else equal' on conditionalism. Does it mean holding all the relevant contextual determinates of intrinsic value fixed? If so, we need to know exactly which changes we can make that are not changes in context so as to better or worsen the intrinsic value of some state irrespective of context. In another way, *we still need an axiology* and conditionalism hasn't provided one. Once one has been provided we then need some reason for accepting it. Again, whether we should accept organic unities will depend on the background axiology we accept. In this case, no background axiology has been given, only a strategy that when employed is compatible with an intuitive ordering of the intrinsic values of the states of affairs under consideration. However, we need an axiology that can guarantee such orderings.

On this account, contextual determinates of episodes of pleasure and pain make the intrinsic value of such episodes depend on external facts. These facts regard other people and their interrelations, and how much good is elsewhere and elsewhen, and what has occurred at other times in our own lives. This is incompatible with any account of intrinsic value that claims that its possession cannot depend on facts about external material objects. But every plausible account of an intrinsic property entails this claim. Thus, conditionalism is incompatible with there being intrinsic value. The next question is *what sort of value is it* that is changing from context to context on the conditionalist's view if it is not intrinsic value? Conditionalists have responded to this question by claiming that the relevant value is *final* value.[7] It is value that something has for its own sake. In chapter 2 I argued that final value is no sort of value at all. People act *for the sake of* various ends. Nothing has value *for its own sake* unless this expression is simply a misleading way of saying that something has intrinsic value. But conditionalists cannot say this. Here even the epitaph 'for its own sake' seems bizarre. If the various contextual factors have a legitimate claim to bearing on a thing's intrinsic value, as conditionalists claim they do, we should say that a thing's value is had *for their sakes too*. But then we have nothing like intrinsic value to work with.

Luckily, there is a simple alternative that avoids all of these problems. I claimed in chapter 2 that one other advantage of AAIV would have to wait until later. It's time to explain this advantage, namely, how AAIV can dissolve Moore's putative organic unities.

4 The Attitudinal Account of Intrinsic Value and Organic Unity

[7] See Olson (2004).

According to AAIV, all intrinsic value is grounded in fitting attitudes. Recall AAIV and its corollary:

($AAIV_G$) A state of affairs S has *positive basic value to degree n*, if and only if, S involves a subject, a psychological attitude, and an object, where the subject's attitude towards the object is *fitting to degree n*.

($AAIV_B$) A state of affairs S has *negative basic value to degree n*, if and only if, S involves a subject, a psychological attitude, and an object, where the subject's attitude towards the object is *unfitting to degree n*.

We can add that a state of affairs S has *neutral intrinsic value,* if and only if, S has neither positive nor negative intrinsic value. Also recall that, along with conditionalism, AAIV claims that the intrinsic properties of a whole can depend on some contextual facts. In chapter 4 I argued that intrinsicness should be cashed out in such a way that the possession of intrinsic properties cannot depend on facts about other *material objects*, but the possession of intrinsic properties often depends on the presence of causal laws. Dependence on laws does not render a property extrinsic. Here I want to extend this claim to intrinsic goodness. The intrinsic value of a state of affairs can depend on the presence of laws too, this time moral and evaluative laws. What sort of laws do I have in mind? Roughly, whatever normative principles are true and whatever true principles govern value are the relevant laws. Assuming these laws are *ceteris paribus* here are a few examples: it is wrong to lie, we should help others, we should treat relevantly similar people similarly, we should ask for consent before kicking someone, it is bad to kill other people's

children, we should do what is right, it is better if I die than that the rest of the people in the world die, harming someone makes them worse off, if x is better than y and y is better than z, then x is better than z. I am happy to count these principles as analytic principles, though I confess that I do not have a complete grasp on what analyticity amounts to. I am also happy to count many of these principles as derived, and not basic moral principles. The point is that there are principles that go "over and above" matters of particular moral fact. We use moral principles when reasoning about everyday decisions. What it is fitting to do and what it is fitting to think want, or feel is determined by reasons available to us. Some of these reasons are generated by principles like those above. So I am suggesting that such principles partially determine what attitudes it is fitting to have in some circumstances. These principles govern matters of particular moral fact and are not generalizations from these matters. This determination is compatible with degrees of fittingness being intrinsic to its bearer.

Whether some attitude is *fitting* or not can depend on such laws, and since the degree to which a state of affairs is intrinsically good is determined by how fitting the attitude that generates that value is to its object, it follows that intrinsic value can depend on these laws. Recall that Zimmerman's atoms have no less than the following form: **[John, being pleased, for duration = +20 with intensity = +2, in a way that is neither deserved nor undeserved in any respect at something for its own sake that is intrinsically neutral and that exists and that pleases him for duration = +20 with intensity = +2 and that he believes is intrinsically neutral, at t1]**. His atoms are rather complex and conjunctive. Zimmerman builds the conditionalist's factors into his axiological atoms, thus rendering contextual factors absent and his evaluative atoms very complex. But he preserves intrinsic value. On the one hand, conditionalism assumes that value-grounding atoms are relatively simple (I suppose) and that the

conditions under which these atoms generate intrinsic value are rather complex given the variety of contextual factors that determine intrinsic value. But they do not preserve intrinsic value. Can we navigate a path between these two extremes?

There is a strategy for dealing with putative organic unities compatible with AAIV and the metaphysics developed here. This account avoids costs associated with conditionalism and Zimmerman's account. Dancy (2003) suggests this strategy in the following passage:

> Moore thinks that intrinsic value must remain so long as its ground remains (as he supposes it must, being intrinsic). But the ground for a value is not the only relevant aspect, and once we see this, we see that there is room for an object to change in intrinsic value even if intrinsic value is grounded in intrinsic features of that object and the object remains unchanged in respect of those intrinsic features. The holist is likely to suggest that in addition to the ground, there may be other features, not themselves intrinsic to the object concerned, but which are required if the ground is to be able to generate the relevant intrinsic value. These further features may not even be features of the object concerned; we can call them generally 'enabling conditions.' A change in these further enabling conditions will be able to affect the intrinsic value of the object without necessarily altering the intrinsic features that ground that value (2003, p. 632).

If these enabling conditions do not involve facts about distinct material objects, Dancy's suggestion is compatible with intrinsic value being intrinsic in Moore's sense. Take some entity and duplicate its intrinsic natural properties, or fundamental properties, and we will have thereby duplicated its evaluative properties. That is, if we hold fixed the laws that govern the properties these objects possess, or their enabling conditions. Facts about fittingness are all grounded in facts about the subject, attitude, and the object of the attitude. Facts about fittingness are thereby rendered intrinsic, and so the intrinsic values these facts generate are also intrinsic. However, the moral laws that bear on the degree to which an attitude is fitting make for differences in intrinsic value without making for differences in intrinsicness. Borrow and interpret those contextual

factors that conditionalism uses to avoid organic unities, convert them into moral laws, and then solve the problem of organic unities in a way that is compatible with a Moorean conception of intrinsic value. That's the recipe. Since basic states affairs are mereologically simple, we avoid Zimmerman's complex atoms. We can follow this recipe and supply axiological atoms too, unlike conditionalism. These atoms involve fitting attitudes and include pleasure, knowledge, and virtue. This account is compatible with the metaphysics defended earlier and retains additivity in the face of one prominent objection. Sounds good, right?

How does this account handle those cases of purported organic unity? It divides them into two classes. On one side we have failures. On the other side we have genuine cases which support the idea that there are moral laws that determine fittingness, and thus affect intrinsic value. It is easy to place cases in their respective positions. Let's do it. Moore claimed that (6) > (3), namely, that it is intrinsically better if vice is rewarded with pain than if vice is rewarded with pleasure. Moore was right. One property that determines the intrinsic value of an episode of pleasure or pain is the relative virtuousness and viciousness of its recipient. The better the recipient of an episode of pleasure, the more fitting it is that its recipient enjoy that episode. These facts about the character of the subject are intrinsic to states of affairs that involve these subject's enjoying episodes of pleasure or pain. So we can uphold Moore's judgment and claim that we lack relevant information for assigning intrinsic values to states of pain or pleasure considered alone. That is, we should reject the idea that pleasure is intrinsically better than pain as such. In the first case, I deny that an uphill life has greater intrinsic value than a downhill life, all else equal. This case suffers various distorting features. Simply imagine being in the shoes of one of the occupants of these lives. You will face a life that will keep getting better, or else one that perpetually worsens. Now, even if roughly, at what age did you see yourself when wearing

these shoes? I suspect the answer is middle-age. If *that* is how you considered the case, then it would be preferable, for you, to choose a life that gets better. At any time in our lives, it is always rational to want goods to be awaiting us and harms to be behind us, all else equal. When evaluating case 1, I believe those that think an uphill life is intrinsically better are mistaken. They are reasonably conflating an intrinsically better life at time t with a life they would reasonably prefer living out from t. In case 2, matters are more complicated. I admit that there is some intuitive pull towards saying that a more fair distribution of goods is intrinsically better. However, the view that equality has intrinsic value has been refuted.[8] Likely, when considering such cases we imagine that, when some distribution of goods is unequal, that this distribution of goods is not a deserved distribution. We tacitly assume, that is, that the distribution is unfair. We can confirm this hypothesis by simply altering our case. This time imagine that those 2 people given nearly all of the good *actually deserve it*, whereas the other 98 persons did extremely little to deserve any of the good that is to be distributed. You fill in the details. Once you have done so, do you still have the intuition that one distribution is intrinsically better? I suspect not. There can be no morally significant inequality in a world where everyone is getting what they deserve. This suggests that equality is irrelevant to intrinsic value, even if *in*equality may be evidence of some property that is relevant to intrinsic value, namely, desert. In the third case, we can appeal to some moral law: all else equal, it is better if one gets what one deserves. So some particular episode of pleasure is made intrinsically better the more it is deserved, and an episode of pain is made intrinsically better the more it is deserved. How much better? That's hard to say, but many able philosophers have said exactly this.[9] Thus, punishment presents no problem for this view,

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[8] See Huemer (2003).

[9] See Kershnar (2010), Kagan (2005), and Feldman (2004).

and neither does case 4. For when one takes pleasure in another's perceived suffering, one takes an attitude that is unfitting for its object. Perhaps there is a moral law that explains this fact that has the following form: if someone is suffering then one ought not take pleasure in their suffering. This law would generate a reason to not take such pleasures and would then serve to make it unfitting to take such pleasure.

On the other hand, perhaps it is unfitting to take pleasure in another's perceived suffering because the representation of suffering, in itself, simply cries out to be disliked by its very nature. Perhaps part of what makes us good people is to not enjoy the suffering of others; that such enjoyment is constitutive of vice. Perhaps there is no deeper explanation for this fact and we can only say: It's just bad. If you don't get it, you probably never will. How would *you* explain to someone why it is bad to enjoy watching other people suffer? In the final case we are considering issues of justice. Intuitively, the more just some distribution of goods or bads, the better that distribution is intrinsically. Principles of justice would seem to be universal, and thus candidates for moral laws. But I cannot separate issues of justice from issues regarding desert. These issues seem to me to be the same issues. Though distributing some amount of pain to the wicked is intrinsically better than distributing that same amount of pain to the virtuous, the reason this is so is that pain suffered by the wicked is less intrinsically bad than similar pain suffered by the virtuous. This is because the wicked are less deserving of pleasure, whereas the virtuous are more deserving of pleasure. Moreover, some episode of pleasure enjoyed by the wicked seems to me to be less intrinsically good than some pleasure enjoyed by the virtuous. The reason is the same. This is not to say that these episodes are any less good, or less bad, *for the subject* of these pains and pleasures. Rather, it is to say that those moral laws which entail that it

is better when someone gets what they deserve are in play in such cases, and hence, will make a difference to the intrinsic values of these states of affairs.

What I want to emphasize is this: only this account is compatible with the intuitive judgments in the cases of purported organic unities, and also the claim that intrinsically valuable states of affairs are simple and have their value intrinsically.

5 Two Worries

This solution to the problem of organic unity is not without problems. Let's begin by discussing an objection raised by Hurka:

> Moore endorsed the retributive view that when a person is morally vicious it is good if he is punished, and he expressed this view by saying that although the person's vice is bad and his suffering pain is bad, the combination of vice and pain in the same life is good as a whole, and sufficiently so to make the situation on the whole better than if there were vice and no pain (*Principia Ethica* 263–64). This is in fact a point where Moore's holistic formulation of the principle is especially appealing. The alternative variability view must say that when a person is vicious, his suffering pain switches from being purely bad to purely good. But this implies that the morally appropriate response to deserved suffering is simple pleasure, which does not seem right; the better response mixes satisfaction that justice is being done with pain at the infliction of pain, as Moore's view implies (2010, SEP online).

Strictly speaking, there is no objection here to the view I am defending. However, we can tease an objection out easily enough. Hurka is correct that some mix of emotions is a fitting response to deserved suffering. Unfettered pleasure in the perceived suffering of someone that deserves to suffer, Augustinian sentiments aside, is surely misplaced and disturbing. It is one thing to be happy to learn that Hitler was killed. When focusing on this situation as such, it is another thing to simply enjoy and take pleasure in this perceived fact with no other feelings.

Perhaps Hurka is appealing to the following principle: a mixed attitude (one of favor and of disfavor) towards some state of affairs S is fitting, if and only if, S has some part that is intrinsically bad, and another part that is intrinsically good. Assuming that when someone is suffering deservedly such a mixed attitude is fitting, it follows that a state of affairs that involves deserved suffering has a part that is intrinsically bad. The objection is that this consequence is incompatible with the view defended here.

Along similar lines, Lemos has argued that conditionalism makes the wrong predictions about which responses would be fitting in certain circumstances. Here is Lemos:

> The chief difficulty with Ross's view [that pleasure as such is merely prima facie intrinsically good] is that it misses what apparently makes so offensive the prosperity of the wicked . . . What is it that makes the wicked man's being happy. . .so offensive? I suggest that it is offensive precisely because we think that the wicked man has a good that he deserves not to have. Contrary to Ross, the judgment that the prosperity of the wicked is not good. . .presupposes the judgment that his being pleased is good; it is a good that is contrary to what he deserves (1998, pp. 43-44).

According to Lemos, a state of affairs involving a wicked person's being happy is offensive. That is, when contemplating a perceived state of affairs of a wicked person's being happy, a fitting response would be to disfavor it. This is not simply because it involves wickedness, but rather because there is an intrinsic good the wicked are enjoying they deserve not to be enjoying. The argument would then run as follows. The best explanation for why it is fitting to be offended by the prosperity of the wicked is that they are enjoying an intrinsic good they do not deserve. Thus, in such cases the wicked are enjoying and intrinsic good. On my account, that some purported happiness is enjoyed by the wicked guarantees that the episode of happiness does not generate intrinsic value, and so there is nothing intrinsically good in the case.

In both cases there is a simple response. What makes happiness of the wicked so offensive is that its recipient is getting something *good for them* that they do not deserve. What makes pain suffered by the wicked fitting for displeasure is that they are getting something *bad for them* that they do deserve. Earlier I distinguished person and impersonal goods. Personal goods need not be fitting objects of favor, they simply must involve a subject's getting what they want while being aware that they are getting what they want. Personal bads involve frustration of a desire that subject is aware is being frustrated. In both of these imagined cases, then, we have a relevant personal good or bad that can explain the data.[10]

Dancy describes a case that will help to generate the second worry I want to consider. Here is his case:

> It might help if I were to offer an example of the distinction between ground and enabling condition—ideally, an example of intrinsic value with an enabling condition. A rich source of examples of this sort is the film The Truman Show, in which the protagonist leads a life in which everyone else is an actor playing a part, the town in which he lives is merely a set, the clouds above him merely computer-generated images on a screen, and so on. His life is in this sense unreal, but he has a girlfriend, colleagues, friends, and all the other trappings of a rich and rewarding life. Eventually he discovers that it was all a sham. A way of reading this is that this discovery deprives the life he has been leading of all the value; its value depended on its not being a sham, but that it was not a sham is not to be understood as part of the ground for its supposed value. The general idea, then (irrespective of the film), is that what is of value about a friendship would have no value if that friendship was a sham, but that it is not a sham is not part of what makes the friendship worthwhile. Genuineness is an enabling condition here, not a ground. . . The intrinsic value of an object is thus capable of being affected by context (2003, p. 632-33).

Dancy aims to retain a Moorean conception of intrinsic value while allowing intrinsic value to vary from context to context. Vary the enabling conditions and so too might something's

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[10] See Zimmerman (1999).

intrinsic value. On my account, this is exactly the right approach. Where Dancy and I differ, I believe, regards the enabling conditions. I claim that they are laws that must involve no reference to particular people, places, or things. Moral laws are thus like causal laws. Dancy suggests that enabling conditions can involve reference to particular things. In his case, whether X's friendship with Y has intrinsic value depends on the whether Y is genuine, or possesses some relevant set of intentions towards X.

Dancy does not, however, offer a metaphysics to support this possibility. Moreover, his case is intended to illustrate that this general approach has problems. The protagonist in Dancy's case, on learning that "it was all a sham," is claimed to have learned that his life had no value. If it is episodes, or experiences in life that have intrinsic value, the claim must be that, for at least many of these episodes, they had no intrinsic value. Earlier I provided a case intended to undermine these kinds of claims. All of the episodes underwent by Saint and his brain-in-a-vat duplicate Saint* are qualitatively the same. Intuitively, whatever intrinsic value can be ascribed to Saint's experiences can be ascribed to his duplicate's experiences. Of course, this does not entail that how well things are going for these duplicates is the same. We could suppose that one duplicate is getting what they want, whereas the other duplicate is only seeming to be getting what they want in a range of circumstances. We should say the same about Dancy's protagonist. On discovery that his life was a sham, his desires for having genuine relations were frustrated. He realized that, for the greater part of his life, the desires had always been frustrated, and for the greater part of his life, things were not going well for him, even though they seemed to be going very well for him. We are not *forced* to accept this explanation, but it is compatible with the life of the protagonist in Dancy's case, call him 'Jim,' having no less intrinsic value on learning that some purported enabling condition has not been satisfied.

The other problem with this case is that friendship has no intrinsic value in the first place, rather it is related to states that have intrinsic value. Typically, friends respond sympathetically to one another's perceived misfortune, and desire that their friends life go well for them. These are fitting attitudes to have, and they generate intrinsic value when friends take these attitudes towards one another. But these states can very well be present for Jim, even if they are not present for the actors pretending to be his friend. So *Jim's* life has no less intrinsic value on account of what his purported friends are doing. Furthermore, even if we did suppose that friendship has intrinsic value, we could suppose that genuineness on both sides of this relation is a necessary condition for the relation to possess intrinsic value. Now this condition is *internal* to the relation, not some external enabling condition. For to be friends with someone consists in having genuine attitudes towards them. Dancy's case does not require external enabling conditions. If we reserve such conditions for moral principles, we can retain Moore's original insight that intrinsic value is grounded in intrinsic natural properties of thing. We can do this without embracing Moore's organic unities.

Chapter 8

Incommensurable and Indeterminate Goods

0 Introduction

The additivity of intrinsic value entails its commensurability and determinacy. *A fortiori* if there are either incommensurable or indeterminate intrinsic value states, then not all intrinsic value is additive. Are such states possible? In this chapter I continue from where we left off and argue that such states are impossible.

Earlier I claimed that additivity entails that magnitudes of intrinsic value can be ordered by an additive function. Those entities that possess intrinsic value inherit their ordering from the ordering of these magnitudes. As a consequence magnitudes of intrinsic value are similar to magnitudes of mass at least in at the following respect: just as massive things can be ordered by their mass, i.e. by a *more massive than* relation, states of affairs with intrinsic value can be ordered by their intrinsic values, i.e. by an *intrinsically better than* relation. The existence of such an ordering of the good entails the commensurability of its magnitudes because such an ordering is *complete*.[1] This is to say that anything with intrinsic value is an element in this ordering, and thus, better than, worse than, or equal in intrinsic value to other elements in this ordering. Furthermore, I claimed that the relation expressed by 'is intrinsically better than' is an *analyzable* relation. The relation x *is more massive than* y can be analyzed as x has *n* units of mass and y has *m* units of mass and *n* is greater than *m*, and similarly, the relation x *is*

1 Carlson (2010) defends a weaker form of additivity that does not require completeness.

intrinsically better than y can be analyzed as x has *n* units of intrinsic value and y has *m* units of intrinsic value and *n* is greater than *m*.

On this understanding facts regarding whether some x is a greater F than y, where 'F' picks out a property that permits of degree, will all be numerical facts. Hence, these facts are always perfectly determinate. For example, whether there are more people in this bedroom or that living room is a question the answer to which will always yield a determinate 'yes' or 'no.' This is because once the number of persons in these spaces have been settled, the question of which number is a greater number will always yield a determinate verdict. Behind this idea is the following claim: For any two numbers *n* and *m*, one and only one of the following is true that: $n > m$, or $m < n$, or $m = n$. Given the proposed analysis of 'is intrinsically better than' and the constraint that additive functions yield a complete ordering, it follows that additivity requires the denial of both incommensurability and indeterminacy in intrinsic value.

On the other hand, that intrinsic value permits incommensurability and indeterminacy has struck philosophers writing in value theory as a commonplace phenomena of just the sort that a theory of the good must capture. For the most part, these philosophers offer cases intended to demonstrate this more general claim. If such cases were sound, then either it would be possible for there to be some entities *x* and *y* with intrinsic value such that: *x* is not better than *y*; *y* is not better than *x*; while *x* and *y* do not have the same intrinsic value; or else it would be possible for it to be indeterminate whether *x* is better than *y*. Though I will argue against both of these possibilities, for my own part such cases *do* sound initially quite plausible. For instance, it might be argued that the intrinsic value of *Mother Theresa's being kind* is incommensurable with *Bozo's being happy*, or the intrinsic value of *my believing that 2 + 2 = 4* is incommensurable with *my enjoying a tasty meal and a margarita*. It would be odd to assert that one of these states of affairs

is intrinsically better than the other. Perhaps the underlying reason is that pleasure, knowledge, and virtue are each so different in kind that their instances cannot be ordered along one common metric in the way that, say, massive things intuitively can be so ordered. And it's not that we simply fail to see which of these states of affairs is better on this view, it is rather that we actually see that none of these things is at least as good as the other. That is, we could learn everything about the circumstances in which Mother Theresa exercised some virtue as well as Bozo's happiness and we would still be unable to tell which state of affairs had more value. Perhaps this will either be because these entities do not have a degree of intrinsic value in the first place, or else because they possess fundamentally different kinds of value, and so any ordering of intrinsic value *as such* cannot be complete. Whatever the explanation, the thought goes, it will entail that these state of affairs are incommensurable. This worry is especially pressing for pluralists about intrinsic value for it is the pluralist that commits herself to there being different kinds of intrinsic value states. Here is Ross on a related matter:

> The suggestion that there are two orders or classes of good things such that those in one class are not commensurable, though they are comparable, with those in the other, is obviously not free from difficulties. But it is the conclusion to which we are led if it be admitted that on the one hand virtue and, say, pleasure are both of them good, and that on the other we are totally unable to see how any amount of one of these could be equal in goodness to any amount of the other (1930, p. 154).

I mention this passage for a few reasons. First, it contains a verificationist's flair that is all too common in discussions of incommensurability, and moreover, Ross overstates his view. Prior to this passage he claims that virtue is *infinitely* better than pleasure even though it seems clear that a relatively benign disposition to act kindly, whatever its intrinsic value, is less valuable than innocent pleasures enjoyed by one-billion virtuous people on a summer afternoon. It simply

doesn't follow from the purported fact that "we are totally unable to see how any amount of one of these could be equal in goodness to any amount of the other" that some amount of pleasure cannot outweigh some amount of virtue. On the other hand, perhaps we cannot see whether someone's disposition to act kindly is intrinsically better than, say, ten people enjoying a lazy afternoon. Neither can we see the exact degree of intrinsic value that the possession of some virtue has, or even an instance of some pleasure. That's true enough. How do these benign facts bear on the intrinsic value of virtue and pleasure? Consider a contrast: we can place two people similar in height far enough away so that we can't tell which person is taller. What would follow from the benign fact we can't discern which of the two people was taller? Nothing interesting would follow, and moreover, it would not be at all surprising if our cognitive distance from intrinsic value is exceedingly far. There is no reason whatsoever to think that precise degrees of intrinsic value would be given to us in experiences. More to the point, Ross claimed that some intrinsic values are comparable but not commensurable because he believes that virtue is infinitely better than pleasure. Why Ross thinks that he can discern this particular fact I don't know, but if an instance of virtue *is* infinitely better than pleasure, then it is better than pleasure, and so these kinds of values are commensurable. So I mean something different by 'incommensurable' than what Ross and others have meant. As a consequence, were some good infinitely better than another, they would actually be commensurable the way I am using the term. I'm not here interested in whether there are types of goods that are infinitely better than other sorts of goods because this view doesn't seem at all plausible to me.

There is a natural response to purported counterexamples of this sort that I will not be making. We could introduce a *restricted* conception of additivity according to which intrinsic values of different kinds can be added only to intrinsic values of the same kind, though they

cannot be added across kinds. We could deny that there is an *all-things-considered intrinsically better than* relation, or an *intrinsically better than* relation the way I am using the term. The same goes for purported indeterminacies. We could introduce a restricted conception of additivity according to which only determinate intrinsic value states can be added and ordered, relegating indeterminate value states to "don't cares" as it has recently been put.[2] These alternatives, however, would complicate evaluative reasoning. For how would we then assign values to non-basic states that posses value if not by addition, and how would these states get compared vis-a-vis their intrinsic values if not in terms of more or less? How would we discern which states of affairs are determinate and commensurable? There are various answers that one might give to these questions. Perhaps we can average values or make use of probabilities. The notion of "fuzzy orderings" has even been appealed to towards solving these sorts of problems.[3] Well, perhaps. It would nonetheless be nice if we could retain a uniform and simple way to arrive at intrinsic values for non-basic states of affairs. Arguably, if there are incommensurabilities and indeterminacies in value, they are widespread indeed. Such restrictions would thus leave additivity with dubious significance, applying to value states that are few and far between. So I want to propose that we can avoid these complications assuming that all intrinsic value has the same kind of ground, namely, fitting responses to intentional objects. Recall that the degree to which these states have their intrinsic values is a function of the degree to which they fit their objects: the greater the fit the better the state of affairs. Importantly, with this view and also with an account of vagueness in hand, we can avoid these purported cases, and hence, we need not accept the possibility of incommensurability or indeterminacy in intrinsic value.

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2 See Feldman (1998).

3 See Qizilbash (2000).

In section 1 I attempt to isolate a number of cases in which pro-incommensurability intuitions arise, note some of their salient features, and I then consider Chang's "Small Improvement Argument" for the incommensurability of intrinsic value (2001, p. 55). In section 2 I consider a handful of cases that suggest that value is indeterminate. On this view, for some particular degree of intrinsic value *n*, there are states of affairs that neither have, nor fail to have intrinsic value to degree *n*. In section 3 argue that it is *vagueness* in value, and not incommensurability in value, that is present in these purported cases of indeterminacy and incommensurability. This account also allows us to identify where Chang's argument goes astray. Accordingly, unsound intuitions regarding incommensurability and indeterminacy in value are confused with, or are being incorrectly inferred from, sound intuitions about vagueness in intrinsic value. I outline an account of vagueness up to this task. What's interesting about this response is that though it is common for defenders of commensurability to appeal to vagueness to explain away pro-incommensurability intuitions, these authors all accept that **vagueness entails indeterminacy**. These authors must all deny that value is always determinate, and hence, these responses offer only a partial solution to the problems above. On my view, however, we get a solution both to purported cases of indeterminacy and purported cases of incommensurability in intrinsic value. In short, this is because I reject the claim that vagueness entails indeterminacy in favor of the view that vagueness is *sui generis* whereas indeterminacy is impossible.

In section 4 I consider one evaluative space in which something like incommensurability and something like indeterminacy find a home. There is something like incommensurability and indeterminacy in our *valuing* or *desiring*. For example, we might reasonably be indifferent between *x* and *y*, prefer *z* to *x*, but reasonably remain indifferent between *y* and *z*. We can be reasonably indifferent between options that differ in their intrinsic value. This phenomena looks

something like incommensurability. Moreover, for many states, we may be rationally unable to assign a determinate intrinsic value to those states. Arguably, what is given to us in intuition when it comes to intrinsic value is that certain things have it and that certain things have more of it than others, as opposed to the degree to which things have it and exactly how much better things are than others. This phenomena looks something like indeterminacy in intrinsic value. Conflating value with valuing is pervasive. But subjectivism is false and once we have clearly distinguished the fitting attitude from its intentional object, we can distance ourselves from the allure of incommensurability and indeterminacy.

Finally, in section 5 I consider an interesting consequence of the preceding discussion. In particular, if vagueness excludes knowledge, then whenever it is vague how valuable something is, we cannot know how valuable that something is, and whenever it is vague which of two entities is better, we cannot know which entity is better. I suggest that vagueness does exclude knowledge and that vagueness in value is abundant. As a consequence we are often in the dark when it come to comparisons of value, and also when it comes to assigning degrees of value to individual states of affairs. To the extent that what we reasonably believe ought to be done depends on our making such comparisons, we will often be in the dark about our obligations. This a somewhat surprising consequence, but it is a price that defenders of additivity must pay if they are to accept the claim that evaluative reasoning requires only simple mathematics. However, this consequence gives us a nice response to a recent attempt to argue against the possibility of intrinsic quantities, and thus, it allows us a nice solution to this argument as it applies to degrees of the good.

1 Incommensurability and Small Improvements

Let's begin with a general account of incommensurability. Let me stipulate that two items *x* and *y* are *incommensurable* with respect to a feature F $=_{df}$. (1) *x* and *y* instantiate F-ness to some degree; (2) *x* is not more F than *y*; (3) *y* is not more F than *x*; and (4) *x* and *y* are not equally F. Notice first that incommensurability is a purported relation between distinct items. Nothing is incommensurable with itself, whereas more than two things could be incommensurable with respect to some feature they possess. As mentioned above, it could be that instances of knowledge, virtue, and pleasure are incommensurable with one another. Second, note that this definition relates incommensurability to a feature. Earlier I suggested that in many (all?) cases such features are conceptual and that intrinsic goodness is among these concepts. What is important is that if some things are incommensurable, they must possess the feature in question with respect to which they are incommensurable. Third, clause (1) restricts incommensurability to pairs of entities that actually have a degree of some purported property with which they are incommensurable. Thus, the property F must be one that permits of degree, which is to say that things can have *n* units of F. Though this definition is stipulative, it is compatible with the way that 'incommensurable' is used in the literature.

To illustrate this definition consider the following example: Suppose that Tom and Jerry are incommensurable with respect to their height. If so, then Tom and Jerry each have a particular height; Tom is not taller than Jerry; Jerry is not taller than Tom; and Tom and Jerry are not equal in height. But heights are clear cases of commensurable magnitudes. For any two objects with heights, one of these objects is at least as tall as the other. Our question is whether a case can be made for the claim that intrinsic value can be incommensurable. Initially, it is hard to see how such a phenomena could be possible. For if some things have intrinsic value, they must have particular degrees of intrinsic value. To have a particular degree of intrinsic value is to have

n units of intrinsic value, where 'n' ranges over numbers. As pointed out above, for any numbers *n* and *m*, one of these numbers is at least as great as the other. This entails that, for any two things that possess intrinsic value, their value is commensurable. Below I offer a few alleged cases of incommensurability.

Case One

> Michelangelo was a great painter and Mozart was a great composer. Michelangelo was better in certain respects of creativity, whereas Mozart was better in others. Who was more creative *simpliciter*? It is tempting to say that the creativity of Mozart and Michelangelo is incommensurable. Neither artist was more creative than the other, nor were they equally creative.[4]

Case Two

> Wisdom is a good thing. The experience of grasping the answer to difficult and important question is intrinsically valuable. Happiness is a good thing too. The experience of feeling at peace while hiking in the Mt. Baker Wilderness is intrinsically good. Which is better? It is tempting to say that wisdom is not more valuable than happiness; happiness is not more valuable than wisdom; and that two experiences that involve each are not equal in intrinsic value.

Case Three

> Michael Jordan was a great athlete and was arguably the best basketball player in history. Muhammad Ali was a great athlete too and was arguably the best boxer in history. It is tempting to say that neither athlete was a better athlete than the other. For the components that make for a great boxer are not the same as those that make for a great basketball player. Thus, it would seem that Michael Jordan was not a better athlete than Muhammad Ali; Muhammad Ali was not a better athlete than Michael Jordan; and Muhammad Ali was not as equally good an athlete as Michael Jordan.

There are other cases too. Raz asks us to compare a career as clarinetist with a career in law (2001, p . 134) and claims such careers are incommensurable in value. Stocker asks us to

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4 See Chang (1997, 2002).

compare giving up one's honor versus giving up one's family (1997) and claims these options are incommensurable. And interestingly, Broome asks us to consider which was more impressive, either Stonehenge or the Salisbury Cathedral and goes on to suggest the following:

> Which is more impressive: Salisbury Cathedral or Stonehenge? I think there is no determinate answer to this question. . . For many comparatives, the indeterminacy arises because the comparison involves several factors or dimensions, and it is indeterminate exactly how the factors weigh against each other. The impressiveness of a building depends on some combination of its size, its importance in the landscape, the technological achievement it represents, and more, and it is indeterminate how these factors weigh against each other. Many evaluative comparatives are indeterminate for this reason. They depend upon a combination of values, and it is indeterminate how the values are to be weighed. The values are *incommensurable*, we say (1997, p. 72).

I'll return to Broome's claim later, but for now the point is that pro-incommensurability intuitions are easy to generate because cases where incommensurability seems present are easy to describe. Moreover, there is no temptation at all to simply *assert* that one of the pairs is a better F than the other member of the pair in these cases. In fact, these claims seem clearly unassertable. Neither does it seem that some relevant information is being left out in any of these cases. It is not true that had we just possessed more information we could reasonably judge that one member of the pair was indeed the more F member. Rather, it seems that no information one could gather would settle the matter as to which member of the pair was more F. According to the first argument for incommensurability: The possibility of these cases entails the possibility of incommensurability. These cases are indeed possible. So incommensurability is possible. Indeed, some of these cases are actual cases, and so, if they are being correctly described, our world contains incommensurability. The defense of the possibility claim involves an appeal to intuition, namely, that these cases just seem to be possible and we have no reason to doubt these intuitions.

Before I agreed with the conditional claim, and the conclusion follows validly. So we are stuck with the possibility claim as a target.

That said, except for case two, the cases mentioned above all involve comparisons that do not obviously involve comparisons of intrinsic value. Strictly speaking, we could accept that they involve genuine incommensurability while denying that intrinsic value is incommensurable. That is, it could be that 'is more impressive than' and 'is a better athlete than' express incommensurable relations, whereas 'is intrinsically better than' does not. Here the question of burden of proof becomes a bit more difficult. Is 'intrinsically better than' more like 'is more massive than' or is it more like 'is more impressive than'? To the extent that we think the relevant substitution on F involves the substitution of a subjective property, we could agree that incommensurability is present. Perhaps subjective properties admit incommensurability. There is nothing irrational in having intransitive preferences, for example. But intrinsic value is an objective property like mass, height, or volume, and objective properties like these do not permit incommensurability. There is something contradictory in denying that better than is transitive. So the cases above, even if plausible, would cast little doubt on additivity. Or so one might think if one accepts this division between the subjective and the objective. The objector might respond that value really is more like impressiveness or athleticism, but I simply want to point out that it's not obvious how far these assertions of "greater similarity" are going to further anyone's project, and I'm assuming that value is objective. Of course, we should also ask why these purported cases of incommensurability seem possible. For defenders of incommensurability rarely argue for claims like "Mozart is neither more creative, less creative, or equally creative as Michelangelo." As mentioned, that this claim is intuitively correct is supposed to shift the burden to those that would deny the intuition. Perhaps the thought is this: "Everyone else is on board

with the case, YOU show us why you're right and the rest of us are wrong!" So the question is whether we can explain away these judgments while going some way towards accommodating them. I will suggest that we can do this without any appeals to "greater similarity."

Chang provides an argument for incommensurability she calls a "Small Improvement Argument." Let's consider Raz's case to illustrate how this argument is supposed to go. Consider two options: you choose a career in law, L, or a career as a clarinetist, P. Intuitively, it can be reasonable to be indifferent between P and L when carefully considering their respective values. Now consider another option: a career in law in which you make slightly more money than in L. Call this option L+. Intuitively, it is reasonable to prefer L+ to L, though it remains reasonable to be indifferent between L+ and P. The best explanation for the reasonableness of these attitudes together is that L and P are incommensurable, as are L+ and P. Thus, we should think that incommensurability is possible with respect to betterness of careers. So incommensurability in intrinsic value is possible.

But actually the conclusion doesn't follow. We can grant Chang that her case is possible and it still wouldn't follow that incommensurability in intrinsic value is possible. At best a career in law has instrumental value, not intrinsic value. She would need to add another premise that connects intrinsic value to reasonable preferences. Something like the following is required: (P) If S is reasonably indifferent between options 1 and 2, then these options have the same intrinsic value, and if S reasonably prefers option 1 to option 2, then options 1 has more intrinsic value than option 2. However, principle (P) is obviously false. I can be reasonably indifferent between two options because the value *for me*, were either option to obtain, would be the same for me. Intrinsic value is one thing and value for an agent is something entirely different. The cold-blooded killer could be made better off as he enjoys watching his victim suffer, but this

enjoyment does not contribute any intrinsic value to the world. He could be reasonably (not morally) indifferent between sparing his victim and eating an ice cream, but that wouldn't show that these options have the same intrinsic value. Without this premise or something much like it, it is unclear how Chang's argument could bear on whether intrinsic value permits incommensurability. There's another problem with her argument as formulated. Contrary to what I just said, suppose that Chang is correct and that it is reasonable to prefer L+ to L if and only if L+ is better than L; that it is reasonable to be indifferent between P and L if and only if P and L are equally good; and that it is reasonable to be indifferent between P and L+ if and only if P and L+ are equally good. If Chang were correct, then we would reach the conclusion that L+ is better than L, and that L+ and L are equally good (this is assuming that 'is equally good as' expresses a transitive relation). But this is impossible. So Chang needs a premise that is false, and even if this premise were true, her case would still be impossible. On top of that, even if her case were possible, it would have nothing to do with intrinsic value. But let's let these minor worries pass.

Perhaps we could instead assume that if some instance of an expression of the form 'x is more F than y' is incommensurable, then *all* such instances are likewise incommensurable. The case above could then be generalized to all cases of the same form. But recall that F must be a property that comes in degrees. Does impressiveness and the quality of a career really come in degrees? Perhaps they do in some sense, but it's plausible that the sense in which they do is subjective. It's not at all obvious that there is an objective completely general fact of the matter as to which careers are best. Yet even if they do come in degrees and they are perfectly objective properties, this principle remains clearly false. We need only consider 'taller than' or 'more massive than' to get our counterexample to the inference from one case to every case. Furthermore, we could make 'F' as fine-grained as we like, exactly fine-grained enough so that

only two items could possibly satisfy F, thus rendering the property a commensurable one. This too would serve as a counterexample to the inference.

At this point, the fix for Chang's argument might seem to be an easy one. Let's simply ignore her case and consider case two and reconstruct it along the lines of the small improvement argument. The two options now are either that you stay home and finish a proof for a rather interesting claim that *p* while also encouraging, even if slightly, your perseverance when working on difficult proofs, or else you venture on a long hike and enjoy the beautiful Mt. Baker Wilderness. In the first case, call it P, you can acquire some interesting knowledge and a bit of virtue, and in the second case you can enjoy a well-deserved afternoon without proofs, call it H. Both P and H involve generating an intrinsic good to some degree given the axiology defended earlier since these options involve fitting responses. Now consider a third option, this time the same hike in the mountains but now followed by a tasty microbrew at the North Fork Brewery, and call this option H+. As a matter of fact, H+ is better than H because it involves a bit more well-deserved pleasure. How then is the "Small Improvement Argument" supposed to go given these new assumptions?

It's not clear because we haven't specified whether H is or is not intrinsically better than P or whether these options have the same intrinsic value. We have simply described two options such that it is unclear which is better, if either is better. Though these options are such that one could be reasonably indifferent between them, the relevance of reasonable indifference is in serious doubt because we can be reasonably indifferent between options with different intrinsic value. The only way to get a genuine case of incommensurability would require of us to assume that H is not better than P and that P is not better than H, and moreover, that H+ is not better than P and that P is not better than H+. Were this assumption plausible, there would be

incommensurability with respect to intrinsic value. We will return to this argument in section 3, but at this point this argument looks suspect. Why can't we infer that if neither of these options is better than the other, then they therefore have the same intrinsic value? Were these claims really compossible, we would have a counterexample to the transitivity of *is equally intrinsically good as*. This suggests that something has gone seriously wrong. In any event, we have cases that are intended to support the possibility of incommensurability, and now we have something like an argument for this claim too.

2 Indeterminacy

Intuitively, the claim that some matter is indeterminate can be cast as the claim that, for some proposition *p*, there is no fact of the matter as to whether *p* is true. It is indeterminate whether *p* just in case it is metaphysically unsettled whether *p* is true. Fix all the metaphysical facts that could bear on whether *p* is true and those facts would neither settle that *p*, nor would they settle that *not p*. That is, any relevant facts would leave the question as to whether *p* open whenever it is indeterminate whether *p*. This is the notion of indeterminacy I will be working with. Some philosophers have argued that it can be indeterminate how much intrinsic value a state of affairs possesses at a given time. Here we will consider a few reasons that have been offered to support this view. First, Zimmerman presents the following case:

> [C]onsider the property of being courageous. We are accustomed to distinguishing degrees of courage, but perhaps there are limits even in principle to the precision with which we can do so. For suppose that being courageous requires having a belief that one is in danger; and suppose that, on a particular occasion, John has such a belief, but that there is simply no precise degree such that John believes he's in danger to that degree. Then it may well be that John manifests courage to some degree but not to any determinate degree. That being the case, and if courage is in general intrinsically good, I conclude (somewhat reluctantly) that, on this occasion, a state of courage (call it S1)

> occurs which is basically intrinsically good but not intrinsically good to any determinate degree (2001, p. 121)

According to this case, for some degree of courage *n*, it is metaphysically unsettled whether John is courageous to degree *n*. On Zimmerman's view, states that involve the exercise of virtue are among those that give rise to basic intrinsic value. If this case is possible, then it is likewise indeterminate whether John's being courageous has basic intrinsic value to degree *m*, where *m* may or may not equal *n*. Here the thought is that if the degree to which x has intrinsic value is at least partly determined by the degree to which y is F and it is indeterminate to what degree y is F, then it is likewise indeterminate to what degree x is has intrinsic value. This seems plausible. If whether some fact F holds depends on some fact that is indeterminate, then whether F holds will be indeterminate. The main motivation is that courageousness is partly a function of one's degree of belief that one is in danger, or else the degree of danger one believes oneself to be in. The reason offered for thinking that degrees of belief can be indeterminate involves our lack of the ability *to distinguish* between degrees of belief or degrees of danger because "perhaps there are limits even in principle to the precision with which we can" distinguish between degrees of belief or degrees of danger. Notice again the verificationist flair in this justification. The fact that one cannot *tell* whether *p* is not generally a reason to think that there is no fact of the matter as to whether *p*. That is, unless Zimmerman is assuming that if there were a fact of the matter as to whether *p*, then one would, or likely would, be able to discern whether *p*. The truth of this counterfactual would help to support Zimmerman's claim. But this counterfactual isn't true. Every psychological state that comes in degrees is such that, on any particular occasion, one likely would be unable to distinguish between being in it to some degree *n* and being in another state that is different only by a small degree. The same is true for any magnitude. If magnitudes

are real-valued, there are uncountably many everyday magnitudes that we would likely fail to be able to discriminate between. For example, I am 6'1," but it is physically impossible to discriminate between this particular height and being 6'1.00000000000000000000000000000...1" or something in the neighborhood. It doesn't follow that it is indeterminate how tall I am. Or rather, were it to follow, it would then follow that for all candidate heights that I might, for all I can tell, have, it is not true that I have any of them. So it will follow that I have no determinate height and that's clearly false. Perhaps Zimmerman has another reason for thinking degrees of belief can be indeterminate,[5] but let's turn to a different argument.

Lemos is a prominent defender of the claim that intrinsic value permits indeterminacy. He also provides purported examples of states of affairs that have intrinsic value (or disvalue), but no determinate degree of intrinsic value (or disvalue). Consider the following four states: (1) Someone is feeling pleasure now, (2) Eudoxus is feeling more than 25 units of pleasure, (3) S is pleased to degree 5 at t that someone is feeling pleasure now, or (4) S is pleased to degree 5 at t that Eudoxus is feeling more than 25 units of pain.[6] According to Lemos, none of these states has a determinate degree of intrinsic value (or disvalue). To defend this claim for (1) and (2) he writes, "It seems plausible that these states of affairs have no determinate degree of intrinsic value," and this is the *only* defense that Lemos offers on behalf of (1) and (2). To defend (3) and (4) Lemos has a bit more to say:

> Suppose we think that the intrinsic value of pleasure or displeasure varies depending on the object of that pleasure. What, then, is the intrinsic value of (3) and (4)? In these cases, one is taking pleasure in objects that have no determinate value. If the value of a pleasure varies according to its object and if the objects of these pleasures have no determinate

5 In correspondence this is the suggestion he offered, thus repeating what he said in his book.

6 Lemos (2010).

value, then it seems reasonable to think that these states themselves have no determinate degree of intrinsic value.[7]

Both (3) and (4) are supposed to have indeterminate value because of the content of the pleasure. Above I claimed that if whether some fact F holds depends on some fact that is indeterminate, then whether F holds will be indeterminate. Lemos here seems to be claiming that the degree to which (3) and (4) have intrinsic value depends on the content of the pleasure states, and since the content is indeterminate, so too is the degree to which (3) and (4) have intrinsic value. But why is the content here indeterminate? Why think that the intrinsic value of a pleasure state depends on some content that has indeterminate intrinsic value as opposed to no value whatsoever? Lemos doesn't say. Here I will make a point that has come up time and again: contents of fitting attitudes lack intrinsic value, for (3) and (4) could exist even if no one other than S is feeling pleasure now or if it were false that Eudoxus is feeling more than 25 units of pain. The direct object of a fitting attitude could be possessed by a brain-in-a-vat twin, and so they are not facts about pleasures occurring in the world. The content of the these pleasures is nonetheless relevant. The value of (3) and (4) does depend on the nature of these contents because whether the attitude is fitting depends on these contents, but this does not entail that these contents themselves possess intrinsic value: they don't. Cases (1) and (2) nicely illustrate this point. The proposition *that someone is pleased* is equivalent to the proposition with the following form: $(\exists x)[(Px \ \& \ (x = a)) \vee (Px \ \& \ (x = b)) \vee \ldots]$ for all a, b, c, etc. in the domain of the existential quantifier and where 'P' means being pleased. What of those states of affairs that correspond to these propositions? Arguably, a purported state of affairs that corresponds to *someone is pleased* obtains if and only if its disjunctive counterpart obtains. A ban on disjunctive

[7] Lemos (2010). I changed the numbering in this quotation to accommodate my own.

states of affairs would give us reason to deny that there is a state of affairs of *someone is pleased* in the first place. If so, the problem of assigning a determinate intrinsic value to (1) does not arise, and the same point holds for (2). So there is a proposition that lacks intrinsic value that is identical to someone is pleased, but there is no state of affairs someone's being pleased that has intrinsic value.

Setting this worry aside, it could be that (3) and (4) lack determinate intrinsic value if they lack determinate contents since whether some pleasure is fitting, and the degree to which a pleasure is fitting, will depend on the nature of the contents of these pleasure states. As a consequence we would need to see whether, in fact, it is possible for a mental state to lack a determinate content. That is, we need to see whether a determinate mental state can lack a determinate content. For if what it is for a mental state to be the state that it is involves having the content that it does, then we will simply have a case of indeterminate mental states. This would be no worry for additivity. The determinacy of value requires that all determinate states have a determinate intrinsic value, not that indeterminate states, if such there be, have a determinate intrinsic value. In any event, we have some candidates for states of affairs that lack a determinate intrinsic value. In the next section I argue that, contrary to appearances, these states of affairs all have determinate intrinsic value, though we may be, unsurprisingly I think, unable to tell exactly what that value is.[8]

3 Vagueness as Sui Generis

8 Feldman (1998) provides another purported case of indeterminacy. Future states of affairs have intrinsic value, but according to Feldman, because it is indeterminate which future state will obtain right now, it is right now indeterminate how much value the future will have right now, though the future will have some intrinsic value or other right now.

How long must a tea bag sit in a cup of water before one has a cup of tea rather than a mere cup of water? The answer to this questions is vague. For many candidate answers, it is simply vague, for each of these candidate answers, which candidate is the correct answer. Here I briefly outline an account of vagueness according to which vagueness is *sui generis*. Then I apply this account to those purported cases of indeterminacy and incommensurability mentioned above, as well as Chang's small improvement argument.

According to the view that vagueness is sui generis, vagueness is irreducible and fails to permit of analysis in terms of concepts that are not themselves vagueness-related. Vagueness cannot be understood in other terms. Standard accounts of vagueness deny this claim and these accounts fall into three categories: vagueness analyzed as *semantic*, vagueness analyzed as *epistemic*, and vagueness analyzed as *metaphysical*. In each case, vagueness is reduced to something that is not vagueness-related in the sense that the more fundamental facts in virtue of which some matter is vague do not involve vagueness. I'm not going to argue against these accounts here, but will instead outline an alternative. Let's say that a concept C is *sui generis* if and only if necessarily, if C is analyzable, then C is partially analyzable by a concept of the same *conceptual kind* as C. Here is an important definition: *a* is *clearly* F $=_{\text{def.}}$ *a* is F and it is not vague whether *a* is F. This definition can be illustrated by example: If I clearly know that Harry is bald, I know that Harry is bald and there is no vagueness as to whether I know that Harry is bald. If my glass is clearly full, then my glass is full and there is no vagueness as to whether it is full. Whenever a predicate is clearly satisfied, the conditions necessary for its satisfaction are clearly satisfied. On this view, the following string of biconditionals is true: *x* is clearly F iff *x* is F and there is no vagueness as to whether *x* is F iff it is clearly true that *x* is F and there is no vagueness as to whether it is true that *x* is F iff it is clearly metaphysically settled that *x* is F and there is no

vagueness as to whether the metaphysical facts settle that *x* is F. In short, we can state the conditions under which vagueness is present only by appealing to conditions that involve other vagueness related concepts. Moreover, vagueness applies across a range of categories: to facts, to truth, and to the conditions under which facts settle which propositions are true.

Typical intuitions to the effect that it is vague whether *p* can get reported as the claim that there is no fact of the matter as to whether *p*. Such accounts of vagueness entail indeterminacy in truth, that is, for some proposition *p*, it is not the case that *p* is true and it is not the case that *not p* is true.[9] On such accounts when it is vague whether *p*, those facts which would otherwise settle whether *p* is true or whether *not p* is true fail to do so. Both the semantic and metaphysical conceptions of vagueness entail that some claims can be indeterminate in this sense. In the former case this is because, on one conception, we have not settled what we *mean* when we use vague predicates. Vagueness is a result of semantic indecision. Thus, it is indeterminate which proposition a particular sentence expresses, or what is meant, when we utter various claims in a range of cases. This is because *we* haven't settled what we mean in these range of cases. In the latter case, this is because nothing in *nature* settles whether some relevant entity possesses the property in question. Nature itself leaves it open whether the property is, or is not possessed by the entity in question. Does vagueness entail indeterminacy of either sort? Following Barnett the answer is no, and we can reduce arbitrary ascriptions of indeterminacy to absurdity with a quick argument. Here is a slightly altered version of his argument.

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[9] There are many versions of vagueness-as-indeterminacy. I do not have the space to consider every option here. I refer you to Barnett (2009, 2011), and (unpublished). If you are not already convinced that indeterminacy is impossible, it is unlikely that anything I repeat here will convince you. It is nonetheless interesting to consider the problem of incommensurability and indeterminacy in value on the supposition that vagueness is present in these cases, while vagueness does not entail indeterminacy.

For reductio, suppose that it is indeterminate, i.e. metaphysically unsettled, whether Harry is bald. Since it metaphysically unsettled whether Harry is bald only if it is not metaphysically settled that Harry is bald and not metaphysically settled that Harry is not bald, it is not metaphysically settled that Harry is bald and not metaphysically settled that Harry is not bald. However, it is true that Harry is bald only if it is metaphysically settled that Harry is bald, and because it is true that Harry is not bald only if it is metaphysically settled that he is not bald, it follows that it is not true that Harry is bald and it is not true that Harry is not bald. Yet Harry is bald only if it is true that Harry is bald, and because Harry is not bald only if it is true that Harry is not bald, Harry is not bald and Harry is not not bald. Since we have arrived at a contradiction, our initial supposition is false. Moreover, because the issue of whether Harry is bald was chosen arbitrarily, the argument generalizes: indeterminacy is impossible.[10]

The soundness of this reductio depends upon three kinds of inference. First, that it is true that S only if it is metaphysically settled that S. Second, that S only if it is true that S. Third, that modus ponens, contraposition, and reductio ad absurdum are valid rules of inference. These inferences seem impeccable. The first upshot is that we arrive at a powerful argument against the possibility of indeterminacy. The second upshot is that these three claims are a great deal more compelling than purported cases of indeterminacy and incommensurability in value. Let's now consider an argument for thinking that vagueness needn't threaten the law of excluded middle (LEM), the claim that every proposition is either true or it is not true, in the first place. Consider *Surgery Sue*.

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[10] This paragraph was taken nearly verbatim from Barnett [unpublished]. Structurally similar arguments are given in Williamson (1994) and Horwich (1990).

> As a result of an accident, Sue is in now on an operating table having one of her legs reattached to her body. At the present stage of the procedure, it is vague whether the leg has been reattached. The surgeon asks an attending student, "What is the patient's current weight?" Well prepared, the student knows that Sue's body weighs precisely 100 pounds without the leg, and that the leg weighs precisely 20 pounds. She offers the intuitive response, "Clearly, the patient weighs something. The only two candidates are 100 and 120 pounds. Hence, clearly she weighs either 100 or 120 pounds, even though it is vague which." It is vague whether Sue weighs 100 pounds; it is vague whether she weighs 120 pounds; yet, intuitively, she clearly weighs either 100 or 120 pounds. Hence, intuitively, a disjunction might be clearly true even if none of its disjuncts is clearly true. More specifically, an instance of the law of excluded middle might be clearly true even if neither disjunct is: clearly, Sue either does or does not weigh 100 pounds, even though it is vague which (2011, p. 31).

If we suppose that it is vague whether Sue weighs 100 pounds and that it is vague whether she weighs 120 pounds, then Sue neither clearly weighs 100 pounds nor clearly weighs 120 pounds. Nonetheless, clearly, Sue either weighs 100 pounds or 120 pounds. She is clearly not weightless and these are the only two options. An instance of LEM is clearly true, even while neither of its disjuncts is clearly true. So the case of *Surgery Sue* is an intuitive consideration for thinking that vagueness does not threaten LEM, while providing an intuitive consideration for thinking that vagueness need not entail a truth-value gap. The reductio argument before it provides us with a reason for thinking that vagueness does not entail indeterminacy since indeterminacy is impossible. These considerations jointly deliver the following picture of vagueness: for any proposition *p* such that *p* is neither *clearly* true nor *clearly* not true, either *p* is true or *not p* is true, even though it is vague which proposition is true. Second, vagueness cannot be reduced to some phenomena of an other kind. Third, we can capture pro-vagueness intuitions in a way that is compatible with LEM. Since LEM is, to put matters mildly, *extremely* plausible and the indeterminacy of value is incompatible with LEM, we have another reason to reject the possibility of indeterminacy in intrinsic value. Because pro-incommensurability intuitions all

involve some intuition to the effect that it is indeterminate how intrinsically valuable something is, we have another reason to reject the possibility of incommensurability in intrinsic value.

But my goal here is to explain away pro-indeterminacy and pro-incommensurability intuitions by appealing to independently motivated considerations. To do this let's consider the *Clear Fallacy*. On the conception of vagueness under consideration, it would be fallacious to infer that there is no fact of the matter as to whether *p* from the claim that there is no *clear* fact of the matter as to whether *p*. Though there may be other explanations for the temptation to make this inference, I will focus on just one. When it is vague, for some range of answers to a particular question, which answer is correct, we refrain from asserting an answer to the question. In general, as sincere speakers, we abide by the rule that we should assert *p* only if *p* is *clearly* true. When there is vagueness as to whether *p*, we should not assert *p*. This is because, whenever there is vagueness as to whether *p*, we cannot know whether *p*. Yet we should assert *p* only if we know *p*, or more weakly, if for all we know, we do not know that *p*.[11] According to Barnett, "[t]he fallacy lies in taking the best explanation for the fact that we should not assert *p* to be that it is not the case that *p*, when in fact the best explanation is that it is not *clearly* the case that *p*." [12] This story is a familiar one: we confuse assertion conditions with truth conditions. We shouldn't assert that Surgery Sue weighs 100 pounds even if she does because in the presence of vagueness, we shouldn't assert this because the claim is not *clearly* true. But an error occurs when we reason about (either implicitly or explicitly) why we shouldn't assert these claims. We may be tempted to think that these claims are unassertable because they fail to be true. Falsity

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[11] Even more weakly, we should assert p only if we have good reason for believing that p. One might think that the violation of a norm is a ground for criticism, and that violating a knowledge norm would be no such ground. For if one were asserting that p when one had excellent reasons for believing that p, one would not be subject to criticism even if what one asserted were false. Thanks to Michael Tooley for helping me to see this point.

[12] Barnett (2009).

does make a claim unassertable. However, the real explanation lies in the fact that we shouldn't assert these claims because none of them are *clearly* true, and the failure of a proposition to be clearly true is compatible with its falsity.

Let's now return to our topic. The thought is that we misreport the sound intuition that none of the three comparative relations clearly holds as the unsound intuition that none of these relations holds. This is a mistake. One of these relations holds, though it is vague which relation holds. Accordingly, incommensurability seems present in a case only when it is vague how much intrinsic value is possessed by some entity being compared in it, for it is vague whether a comparison holds in virtue of its being vague how much intrinsic value is possessed by some entity that is subject to comparison. For were we to accept that entities with intrinsic value always have a determinate degree of intrinsic value, we would fail to have the intuition that incommensurability is present. We would instead have the intuition that, although there is a fact of the matter as to which of some entities is better or whether they are equal in value, we would be somehow blinded from knowing it. The phenomena of seeming incommensurability does *not* present itself as a problem that can be settled by investigation. This isn't surprising. The phenomena of vagueness does not present itself as a problem that can be resolved by investigation either. This is exactly what we should expect if we can explain one of these phenomena in terms of the other.

Who was a better athlete, Michael Jordan or Muhammad Ali? It is tempting to answer this question by claiming that neither athlete is a better athlete than the other, nor are they equally good athletes. What is true is that neither athlete is *clearly* better than the other, and neither are these athletes *clearly* equally athletic to one other. This is to acknowledge that there is vagueness as to who was a better athlete. It would be a mistake to infer the unsound claim that

none of these relations holds from the claim that none of these relations clearly holds. It is precisely because it is vague how good of an athlete Muhammad Ali and Michael Jordan were that their athleticism seems incommensurable. There *is* a correct answer to the question "How good of an athlete were Michael Jordan and Muhammad Ali?" though which answer is the correct answer is vague, and this is because it is vague how the various components of athleticism: skill, strength, agility, competitiveness, and so on, interact with one another to determine all-things-considered athleticism. Moreover, Michelangelo is neither clearly more creative than Mozart, nor is Mozart clearly more creative than Michelangelo. It is not clearly the case that Mozart and Michelangelo are equally creative. Why? Because it is vague exactly how creative both Michelangelo and Mozart were. It is vague precisely because it is vague how the various components of creativity combine so as to yield an overall and specific degree of creativity. The same goes for impressiveness of buildings, quality of careers, and so on.

Where does Chang's argument go wrong? Where it assumes that a career in law is neither a better career, nor a worse career, nor an equally as good career as a career as a violinist. What is true is that none of these relations clearly holds between these careers. From this fact it does not follow that none of these relations holds; one does, it is vague which relation holds. The same goes for the options of going on a hike in the wilderness or finishing a proof. One of these states of affairs is intrinsically better than the other, it is just vague which is better. Moreover, it is likewise vague whether a hike followed by a tasty beer is better than finishing a proof and learning that *p*. It is not in general true that if it is vague whether x is better than y, and z is clearly better than x, then z is clearly better than y. Naturally, if it is vague of two options how valuable each option is, while neither option is clearly better than the other, then it will be vague

which option is better.[13] Again, we would not *assert* that one of these options was a better option, and because we are cooperating speakers, we aim to satisfy the rules for sharing information. We abide by the rule that we should assert *p* only if *p* is clearly true. So we would not assert either that learning that *p* or enjoying hike is the better option. This is compatible with there being a fact of the matter, though it is vague which fact it is, as to which option is better.

What of courage and degrees of belief? Here the story is the same. There is a precise degree of belief associated with every belief, but it is often vague what this degree is. Similarly, there is always a sharp cutoff between the bald and the non-bald, though it is vague where this cutoff is. We must keep in mind that a sharp cutoff is not a clear cutoff, and that that something's being clearly the case does not entail that it is obviously the case. Additionally, it is plausible to think that *we* cannot know the precise degree to which we believe most things. This fact is in need of explanation and here an explanation is on offer: we cannot know the degree to which we are in many mental states because it is vague, for a range of degrees, whether we are in these mental states to degrees within this range. Why is it vague? Because mental states and their degrees are determined by more basic facts, and it is often vague how various features of these facts combine so as to determine a precise degree for the mental states they determine. The same holds for courage and the like. It can be vague, though not indeterminate, how courageous someone is because it can be vague, though not indeterminate, how the the more basic states that give rise to courage interact so as to yield a degree of courage on a particular occasion.

Lemos offered cases too, but here the response is not quite the same. In his cases we have neither indeterminacy nor vagueness. We instead have *imprecision*. Recall the following four purported states: (1) Someone is feeling pleasure now, (2) Eudoxus is feeling more than 25 units

13 Chang (1997) considers this response and argues that purported cases of incommensurability are quite unlike standard cases of vagueness.

of pleasure, (3) S is pleased to degree 5 at t that someone is feeling pleasure now, or (4) S is pleased to degree 5 at t that Eudoxus is feeling more than 25 units of pain. Lemos claimed that each of these states has indeterminate intrinsic value. As has been pointed out, states of affairs have intrinsic value and there are no states of affairs that correspond to sentences (1) and (2).[14] There are no disjunctive states of affairs. Thus, there are no states of affairs with indeterminate intrinsic value that correspond to these sentences. There are propositions that correspond to these sentences, but propositions do not have intrinsic value. We must then ask what state of affairs makes true these propositions, and Lemos has given us no reason for thinking that these states of affairs will be indeterminate.

Nevertheless, (3) and (4) do purport to pick out determinate states of affairs with indeterminate content. I will simply grant Lemos the claim that these states of affairs would be determinate even if their content were indeterminate, though I doubt this is possible. But we must distinguish between two questions. The first question is whether it could be the case that S takes attitude A towards some content or other, but for a range of candidate contents C1, C2, C3. . . it is not true that S takes A toward C1 and it is not true that S does not take A towards C1, and so on with C2, C3, etc. That is, contents are determinate (perhaps because they are propositions and all propositions are determinate), but which proposition the subject is hooked up with is indeterminate. The second question is whether it could be the case that S takes attitude A towards some content or other, but with respect to that content, it is indeterminate *what that content is*. This second option involves indeterminacy in the identity of the content and not in whether the subject is hooked up with it, whereas the first option involves determinate identities

14 Zimmerman (2001) makes roughly the same point.

of concepts, but indeterminacy in whether a relation to those determinate concepts obtains. Other than LEM and the reductio above, are there reasons for doubting either of these possibilities?

Evans provided an argument against this latter possibility (1978). Though it is not uncontroversial, his simple argument has much to recommend it. Briefly, it goes as follows: (1) it is always determinate that A = A and (2) if x and y are identical, then they possess the same properties. Suppose for reductio that it is indeterminate whether A = B. Given (1) it is determinate that A = A and that B = B. Given (2) A and B have all the same properties. However, if it is indeterminate whether A = B, then A has the property of *being indeterminately identical to B*. B lacks this property. So A and B do not have all the same properties. So our reductio assumption is false. Indeterminacy in identity is impossible.[15] Now, can it instead be indeterminate which determinate proposition I believe or am pleased by? Recall: (3) S is pleased to degree 5 at t that someone is feeling pleasure now, and call the propositional content of S's pleasure '*p*.' Can it be indeterminate whether S is pleased that *p*? If so, there must be some distinct proposition, *q*, in the neighborhood of *p* such that S cannot know whether he believes *p* rather than *q*. If there is, it is hard to see what it is. It is even harder to see why we should conclude that there is indeterminacy in what S is pleased by, as opposed to vagueness in whether S is pleased by *p* rather than *q*. I don't have a knock down argument against this view, but if we can handle all the other purported cases of indeterminacy without accepting that indeterminacy is present, I think we should have a unified account and say the same here.

Before moving on I want to consider an objection raised by Chang. She considers whether the presence of vagueness (though unfortunately she uses the terms 'vague' and 'indeterminate' interchangeably) in purported cases of incommensurability might explain away

15 This is my presentation of the idea behind Evans' argument, this is not Evans' argument.

pro-incommensurability intuitions. She has a response. Accordingly, in a response, namely, that in borderline cases we can flip a coin to resolve these cases, whereas in superhard cases (those of purported incommensurability mentioned above), we cannot flip a coin to resolve them. If we asked a subject, Harry, to group bald people together and non-bald people together, then were Harry faced with a borderline case of baldness, Harry could resolve his choice by flipping a coin. Chang says "the resolution of borderline cases can always be a matter of arbitrary stipulation" (2002, p. 684). Harry can precisify 'bald' to 'bald1' so that for any given person he groups, that person will clearly satisfy or clearly fail to satisfy 'bald1.' However, that Harry chooses 'bald1' as the precisification for 'bald' is an arbitrary, or largely arbitrary matter. On the other hand, says Chang, were Harry to group Michelangelo and Mozart on the basis of who was "better than with respect to creativity," then who gets grouped where is no arbitrary matter. The matter would be substantive. In this case, Harry "may not arbitrarily shift to a new predicate, "better than with respect to creativity1," as the basis for resolving the perplexity. The perplexity of superhard cases demands that one stick with the predicate at hand and resolve the perplexity in those terms" (2002, p. 685). Is this correct?

It is unclear why Chang claims that in superhard cases there is a fact of the matter as how such a sorting ought to be, or ought not to be resolved, whereas in vagueness-related cases there is no such fact of the matter. She claims that, ignoring epistemicism, "every proponent of vagueness agrees that an appropriate response to a borderline case is to stipulate a new predicate for which its application is determinate" but this is not so for the account outlined above (2002, p. 686). One can stipulate a non-vague predicate and ask Harry to sort bald people with it, but then Harry is no longer sorting people with a vague predicate. He *can* do this, but then Harry's task is uninteresting and, as far as I can tell, irrelevant to whether vagueness is present in

superhard cases. However, if Harry is stuck with the vague predicate 'bald' and is asked to group people with *this* predicate, then Harry's case seem on a par with superhard cases. Harry cannot stipulate the meaning of 'bald' anymore than he can stipulate which hair conditions people possess. So we should deny that, in the relevant sense of 'appropriate,' that "an appropriate response to a borderline case is to stipulate a new predicate for which its application is determinate" and accept that this is *in*appropriate in cases in which someone is asked to sort on the basis of a vague predicate. For one would not be doing what one was asked were one to switch to a different kind of predicate. But this is just what we should say if we reject incommensurability and replace it with vagueness. It is inappropriate, just as Chang suggests, to make an arbitrary stipulation in these cases precisely because the cases involve vagueness, and it is likewise inappropriate to make arbitrarily stipulations in cases of vagueness.

4 Relocating Incommensurability and Indeterminacy

There is no incommensurability in intrinsic value, there is only vagueness with respect to how intrinsically valuable things are. I want now to describe a home for a phenomena that closely resembles incommensurability and indeterminacy. Something like these phenomena occur in our valuing. To the extent that we misreport sound intuitions about incommensurability in our valuing as unsound intuitions about incommensurability in intrinsic value, we have yet another way to explain away pro-incommensurability intuitions.

Recall our case: It could be reasonable to be indifferent between two careers: a career in law or a career as a clarinetist. Imagine yourself entering college with a passion for both music and law. On the one hand, you want the stability that the income of a practicing lawyer can bring, you love to argue, and improving the world by fighting injustice strikes you as a noble goal. On

the other hand, you find yourself inspired to create music and the thought of playing in an orchestra, say, and traveling around the country is very appealing to you. In a situation like this it could be reasonable to be indifferent between these options. Next, imagine that you are comparing a career as a clarinetist with a career in law, but this time a slightly different career in law, one in which you make $1000 more each year. You reasonably prefer a career in law with the added income to a career in law without that additional income, while remaining reasonably indifferent between this better career in law and a musical career. An added $1000 doesn't make the career in law clearly preferable to a career as a clarinetist. This case supports the following principle:

Incommensurability in Valuing (IV) An agent S can reasonably be: (1) indifferent between options x and y; (2) prefer z to x; and yet (3) indifferent between y and z.

The additivity of value entails that if a has the same intrinsic value as b, i.e. that $a = b$ and $c > a$, then it follows that $c > b$, so a relevantly similar principle to additivity does not hold for valuing. We can motivate (IV) by considering cases of vagueness involving baldness. Suppose I prefer a more bald head to a less bald head. I am then confronted with three heads such that one head is clearly more bald than the other, but for both, it is vague whether either head is balder than some third head. I am reasonably indifferent between head x and y, I prefer head y to head z, but I am also reasonably indifferent between head x and head z. Moreover, if we pluck one hair from y, creating another hair situation z, such that z is clearly balder than y, I could still be reasonably indifferent between head x and z. One can be reasonably indifferent between entities that have the same value too. The axioms that govern intrinsic value do *not* govern reasonable

preference. Whereas *intrinsically better than* and *intrinsically exactly as good as* are transitive relations, *reasonably indifference between* is a non-transitive relation. We need only consider a series of color patches. Harry now wants to paint his bathroom blue and he is looking at large sample of paint swatches going from light blue to dark to help him to decide. Harry is reasonably indifferent between adjacent pairs, but he reasonably prefers some members in this series to other members. This is a mundane phenomena even though it is incompatible with the transitivity of 'is reasonably indifferent between.' This observation supports the following hypothesis: we can misreport the sound intuition that we are reasonably indifferent between *x* and *y*; or we reasonably value *z* more than *y*; or we are reasonably indifferent between *z* and *x,* as the unsound intuitions that *x* and *y* have the same value; or *z* is more valuable than *y*; or *z* and *x* have the same intrinsic value. In another way, we conflate the degree to which something is reasonably valued with the degree to which something valued possesses intrinsic value. As I mentioned, this would be no conflation were subjectivism of a sort true. However, given that this view is false, we should reject any temptation to conflate what has value with what is valued. Chang seems to think this sort of solution would be problematic, however. She writes:

> Perhaps most striking, the possibility of parity shows the basic assumption of standard decision and rational choice theory to be mistaken: preferring X to Y, preferring Y to X, and being indifferent between them do not span the conceptual space of choice attitudes one can have toward alternatives. Put another way, the "partial orderings" sometimes favored by such theorists will underdescribe the range of choice attitudes a rational agent can have toward alternatives. And without the assumption of the Trichotomy Thesis, it is unclear how the rationality of preferences could be adequately modeled by standard utility functions. Thus the approach to rational choice favored by mainstream social scientists will, at the very least, require reexamination (2002, p. 680).

The term 'parity' is supposed to pick out a fourth value relation in addition to better than, worse than, and equally good as. I assume that what standard decision theory is a theory about is

how agents should act to satisfy their preferences under ignorance. Chang worries that incommensurability threatens decision theory, but her worry is ill-founded. The trichotomy thesis is simply the claim that incommensurability is impossible, but neither the success nor the failure of this thesis has any bearing upon decision theory. For decision theory is a theory about what it is rational to do given certain preferences. It is concerned with the degree to which various options are valued and how we should reason on that basis. Thus, it is concerned with value for a subject, and not intrinsic value (or value for the world). The claim that intrinsic value is commensurable or not is concerned with objective value and not with our preferences.[16] To connect the dots Chang must be assuming that the degree to which something has intrinsic value is somehow determined by our preferences, but this brand of subjectivism is false. The second thing to note is that if (IV) is true, we do have something like incommensurability in valuing. The question is whether this phenomena presents us with any special difficulties for decision theory, and I can't see that it does. Suppose that we *should* value the more valuable alternative. As I put it earlier, suppose that it is fitting to value the more valuable alternative in a range of cases. Whenever it is vague which of two alternatives is more valuable, then it will be vague which alternative we should prefer. This is compatible with there being a fact of the matter as to which of two alternatives we should prefer, and it is compatible with standard decision theory. If we should act to satisfy our preferences and it is vague which act will accomplish this goal, then it will be vague which action we should perform. This too is compatible with standard decision theory. So I don't see the worry.

Is their something like indeterminacy in our valuing which might masquerade as indeterminacy in the intrinsic value of the object valued? Not surprisingly, I think there is

[16] There is another way to put it: the valuation function V(x) does not pick out a number which represents the intrinsic value of x. It picks out the degree to which x is valued by a subject.

vagueness in what it is reasonable to value. Whenever it is neither clearly reasonable to prefer x to y nor to clearly prefer y to x, nor to be clearly reasonably indifferent between x and y, then reasonable preferences with respect to x and y are vague. Another potential source of a phenomena like indeterminacy in valuing arises from ignorance. For most mental states, we cannot tell the degree to which those mental states are possessed. Introspectively, it might seem that there is no determinate degree to which these states are present. For if there were a precise degree, surely we would have the best access to it. But we don't and so it might seem to us that there is no precise degree, for example, to which we are pleased that *p*. Moreover, for many states, we may be rationally unable to assign a determinate intrinsic value to those states. Arguably, what is given to us in intuition when it comes to intrinsic value is which things have it and which things have more of it than others, as opposed to the degree to which things have it and exactly how much better things are than others. Differently, we can assign a determinate positive intrinsic value to some state of affairs and that it has some value or other, but having done so, there is no experience that we could have that would confirm that our assignment was right. To the extent that we infer from the seeming indeterminacy of our valuing an entity to the object's value having an intrinsic, we might incorrectly inferring that states of affairs can have indeterminate value. But either way, indeterminacy is impossible. We should call the phenomena what it is: *vagueness* in intrinsic value.

5 Value, Ignorance, and Intrinsicness

According to *Excluded Knowledge*: Vagueness as to whether *p* entails that nobody knows whether *p*. To the extent that there is vagueness for a range of degrees, to which degree a state of affairs has intrinsic value, we cannot know that it has that value. Because of this fact, the same

goes for cases of purported incommensurability. We cannot know, for example, whether Mozart was more creative than Michelangelo, or whether a deserved pleasure is better than a kind act. Is this a problem?

Actually, this consequence places us in a nice position to respond to a recent argument against intrinsic quantities. Dasgupta (*forthcoming*) argues against the possibility of intrinsic quantities on epistemic grounds. On his view, for example, mass relationships like *x is more massive than y* are more fundamental than determinate masses like *x is 2 grams* which purport to pick out an intrinsic property. The latter facts holds in virtue of the facts like the former, and so whether something instantiates a quantity like *having 2 grams of mass* constitutively depends on its relations to other things. If this is right, then whether something possesses *having 2 grams of mass* is not intrinsic to its possessor because intrinsic properties are such that their possession does not depend on a thing's relations to other objects.[17] Dasgupta's argument for this thesis involves appealing to the following Occamist principle: *A theory which posits undetectable structure is less preferable to a theory that does not, all things be held equal*. By 'undetectable' Dasgupta means that it would be physically impossible for the property to impact our senses given the actual laws of nature. He argues, and rather convincingly, that were there such intrinsic quantities, they would indeed by undetectable, for example, absolute velocity, spatial relations, and mass would all turn out to be undetectable. We can put his argument in the form of a quick modus tollens. (P) Were intrinsic value both intrinsic and quantitative, it would be in principle

[17] I want to mention a worry for this objection and then set it aside. Dasgupta does not distinguish universals from concepts. One might accept that the concept *is more massive than* is a more basic concept than *has 2 grams mass*. Thus, it might be that the former is more analytically fundamental than the latter. However, it does not follow that the universal *is more massive than* is more fundamental than the universal *has 2 grams mass*. Presumably, what makes it the case that x is more massive than y involves intrinsic universals of x and y, together with facts about the laws that relate these universals to one another. For example, such laws of nature might entail that when *x* and *y* collide, the acceleration of *y* that is caused by *x* is greater than the acceleration of *x* that is caused by *y*. Thanks to Michael Tooley for discussion of this point.

undetectable in observation. (Q) There are no intrinsic quantities undetectable by observation. So there is no intrinsic value. Instead, one might go on to say, what we have are more fundamental *comparative* relations. We can detect which things are better than others, but we need not posit any underlying intrinsic value to do so. If this is correct, then any Moorean conception of value falls flat.

To be fair, Dasgupta is interested in *physical* quantities and it is arguable that goodness should not be counted as a physical quantity.[18] He might wish to bracket evaluative properties here. Even still and granting Dasgupta (P), we should ask whether the Occamist principle meant to support (Q) is at all plausible. I submit that it is not, and given the thesis that there is a great deal of vagueness in intrinsic value we can see exactly why. This is because **vagueness excludes knowledge**. Whenever it is vague whether p, one cannot know whether p. Thus, whenever it is vague how valuable something is, one cannot know how valuable that something is, even in principle. And if one cannot know whether p, one cannot observe that p or observe that not p. This is a consequence of every account of vagueness, not just vagueness as *sui generis*. Epistemicism entails this outright, and vagueness understood as semantic or metaphysical entails that whenever it is vague whether p, it is indeterminate whether p. But in these cases it is not true that p and knowledge requires truth. So every account vagueness entails that vagueness excludes knowledge. So the possibility of vagueness as to whether x is F to degree n entails the undetectability of the property that corresponds to F. So we should reject the Occamist principle and Dasgupta's argument that depends on it.

I suggested earlier that only non-fundamental properties permit of vagueness, whereas it is a mark of the conceptual that conceptual properties do permit vagueness. This is one reason to

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18 Oddie (2001) argues that value is causally networked. So if having causal efficacy is sufficient for being physical, and if Oddie is correct, value would turn out to be a physical quantity.

take value to be conceptual rather than fundamental. The concept *being intrinsically good to degree 2*, for example, is satisfied by a state of affairs when the degree to which its attitudinal component fits its object is 2. The source of vagueness in the former concept is given in the conditions in which the latter concept is satisfied. It is because degrees of fit can be vague that degrees of intrinsic goodness can be vague. There are various components that make for fittingness, and it can vague how these components combine so as to yield a precise degree of fit. Similarly, there are various properties that make for athleticism, and it can be vague how these components determine a precise degree of athleticism. The components relevant to fit include, but are not limited to, the quality of the character of the agent (how many virtues versus vices and how entrenched are each) the nature of the object to which the attitude is directed, the nature of the reasons, both practical, moral, and epistemic for which the agent takes his attitude, and so on. These factors together ground degrees of fittingness, but there is no clear recipe for determining exactly how these factors determine a degree of fit, or even for how to weight these components against one another. To assume otherwise is to assume that the nature of value is far less messy than it in fact it. It is precisely because value *is* messy in this way that incommensurability and indeterminacy strike us as problematic.

What should we do in light of this irremediable ignorance? I'd like to suggest that a degree of humility is fitting. For we should criticize only when criticism is *clearly* appropriate, and there are a great many circumstances in which there is vagueness as to whether criticism is fitting. For we should criticize only if believe justifiably that criticism is warranted, and yet we should believe this only if there is no vagueness as to whether it is warranted. Of course, we should further investigate those components of fittingness: those features which make the bearer of the fitting attitude virtuous or vicious, for it is by making these features plain and bare that we

can better try to inculcate them in ourselves and, in so doing, make the world intrinsically better, and hopefully, better for us along the way.

5 Conclusion

In this chapter I began by considering two worries for the additivity of intrinsic value. I argued that neither incommensurability nor indeterminacy in intrinsic values was possible. What is actual, instead, is pervasive vagueness in value. Moreover, when we value things, our attitudes do not meet the demands placed on objective value, but we must not conflate value with valuing, for they are importantly different. Given that vagueness excludes knowledge, this leaves us devoid of knowledge of a great many evaluative truths. This is just what we should expect if value is intrinsic as Moore claimed it was, but more importantly, we should confront this ignorance with a sense of humility and with an eye towards uncovering those components that make for fitting responses to the world, and in so doing, makes us better.

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