

Emotion, Intentionality and Appropriateness of Emotion: In Defense of a Response Dependence Theory

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Abstract: In explaining emotion, there are strong cognitive views, which reduce emotion to belief/thought or judgment. Misgivings about assimilating emotion to belief/thought/judgment have been a main reason for moving towards perceptual accounts for many authors. My aim in this paper is to defend a perceptual theory. To this end, I first argue against a crude version of cognitivism that views emotion essentially in terms of thought or belief. I then argue that doubts about the assimilation of emotion to belief explain the appeal of 'perception' as the 'cognitive element' most appropriate to the analysis of emotion. Then I shall discuss why perception is the right category to fit emotional responses into by contrasting some considerations adduced by Sabine Döring and by Jesse Prinz. I shall show that Prinz ignores the perspective aspect of perception, while Döring fails to explain the indiscriminability in perceptual experience. For these reasons, both Prinz's and Döring's views are insufficient to explain emotional recalcitrance or unmerited emotional response. To explain emotional recalcitrance, I argue that we must appeal to a disjunctivist theory of visual experience. I shall demonstrate why we should prefer the explanation in terms of indiscriminability over one which appeals to a common element, such as a thought or representation of something as dangerous, for example. The present critical examination will afford an alternative view of the appropriateness of emotions.

Keywords: emotional recalcitrance, indiscriminability, disjunctivism.

Introduction

It is generally claimed that the emotions are intentional – they are directed towards an object: if I feel fear, then there is something, some

object, which is the object of my fear. Contemporary cognitivism, which puts the emphasis on the necessity of the cognitive element having intentional content, takes the object of an emotion to be its propositional content. According to cognitivists, emotions must have propositions as their objects. That is, if I am angry, I must be angry that *p*. For example, if I am angry that Kate stole my purse, then this assertion presupposes the truth of the proposition that Kate stole my purse. In discussing intentionality of emotion, in this paper, I reject this kind of cognitivism on the ground that it ignores a 'feeling component.' Now another camp of emotion theory is non-cognitivism which is called a feeling theory of emotion, according to which emotions can be identified with bodily sensations that have a certain pattern. Yet if emotions were merely perceptions of the body, they would represent the body as being in such and such a state. This theory also encounters difficulty in explaining the intentionality of emotion, for as many point out, feeling theorist cannot explain the fact that emotions have intentional content. William James sometimes highlighted the turbulence of emotion rather than their intentionality. Hence, for him to experience emotion is to be in some state of agitation, commotion, excitation, etc. Hence, in order to avoid the difficulties of these two views, I shall address two aspects of the intentionality of emotion: first, they have formal and particular objects. All fears are related to dangers (the formal object), and each particular episode of fear concerns a particular danger, such as a great height, a loud noise, a threat of terror, an upcoming exam, and so on (particular objects). Secondly, intentionality renders emotions amenable to rational assessment. They can be right or wrong, appropriate or inappropriate, warranted or unwarranted, rational or irrational. In explicating the intentionality of emotion, my main concern in this paper is to illuminate this normative aspect of emotion.

1. The Strong Cognitive View and Recalcitrant Emotion

There is a strong version of cognitivism that attempts to view emotion as essentially thought or belief. The question whether the theory of emotion should count emotion as cognitive or not is the question whether cognitive elements, such as belief and judgment, are conceptually necessary or not for having emotion. Robert Solomon has a preference for 'judgment' rather than 'thought' as the label for that cognitive ele-

ment. Jerome Neu has argued that ‘thoughts’ rather than judgments are appropriate for capturing what is the cognitive core of emotion.¹ In this regard, K. Walton says that “it is impossible to have the emotions without accompanying appropriate belief”. He writes:

It seems a principle of common sense, one which ought not to be abandoned if there is any reasonable alternative, that fear must be accompanied by, or must involve, a belief that one is in danger. Charles does not believe that he is in danger; so he is not afraid.²

Given this, cognitivist, for example Kendall Walton, might require that if emotion is accompanied by a belief, and the belief has a direction of fit, namely, a mind-to-world direction of fit, then in some sense the emotion has that as well. Now in order to see if the cognitive element involved in the emotions is the state of belief, let us apply emotion to Smith’s formulation of belief:

For the difference between beliefs and desires in terms of directions of fit can be seen to amount to a difference in the functional roles of belief and desire. Very roughly, and simplifying somewhat, it amounts, *inter alia*, to a difference in the counterfactual dependence of a belief that p and a desire that p on a perception with the content that not p: a belief that p tends to go out of existence in the presence of a perception with the content that not p, whereas a desire that p tends to endure, disposing the subject in that state to bring it about that p.³

We can gloss it in functional terms as follows: an emotion that p is a mental state that tends to go out of existence in the presence of a perception with the content that not p. If I believe that a rabbit is not harmful in the presence of a rabbit, then I should not fear it. If I do, it follows that it is a mistake to fear the rabbit, and the fear should be abandoned. But it is possible that fear persists, even when I consciously believe that the rab-

¹ With regard to ‘cognition’, there has been a lively debate within the ‘cognitivist’ camp whether the type of cognition in question is better thought of as belief, thought, judgment, or something else. Some writers, for example, Walton (1979) favour beliefs. Neu (1977) suggests that the cognitive elements are thoughts. Solomon (1976 and 1980) and Nussbaum (2001 and 2004) defend the view that emotions are evaluative judgments. Roberts (1988) suggests ‘construal’ as an alternative.

² Walton (1979, 6 – 7).

³ Smith (1994, 115).

bit is harmless. If emotions imply beliefs, as Kenny and Walton say,⁴ we would have to be said to hold inconsistent beliefs. If this is true, is it a mistake, and should it be abandoned? In actual life we have those emotions: consider fearing spider, despite believing that it is not dangerous. The recalcitrant emotion of groups, as Susan James points out, are even harder to dismiss. For example, as Susan James puts it, a man as a member of the American Republican party may fear Islamic fundamentalism and holding the unchanging belief that fundamentalists are dangerous, despite evidence to the contrary.⁵ If a crude view which reduces emotion to belief were right, it could be said that the man or woman who does not believe that the rabbit is particularly dangerous cannot be afraid of it, since according to the view, the relevant belief is a necessary element of the emotion. However, in the phobic case, someone might be afraid of a rabbit despite believing that it is not dangerous. If the strong view were true, emotional recalcitrance would seem to predict that people can have inconsistent beliefs. Hence it follows that emotional recalcitrance gets strong cognitivism into trouble. The point of this objection is to ask whether the cognitive element involved in the emotions is necessarily a state of belief.

In this respect, Solomon points out in his recent discussion that the connection between emotion and belief is misleading. According to the cognitivist, the way in which belief and emotion is related is in terms of belief as precondition or presupposition of emotion. Yet as Solomon notes, "belief isn't the right sort of psychological entity to constitute emotion, since beliefs are necessarily dispositions, but an emotion is, at least in part, an *experience*. Moreover, beliefs are propositional attitudes while many emotions are not."⁶

Indeed, cognitive theorists do not always claim that the cognitive element, which is essential to the emotions, should be 'belief'. Belief, among the many cognitive attitudes, is somehow a 'very strong' kind of attitude, for belief itself is necessarily connected with evidential rationality or justification. I do not have a belief when I have no or insufficient relevant evidence. In other words, if cognitivists claim that the cognitive element, which is essential to the emotions, is belief, it cannot cover cases

⁴ See Kenny (1963); Walton (1979).

⁵ James (2003, 228).

⁶ Solomon (2004, 80).

of recalcitrant emotion. Hence, doubts about belief explain the appeal of 'perception' as the 'cognitive element' most appropriate to the analysis of emotion. Given this, in what follows, I shall argue that an emotion's representational content differs from a belief's content. This is because, as Döring points out, the content of emotion is rather similar to the content of sense-perception in that it is not necessary to correct both kinds of representational content in the light of belief.⁷ We can distinguish these two states – emotion and sense perception – from belief in terms of 'direction of fit'. Belief aims at truth, whereas emotion and sense-perception are not an attitude which is defined in terms of any particular 'direction of fit'. If this is so, emotion and sense perception can be cashed out by the idea that we try to *think of X as Y*. In order to see this, let us consider an emotion, pride, for example. One might say that emotions may have either mind-to-world or world-to-mind direction of fit, due to their involving either belief or desire. There are cases in which emotions sometimes have belief-like directions of fit. For example, 'pride' sometimes does not involve desire but belief. My pride at my daughter's achievements depends on the belief, evaluable as true or false and that they are worthy. When I am proud of my beautiful house it is because of my belief that the object is mine. This is 'cognitively penetrable.' In being proud of my beautiful house, I first of all must believe that it is valuable; secondly, in order for the feeling to play a role I must believe the house to be in some way connected with me. G. Taylor calls those two beliefs 'explanatory' and 'identificatory' belief, respectively.⁸ The 'explanatory' beliefs just explain the relation between the valuable things and the person, whereas 'identificatory' belief refers to something 'closely' related to the person who feels pride. Thus, according to Taylor, 'a person may hold the requisite explanatory beliefs and yet not feel proud.' 'She may regard her beautiful house as a most desirable possession but may not regard this as reflecting on her own worth.'⁹ Thus in order to feel pride there must be identificatory belief that 'the agent regards the desirable as something she herself has brought about.' That is, she must regard the information given by explanatory beliefs as her worth.¹⁰ But if we accept

⁷ Döring (2003, 223).

⁸ Taylor (1985, 27).

⁹ Ibid., 34.

¹⁰ This is, according to Taylor, a sufficient condition for pride.

this view we cannot explain the following case: in the case of the triumph of the team which I support, pride may involve 'explanatory belief,' but not involve 'identificatory belief,' since I cannot regard the team's victory as one that I myself brought about. Thus in my view, the pride in the triumph of the team does not derive from belief but from my trying to think of the team's victory as mine. In trying to think of the team's victory as mine, there is no 'fit' or 'directionality', since trying to think of X as Y is subject to one's will. This is one of the difference between 'thinking of X as Y' and 'belief', since as Goldie notes, "believing at will is, as is generally accepted, impossible; one cannot directly try to believe something; at best one can indirectly (albeit irrationally) try to come to believe that thing by, for example, putting oneself in an environment where one is likely to do so".¹¹ If this is so, we can say that the pride in the triumph of the team is derived from my attitude of thinking X as if Y. If this is true, in this case, we can say that pride does not have belief-like direction of fit. Hence, the emotion, pride is not reducible to belief.

My pride, one might argue, presupposes a desire that my daughter has achievements, a desire with satisfaction-conditions and the world-to-mind direction of fit. But that pride does not itself have satisfaction conditions, for it does not itself set goals for action. We could say that pride sometimes involves mind-to-world (belief), sometimes world-to-mind (desire), or sometimes neither directions of fit. It follows that it is difficult to say that emotions have either direction of fit. The reason why emotions sometimes have neither direction of fit is because we have the personal point of view when we experience emotion. We have different standards of fittingness when we experience emotion. Hence the appropriateness of the emotions can be stated from the agent's perspective. I shall discuss how such an account might go in more detail in the following section (section 2).

Another difference between emotion/sense-perception and belief is that emotion/sense-perception tends to have a phenomenal quality of a sort which is lacking in belief. We can see this by drawing an analogy with visual experience. For example, when I see the duck-rabbit as a duck, the figure itself takes on a ducky look.¹² In order to characterize

¹¹ Goldie (2000, 72).

¹² Roberts (1988, 192).

the appearance of the object, my concern is committed to the construal. The way in which my concern enters into the construal is that I pick options up from my psychological repertoire by direct or indirect control. But sometimes I am faced with situations in which I do not have options to pick among construals, due to lack of control. Hence, being afraid of a grass snake despite believing that it poses no danger is possible because to some extent our emotions and emotional responses are passive, and cannot be controlled. I shall discuss this problem in more detail in terms of a disjunctivist view of visual experience in section 3.

2. Emotion, Perception and Perspective

Recently some people have suggested that emotions are analogous to perceptions. Döring argues that the emotional content “resembles content of sense-perception in that both kinds of representational content need not be revised in the light of belief and better knowledge.”¹³ She attempts to show this using an analogy between emotion and optical illusions such as the Mueller-Lyer lines: just as our perception that the two lines differ in length persists in the face of our belief that the lines are the same length, so emotions may persist even though we have relevant and countervailing knowledge. Thus, she suggests that a person can have a sense-perception or can feel emotion that *p*, and at the same time believe that not *p*. The point that Döring makes here is that in such cases of sense-perceptions and emotions we are able to be in a contradictory or ambivalent state, while in the case of belief, this is impossible. This is because, for Döring, an emotion, like a sense perception, is not an attitude that can be considered as true or false as such. Now what Döring doesn't here make clear is what perception would mean when she says that ‘emotional content resembles the content of sense-perception.’ It seems to me, when she assimilates emotional content to the content of sense-perception, what she has in mind is perception in a ‘non-literal sense’¹⁴, which is that it involves no organs of sense.

What then would it mean to say that emotions are perceptions in a literal sense? To answer this question we need to consider paradigm examples of perceptual states, such as vision, audition, and olfaction.

¹³ Döring (2003, 223).

¹⁴ I owe this terminology to Prinz (2004b, Ch. 10).

What makes sights, sounds, and smells count as perceptual? The clue for answering this question can be found in Descartes. Since for Descartes, emotions are states of the soul that manifest themselves as activities of the 'animal spirits' that flow through our bodies. Descartes sometimes says emotions are 'perceptions' of such bodily changes. We can see this picture when he describes the way in which the perception of what constitutes the first cause and object of a passion affects one's body causing bodily changes. For example, when one sees an approaching lion on his path, the perception of the lion – the sight of a frightful beast approaching – affects his body, changing his heartbeat, blood-flow and muscular tension, causing his legs to tremble. These physiological changes feed back into the emotional reaction at the mental level, causing and strengthening the passion proper (one's fear). We could say that for Descartes, the passions are perceptions of conative states caused by bodily changes or reactions. But according to Prinz, this view does not mean that emotions are states in perceptual systems, since Prinz views perceptions as 'states in dedicated input systems'.¹⁵ Instead, Prinz observes that "Descartes regards emotions as pleasant or unpleasant feelings that draw our attention to characteristics of a present situation and dispose us to act in response." Yet according to Prinz, Descartes devised the foundations for perceptual theory by postulating a close relationship between the emotions and bodily changes. James developed these foundations in his identification of emotions with the feeling of bodily changes.¹⁶ The reason why Prinz views James as the true originator of a perceptual theory is that when James identifies emotions with bodily changes, "they are not movements of the animal spirits but perturbations in visceral organs and adjustments in skeletal muscles."¹⁷ Prinz maintains that this is clearly a perceptual theory, because Prinz regards emotions as 'states in the somatosensory system'.¹⁸ In this respect, Prinz argues that his embodied appraisal theory descends from James's theo-

¹⁵ See, Prinz (2004b, 222). According to Prinz, "A dedicated input system is a mental system that has the function of receiving information from the body or world via some priority class of transducers and internal representations." (Ibid.)

¹⁶ Prinz (2004b, 224).

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

ry, because according to Prinz, “emotions are states within systems that are dedicated to detecting bodily changes.”¹⁹

How could this theory explain emotional recalcitrance, for example, phobia? The answer will go something like this: perceptions of spiders trigger bodily changes typical of fear: we register these bodily changes, and represent the spider as dangerous. In the case of the spider, the appraisal is “not merited” by the spider since the spider presents no danger even though it elicits the appraisal. The reason that perceptions of spiders trigger these bodily changes might have its origin in natural selection a long time ago, when spiders were dangerous and it was useful to react that way. This reaction then becomes hardwired, and now it simply happens, regardless of what our better judgment might say. And it is very difficult to get rid of these hardwired reactions. If this is so, recalcitrant emotion such as fear of spiders could be due to misrepresentation. We have seen that Prinz’s embodied appraisal theory can explain the emotional recalcitrance without committing ourselves to the states of belief or judgment. Although Prinz tries to explain the unmerited emotional response in terms of embodied appraisal as perception, he ignores the ‘perspective’ that emotion might have. Hence, in what follows, I shall discuss why emotions are sometimes susceptible to recalcitrance by appealing to the ‘perspectival’ aspect of perceptual experience. The reason is that they are grounded in the needs, desires, beliefs, expectations, moods and dispositions of the subject experiencing the emotion. These features of emotions, as many have noted, are due to the subject’s perspective on her environment. Now these features of emotion involve non-literal sense of perception.

What then would it mean to say that emotions are perceptions in a non-literal sense? In order to understand perception in a non-literal sense, we should take account of two aspects of perception: a factual and a perspectival aspect.²⁰ The former informs us how things are in the world. Yet this kind of perception cannot provide an unambiguous image, since it has multiple interpretations on the perceptual level. The latter is able to provide a unique description of the world, since it informs us how things are in the world from the standpoint of the perceiver. I take this aspect to be perception in the relevant non-literal sense. If

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ The distinction between a factual and perspectival aspect of perception is addressed well by Julian Deonna. See Deonna (2006).

we take the latter aspect we can say having an emotion is *a way* of perceiving one's place in the world. For example, when I see a snake in front of me, my perception alerts me not only of this fact, i.e., that there is a snake in front of me, but also, how the snake in front of me would look, etc. Then I may sense danger and may run away. All these items of information enter into the conditions of correctness of the content of the subject's perception. If someone feels fear even if the distance is very far, and even if the object e.g., a spider, does not fit the formal object, i.e., dangerousness, then it is due to the subject's perspective in experiencing the emotion. Just as one dimension of perception itself is directly dependent on the perceiver's perspective on her environment, so in the case of emotions the same perspectival role can be played by the agent's long-standing evaluative tendencies and character traits.

3. Explaining Inappropriate Emotion in Terms of Disjunctivism of Sensory Perception

In section 1, I discussed strong cognitive views, which reduce emotion to belief/thought or judgment. I then argued that misgivings about assimilating emotion to belief/thought/judgment have motivated a shift to perceptual accounts for many authors: doubts about the assimilation of emotion to belief explains the appeal of 'perception' as the 'cognitive element' most appropriate to the analysis of emotion. I illustrated this in terms of Prinz's embodied appraisal theory. But Prinz ignores the perspectival aspect of perception. Hence, he fails to make a convincing case for the analogy of emotion with perception. In what follows I shall explore what Döring and Prinz miss in discussing why perception is the right category to fit emotional responses into. The answer will be that they leave out the role of phenomenology in perceptual experience. I shall show what role the phenomenology plays in exploring emotion and perception by adopting disjunctivism about visual experience.

Disjunctivism about visual experiences is the idea that visual phenomenology springs from features of objects to which we have direct access.²¹ Disjunctivism takes the phenomenological quality to be por-

²¹ Disjunctivism is not really a theory of visual experience but a rough approach to the topic. Those who discuss disjunctivism find its origins in the works of Michael Hinton. See Hinton (1973). Its defenders include Snowdon (1992, 2005), Martin (1997, 2002, 2004) and McDowell (1998).

trayals of the world, because they view the intentionality of experience as presented rather than represented. Disjunctivists' starting conception of visual experiences begins with the thought that our experience is of mind-independent objects. How then can our experience be directed on a mind-independent object? On this score, they also assume that visual experience possesses a disjunctive kind of phenomenology; and that its phenomenology is internally linked to its accuracy conditions.²² Given this, disjunctivists take a neutral description which ranges across the set of relevant experiences, that is, veridical perception, illusion and hallucination. It could be formulated as follows:

- (D) an episode e is a visual experience as if ϕ iff either
- (v) e is a veridical perception of the fact that ϕ ; or
- (i) e is an illusion as if ϕ ; or
- (h) e is an hallucination as if ϕ .

The key to disjunctivism may lie in its willingness to renounce the quest for a general theory of what it is to experience veridical perception, illusion and hallucination. Disjunctivists may rather simply be concerned with blocking the argument from hallucination. Now a question arises: Is there the common visual element to veridical perception, illusion and hallucination which is to pick out something which is, or is an aspect of, the way one is experiencing? The *yes* answer to this question leads to non-disjunctivism about visual experience, for example, sense-datum theory. The sense-datum theorists might say that a hallucination can be indistinguishable from a veridical perception, since in both cases, the subject is aware of the same *sense data*. According to Ayers, the sense-data are 'the intrinsic state' the subject is in, and they could be in this intrinsic state regardless of what 'lies outside.'²³ Hence, Ayers argues

²² In this respect, disjunctivists tend to argue against sense-datum or qualia theories and in doing so they support the transparency thesis on which Tye insists. According to Tye, when you turn your attention to how the world seems visually – in veridical perception, illusion or hallucination – you become directly aware of qualities experienced as public surface qualities. When you turn your attention to how experience seems phenomenally, you do become aware of your experience's phenomenal character – you come to know what your experience is visually like – but you do so in a deferred way. You do so by becoming directly aware of how the world seems to be visually. See Tye (1992).

²³ Ayers (2001, 104).

that if we concentrate on how it is for a subject, we can just see that the subject is in the same state, and hence that the non-disjunctivist is right. In light of this, non-disjunctivist argues that in indistinguishable cases of perception and hallucination, there is a shared common experiential element to perceptions – the subject’s being in a sensory state of the very same kind. It might be said that the existence of such a common factor, for example, sense data, could be established by introspection. By contrast, the disjunctivist denies the existence of common factor. But he does not deny the fact that both in cases of perception and hallucination of an object a subject can correctly describe the situation as one in which it looks to him as if the object is present.²⁴ This is because, the disjunctivist claims that the way things are when you are perceiving, the qualitative experience you then enjoy, is of a kind which couldn’t occur when you are hallucinating. But they also say that it is true in both cases that it looks to you as if... so there is a sense in which there is a qualitative aspect of the sense experience which is the same across the different cases. In this regard, while disjunctivists take account of how things appear to a subject regardless of what the subject is perceiving, they suggest that we shouldn’t rule out the possibility that the appearance judgment is regarded as disjunctive.²⁵ Given this, for disjunctivists it is not necessary that a subject must be in a sensory state of the very same kind in subjectively indistinguishable cases of perception and hallucination. Thus, even if we cannot distinguish between two experiential states from the first person point of view, we are not thereby ruling out the possibility that they might nevertheless be states of ontologically different kinds.²⁶

Now having established disjunctivism for visual experience in this way, the guiding motivation here is the same as that which applies to emotion: a concern with illusion or hallucinations. For example, someone could say that he does fear a threatening lion even if there is no lion around to be afraid of. In this case, it would have seemed from his point of view, as if there was actually some such object of which he could be afraid. It seems quite conceivable that he should have had a hallucination as of an approaching lion indistinguishable for him from the perception he actually enjoyed. Whether his belief is true or false, it is a belief

²⁴ See Martin (2002, 393).

²⁵ See Snowdon (2000).

²⁶ See Fish (2004, 122).

about how things are in the world. In light of this, Mike Martin points out that “it is just that state of mind which is liable to fix the subject’s beliefs about how his environment must be, and hence is a state of being presented to as if things are so.”²⁷ The reason why the person feels fear is that he doesn’t know that his experience is not the perception of a lion, since from the first person’s perspective, veridical perception and hallucination seem the same to the subject. In other words, the hallucination can seem to the subject to have just the same kind of authority as veridical perceptions.²⁸ From the first person’s point of view, one might suggest, the reason for thinking that there is a lion there is simply the lion itself. Yet we could say that from an observer’s perspective, he was suffering from a hallucination. As Martin remarks, “we would have the same explanation of his belief, and he would be equally in the right in forming that belief, even though in that situation it would in fact turn out to be false.”²⁹ It is his being in the perceptual state, having a visual experience of a lion which explains why he believes and cannot help believing that a lion is there.

To make good on the analogy between an emotion and a perceptual illusion, we need to find cases that resemble the apparent bentness of a stick when it is in water, or the Muller-Lyer lines. The lines continue to appear to be of different lengths while they are known to be equal lengths. This is because, even if the subject reflects on his situation and agrees that he is having an illusion (or hallucination), the fact is powerless to change the phenomenology of the situation. It may still seem to him as if things are immediately and directly manifest to him. In this case, we could say that the subject *sees X as Y*. If we draw an analogy between the Muller-Lyer lines illusion and fear of spider, we can say that the emotional reaction, that is, fear of spider is derived from the subject’s attitude of thinking X as if Y. Given this, we could say that just as in the case of the Muller-Lyer illusion lines continue to appear to be of different lengths while they are known to be equal lengths, so someone might

²⁷ Martin (2002, 399).

²⁸ Although it is true that hallucination can seem to the subject to have the same kind of authority as veridical perceptions, it is not necessary. In the movie, *A beautiful mind*, John Nash learns to ignore his hallucinated voices, though they don’t go away. He is in the position of the person undergoing a robust illusion: although it is a hallucination, and he knows that it is. I would like to thank Ronnie de Sousa for pointing this out.

²⁹ Martin (2002, 390).

have a phobia of spiders despite her best efforts in trying to control it. The person who feels fear of spiders might be wrong in an objective sense. He may be unable to bring his belief into line with how the spider appears to him. Yet we can explain the reason why he cannot help feeling fear, and why it seems from his perspective as if he is right. Just as one dimension of perception itself is directly dependent on the perceiver's perspective on her environment, so in the case of emotions the same perspectival role can be played by the agent's long-standing evaluative tendencies and character traits.

Thus understood, how can the disjunctivist's insight be brought to bear on the analogy between hallucination and recalcitrant emotion? The disjunctivist appeals to the conception of the indistinguishability of the hallucination from a veridical perception. In light of this, some people suggest that indiscriminability of presented objects imply the indiscriminability of experience.³⁰ That may be because Fs and Gs are really the same basic kind of thing; or it may be that the indiscriminability has something to do with our own limitations. In the latter case, Fs and Gs may in fact be rather different from one another in kind. That is what happens, in the disjunctivist view, when it comes to veridical perceptions on the one hand and indiscriminable hallucinations on the other. In themselves they are two different kinds of things. We just cannot tell them apart from within, as it were. My key thought here is that we can appeal to indiscriminability to explain the influence of emotion on us by reference to cases where the emotional response is inappropriate. But why should we prefer the explanation in terms of indiscriminability over one which appeals to a common element? What would be wrong with appealing to a common element, such as a thought or representation of something being dangerous, for example? I have argued that what would be wrong with appealing to a common element, such as a thought or representation of something as being dangerous is that it involves holding inconsistent beliefs as follows: an evaluative belief or construal (fear) endures in the presence of belief that not p (the rabbit is harmless). Now another reason it would be wrong to appeal to a common element such as thought or judgment is that it ignores the *felt quality* which is called 'affect'. Someone is afraid of a spider despite knowing that she is perfectly safe. Her fearing a spider is intelligible regardless of her beliefs

³⁰ Cf. Sturgeon (2006).

that it is not dangerous. We cannot judge her reasonable or unreasonable in this case, since there is no faulty belief here. In such a case, as Deigh notes, "what makes the fear unreasonable is not that it contains a faulty belief but rather that it is felt despite a sound belief that should have immunized its subject from feeling this fear."³¹ The essential characteristic of the felt quality is indescribable.

Now what would be wrong with appealing to representation of something as dangerous, for example, is that Prinz's account of the formal object of fear as 'dangerousness', it seems to me, cannot apply to many cases, where the object of fear cannot be perceived. The reason for this, is that, before a formal object is formed, there needs to be a literally or physically presented object.

4. Emotion as a Response - Dependence Property and Appropriateness of Emotion

When Prinz says that the formal object of emotion, for example, the formal object of fear, is 'the dangerous' it seems to me that it cannot cover many possible targets, such as radiation and the threat of a terror which cannot be perceived. The reason is that, before there is a formal object, there needs to be a real target, which there is not in the case of radiation. Furthermore his view cannot explain other emotions, such as amusement, happiness, envy, guilt and shame. For the formal object of these emotions relate to, as many point out, 'response-dependent' properties. Let us consider the cases of amusement, anger, shame, and happiness. These are responses that circumscribe corresponding response-dependent properties, because we are amused by funny things, angered by offensive things, disgusted by disgusting things, and elated by pleasing things. The response-dependence theory implies that emotions are elicited by things as they relate *to us*. If this suggestion is right, we can say that the property to which fear is a response is 'the frightening' or 'the fearful' rather than 'the dangerous.'³² Let us look further into the idea of a response-dependent property.

On the view I want to discuss, something cannot be valued without being the object of a mental state, namely, valuing. "Something can be

³¹ Deigh (1994, 851).

³² See Goldie (2004); McDowell (1998).

dangerous only *to* some creature or other, and whether or not something is dangerous depends on the creature in question.”³³ However, this does not mean that being dangerous depends on being represented as dangerous. Radiation would be dangerous even if we didn’t know that it is. The person might not be afraid of the radiation in a particular area because he lacks the information needed to recognize the danger. Then, although he would not be warranted in being afraid, the situation is still dangerous. If this is the case, then dangerousness would not seem to be a response-dependent property, because many cases, such as radiation and high voltage, are dangerous for humans even if we don’t represent them as such. This case might get the response dependence theorist into trouble. The trouble with this account, first, as many point out, is that it involves circularity problem.

Prinz maintains that a response-dependence account is uncomfortably circular. For “saying that fear represents the property of being scary to me is like saying fear represents whatever scares me. But that is like saying that fear represents whatever causes fear.”³⁴ So it is viciously circular. However, as Prinz himself noticed, if we take emotion-eliciting properties to be secondary qualities, we can escape this circle. Red things are things that cause us to have red experiences. This is not circular, because a red experience can be characterized by its distinctive feel (seeing red), without mention of red things.³⁵

We can say that red is anything that causes normal humans to have red experiences in normal viewing conditions. If I have a red experiences as a result of pressing my finger against my eye for a few seconds, it doesn’t mean that my finger is red, because eye-pressure is a not a normal viewing condition.³⁶ In a similar vein, we might say that fear represents secondary qualities. We might say that fear represents the property of having the power to cause fear experiences in normal human beings under normal conditions. If we agree with the dispositional analysis that our faculty of evaluative judgment is analogous to a perceptual capacity, then we can say that just as an object is red if it would look red to a normal human observer in standard lighting conditions, so an object is scary

³³ Prinz (2004b, 63).

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 60.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 61.

³⁶ As argued by Prinz (2004b, 61).

if it would elicit fear in a normal human observer in standard conditions. That is, when we make evaluative judgments, we suppose that other people will share our evaluative attitudes, if they are in normal conditions and are making their judgment in normal circumstances. What then are the notions of 'normal conditions' and 'normal circumstances'? This question gives rise to a compelling objection against the dispositional analysis. This is because, whatever standard conditions are chosen, we should not be inclined to grant that people under those conditions cannot be mistaken about values – unless the observers and circumstances are described simply as ideal. A projectivist tries to avoid this kind of difficulty by allowing the possibility of error.

"My attitude," Blackburn writes, "ought to be formed from qualities I admire – the proper use of knowledge, real capacity of sympathy, and so on. If they are not, and if the use of those capacities and the avoidance of the inferior determinants of opinion would lead me to change, then the resulting attitudes would not only be different, but better."³⁷ Yet one might argue, even if we could develop the notion of normal emotional response by correction, such responses would not give a plausible standard of value. It might be normal to be afraid of spiders, for example, but that does not suffice to show that they are fearsome.

Hence, dispositional analysts try to undermine the distinctive claim of projectivism that value is not a *genuine* feature of persons, acts, states of affairs, etc., but only appears so because we mistake features of our evaluative responses for features of such things. Instead, McDowell insists upon a crucial difference between values and secondary qualities, although he shares common ground with projectivism in appealing to the analogy between them. He claims:

The disanalogy... is that a virtue (say) is conceived to be not merely such as to elicit the appropriate 'attitude' (as a colour is merely such as to cause the appropriate experiences), but rather such as to *merit* it.³⁸

By invoking the overtly normative notion of *merit*, McDowell tries to avoid any attempt to characterizing values in purely dispositional terms. Given this, we could say that a snake, for example, is rightly represented as frightening only if it *merits* fear. On this picture, we are rightly

³⁷ Blackburn (1993, 79).

³⁸ McDowell (1985, 143).

amused by something only if it *merits* funniness. Yet one might wonder how someone knows that a particular object merits a given emotional response. Furthermore, she might wonder whether her response is correct when she is amused by an offensive joke, for instance. David Wiggins tries to answer this question by suggesting that emotional responses (such as amusement and shame) and their associated concepts (funny, shameful) are mutually adjusted through a coevaluation in the way in which the responses and the properties influence each other. According to him, evaluative properties and their associated responses are 'made for' each other.³⁹ On this picture, we regard things that actually disgust us as 'disgusting', things we are ashamed of as 'shameful,' and so on. Now the reason why these properties and their responses are associated is that these responses matter to us. Wiggins maintains that evaluative properties have salient features which he calls the 'marks' of such properties. Hence, he argues, we have to look for those features. Furthermore, according to Wiggins, our responses are not 'mere' responses. They are responses that are correct when and only when they are occasioned by what has the corresponding property φ and are occasioned by it because it is φ .⁴⁰ In other words, we can say that the property retains an essential connection to the response. In this regard, he claims that his subjectivism is a subjectivism of subjects and properties mutually adjusted.⁴¹ Thus, he argues that his subjectivism does not give up the idea of achieving a simple or single standard of correctness,⁴² since we can revise our judgment of what is shameful, for example, partly by appeal to the marks of the property and partly by appeal to the nature of our 'shared way of talking, acting, and reacting.'⁴³ According to this view, the property φ is only really φ if it is such as to evoke and make appropriate the response A in any person that are sensitive to φ -ness.⁴⁴ If Wiggins is right, we can say that there is a quality of 'funniness' out there in the world, generally dependent on typical response, but independent of any particular response on a given occasion, and hence we should define 'funny' as that

³⁹ Wiggins (1987, 198)

⁴⁰ Ibid., 204 - 5.

⁴¹ Ibid., 199.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid., 205.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

which makes us laugh. Yet we could imagine that anything could make us laugh, even, in certain circumstances, the ending of the world. Yet we can think that it is inappropriate to laugh at those circumstances. Now how then do we define “inappropriateness”? It seems to me it is difficult to see how the question is answered, following Wiggins, by saying that the property that is the object of the emotion and the emotion “arise together.”

The projectivist tries to answer this question by referring to a higher-order endorsement of our sentiments. This is because for him there is an obvious difference between being in an emotional state and making an evaluative judgment – between being amused, ashamed, or angry and thinking something genuinely funny, shameful, or wrong. When we make the evaluative judgments, they are not just emotions but sentiments, which are “dispositions whose occurrent manifestations... are emotions”.⁴⁵ Although emotions and sentiments are similar in that both represent objects, they differ in that they have different objects. This is because, as Prinz points out, sentiments represent secondary qualities, caused by properties of circumstances that elicit the emotional response. Yet the emotions themselves do not represent secondary qualities, for they “represent concerns.”⁴⁶ Hence, we can say that fear represents danger, while the emotional response, that is, the sentiment that is the phobia represents the property that causes the fear response. Prinz writes: “when you have a phobic reaction to something you are simultaneously attributing to that thing the property of being scary and the property of being dangerous, which is the representational content of fear.”⁴⁷ This view leads us to understand the idea that evaluative concepts express sentiments, not emotions, and while an emotion can be one of pure approval/disapproval, the sentiment relating to it takes its object as the kind of thing that causes approval/disapproval. If this is so, it can be said that this approval or disapproval is the second-order attitude, an endorsement of the emotional response as appropriate, but such attitudes can differ from one’s sentiments.

⁴⁵ Prinz (2007, 84).

⁴⁶ Prinz (2007, 101).

⁴⁷ Ibid.

5. Conclusion

If my argument so far is right, the key factor in the appropriateness of emotion, it seems to me, is not to 'have', but to 'endorse' a sentiment. Now, what does the endorsement mean in my account? Appropriateness may compensate as well as make possible for what emotions cannot handle any more just by themselves. Hence, I argue that we can define appropriateness by considering the context of broader advantage conferred by reflective equilibrium. Different cultures and different individuals find different things funny, disgusting, shameful, and so on. Their differing histories of reflection and refinement, driven by social pressures imposed by the feelings and judgments of the community, inevitably establish disparate standards of what is, for example, shameful. If this is so, "appropriateness" means simply what people in fact find funny, for example, at a point in time. Yet I suggest that we should consider what de Sousa calls 'axiological holism' which "stipulates that we do not apprehend value in discrete units but only in the light of a complex of factors that transcend individual experience."⁴⁸ Among these factors are biological facts, social norms, and 'paradigm scenarios' of individual biography. Yet none of them alone constitutes the appropriateness of emotions. "Instead it is the totality of all these factors – biological facts, social, personal, and more – that may properly be confronted with one another in the hope of arriving at something like reflective equilibrium."⁴⁹ In this regard, we can say that in evaluating emotion as in science, we are all on Neurath's raft, rebuilding while afloat.⁵⁰ The similarity between these lies in the fact that neither has any foundational certainties. Rather both have degrees of centrality in a web of belief. Hence the appropriateness of a person's emotions can only be found through considering all these factors. In this regard, McDowell says that amusement can have greater content reflecting the distinctive character of particular social worlds, such as 'coward', 'gratitude', 'brutality, and 'courage.' Furthermore he says that participation in an evaluative practice may play an essential role in the ability to use the associated concepts.⁵¹

⁴⁸ de Sousa (2002, 225).

⁴⁹ de Sousa (2004, 74).

⁵⁰ Cf. Prinz (2007, 289).

⁵¹ McDowell (1978) and (1988).

Given this, in explaining the appropriateness of emotion, I propose a kind of holism, since as Goldie notes, 'our emotions, moods, and character traits, broadly conceived, can interweave, overlap, and mutually affect each other'.⁵² When you laugh at an offensive joke, the funniness of the joke might be understood by you in the light of your delighted mood after a delightful day, or in the light of your general disposition to be cheerful. If this is right, the emotions' appropriateness or inappropriateness can be said to depend not on the belief/thought/judgment which is true or false. This is because emotions (at least, those implicated in evaluation) are, as de Sousa notes, "tragically rich with an irreconcilable plurality of values."⁵³ I demonstrated this by drawing an analogy between emotion and visual experience.⁵⁴

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⁵² Goldie (2000, 235).

⁵³ de Sousa (1987, 332).

⁵⁴ I am very grateful to Ronnie de Sousa, Mike Martin and Scott Sturgeon for their comments of earlier versions of this paper.

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