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On The Prudential Power of Beliefs and Fittingness of Attitudes

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Abstract

The Resonance Constraint is a crucial claim in the contemporary literature about well-being: if something is good for a person, it must resonate with her. As Connie Rosati and Peter Railton put it, a person's well-being must be "suited" to her, it should be "compelling or attractive" and it should not be "intolerably alienating." Surprisingly, the Resonance Constraint and the phenomenon of resonance itself have received little direct attention. This dissertation explores the phenomenon of resonance and its impact for theories of well-being and theories of ill-being.

In chapter 1, I focus on one aspect of resonance that has been severely under explored. It is widely assumed that the relevant attitude for the Resonance Constraint must be motivational. I argue that resonance can be cognitive too: if an individual believes that something is good for her, it resonates with her. Many have concluded that subjectivism and hybrid theories can meet the Resonance Constraint and that objectivism cannot. I argue that objectivism can meet this constraint too. The novel strategy that I suggest starts with this claim: if there are facts about a person that ground facts about her well-being, she is alienated from what is good for her when she does not recognize those facts. I argue that a person's well-being is counterfactually connected to her beliefs. An idealized person would be acquainted with facts about her own well-being and so would come to have true beliefs about what is good for her. This suffices for objectivism to meet the Resonance Constraint.

In chapter 2, I argue for Fit, a principle that is a prudential version of the claim that attitudes must fit their objects. Fit is the conditional claim that if an

individual fully benefits from something, her attitudes towards it must be fitting to that object. Fit falls within the tradition of the resonance constraint because it draws a connection between an individual's well-being and her attitudes. I argue that Fit is a desideratum of an adequate theory of well-being that it is compatible with Fit. Even though Fit states a necessary condition for full benefit only, it has powerful and surprising consequences for first-order theories of well-being. I argue that two versions of the objective list theory, hedonism, desire views and hybrid views are not compatible with Fit as they are. Suitable modifications change the views so much that only views with hybrid elements will be compatible with Fit. I argue that hybrid views that claim that well-being consists in loving the good can accommodate Fit.

In chapter 3, I focus on the phenomenon of ill-being (what is intrinsically bad for us) and on one family of views, what it is known as "loving the good theories." According to this view, there is more to well-being than just pleasure or just objective value. For this view, pleasure and objective value in isolation, unrelated to each other, do not suffice for well-being either. I am particularly interested in whether a loving the good theory as extended to ill-being can successfully accommodate the connection between mind and world. In this chapter, I explore the resources of a loving the good theory to account for ill-being. I focus on Shelly Kagan's view because he is, to my knowledge, the only philosopher who has suggested an extension of loving the good theories to ill-being. I argue that Kagan's loving the good theory does not provide an explanation of ill-being. This specific result is limited to Kagan's view, but it is, I hope, an important step in our collective exploration on the nature of ill-being.

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To my mom, Margarita Niño Reyes

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May I be so lucky to have even some of your great sense of humor, kindness, strength, and wit.

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Introduction

Well-being is what is intrinsically good for someone. It is usually thought to be different from what is good in other ways, morally good for example. Ill-being, in contrast, is what is intrinsically bad for someone. We say that an idea, a movie or a story resonates with us. Some things fail to resonate. We might be indifferent to them or they might be alien to us. This dissertation explores the phenomenon of resonance and part of its impact on theories of well-being and theories of ill-being.

The Resonance Constraint is a crucial claim in the contemporary literature about well-being. It is the claim that if something is good for a person, it must resonate with her. This claim has played a key role in the literature. Subjectivists about well-being have used it as part of an argument for their view and against objectivists. Objectivists have tried to accommodate it or dismiss its importance. Despite its key role in the debate, it remains rather mysterious what resonance and alienation amount to.

My main goal in chapter 1 is to dispel some of the mystery and show that objectivists have more resources to address alienation worries than we might have thought. It is widely assumed that resonance must be motivational. I call attention to and argue for an underexplored aspect of resonance, namely cognitive resonance. I provide arguments for Belief-Resonance, the claim that if a person believes that something is good for her, it resonates with her. I argue that objectivism can meet the Resonance Constraint too. The novel strategy that I suggest starts with this claim: if there are facts about a person that ground facts about her well-being, she is alienated from what is good for her when she does not recognize those facts. I argue

that a person's well-being is counterfactually connected to her beliefs. An idealized person would be acquainted with facts about her own well-being and so would come to have true beliefs about what is good for her. This suffices for objectivism to meet the Resonance Constraint.

My focus in chapter 2 is the connection between prudential goods, attitudes and degrees of benefit. Some philosophers have argued that prudential attitudes must be appropriate to their object. In chapter 2, I argue that to fully benefit, it is not enough that an attitude is directed towards the right object. Prudential attitudes must fit their object too. I argue for the principle I call "Fit:" if an individual fully benefits from an object, she must react with fitting attitudes towards that object.

Fit falls within the tradition of the resonance constraint because it draws a connection between an individual's well-being and her attitudes. The resonance constraint states a necessary condition on something to be good for a person at all. I argue that Fit involves a prudential phenomenon. As a consequence, it is a desideratum of an adequate theory of well-being that it is compatible with Fit. Even thought Fit states a necessary condition for full benefit only, it has powerful and surprising consequences for first-order theories of well-being. I argue that two versions of the objective list theory, hedonism, desire views and hybrid views are not compatible with Fit as they are. Suitable modifications change the views so much that only views with hybrid elements will be compatible with Fit.

In chapter 3, I focus on the phenomenon of ill-being. Philosophers of well-being often assume that the focus must be well-being and once we have a well-being theory, the ill-being theory will follow from it in a straightforward way. However,

each theory of well-being faces its own challenges to account for ill-being. I focus on a family of hybrid views according to which well-being consists in loving the good. According to this view, there is more to well-being than just pleasure or just objective value. For this view, pleasure and objective value in isolation, unrelated to each other, do not suffice for well-being.

The connection between our mind and the world matters a great deal for well-being, according to loving the good theories. I am particularly interested in whether this views as extended to ill-being can successfully accommodate the connection between mind and world. I take on board a compelling and minimal assumption. If ill-being is something that is intrinsically bad, ill-being is not just the absence of well-being. This minimal assumption generates an equally minimal desideratum on loving the good theories as extended to ill-being. They must give us an explanation of ill-being as something over and above a mere absence of well-being. I argue that the current extension to ill-being of a loving the good theory does not provide an explanation of ill-being.

Chapter 1

The Power of Belief: Cognitive Resonance and Well-being

Well-being is what is good for someone. It is usually thought to be different from what is good in other ways, morally good for example. We say that an idea, a movie or a story resonates with us. Some things fail to resonate. We might be indifferent to them or they might be alien to us. In this chapter I focus on the interplay between well-being, alienation and resonance.

Resonance and alienation have been central to philosophers from a wide range of traditions. Karl Marx wrote about alienated labor (Marx 1988). Jean-Paul Sartre was concerned about the alienated self (Sartre 1992). Sarah Buss has explored the connection between action and self-alienation (Buss 2013). A crucial claim in the contemporary literature about well-being is that a person's well-being must be "suited" to, or a "good fit" for her (Rosati 1996, 298-299), that it should be "compelling or attractive" and that it should not be "intolerably alienating" (Railton 2002, 47). I refer to this thought as "the Resonance Constraint." It picks out a necessary condition on well-being:

> **Resonance Constraint:** If something is good for a person, it must resonate with her.

The Resonance Constraint has played a formidable role in philosophical debates about well-being. According to Dale Dorsey, "[The Resonant Constraint] is one of the most important and widely accepted theses about the nature of the human good"

(Dorsey 2017, 687). Subjectivists about well-being have used Resonance as part of an argument for their view and against objectivists.[1] Objectivists have tried to accommodate it or dismiss its importance.[2] Despite its key role in the debate, it remains rather mysterious what resonance and alienation amount to. My main goal in this chapter is to dispel some of the mystery and show that objectivists have more resources to address alienation worries than we might have thought.[3]

In this chapter, I focus on one underexplored aspect of resonance. It has been widely assumed that resonance must be motivational.[4] I will argue that resonance can be cognitive too:

> **Belief-Resonance:** If an individual believes that something is good for her, it resonates with her.

This is the claim that believing that something is prudentially good suffices for resonance. Cognitive resonance does not suffice for well-being, though. Life abounds with examples of things we believe to be good for us that are not. I do not claim that cognitive resonance is necessary for resonance either. Often motivation is enough for resonance.[5]

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[1] For subjectivism about well-being see Railton 1986 and 2002, Sumner 1996, and Rosati 1996.
[2] For objectivism about well-being see Arneson 1999, and Parfit 2011. Brink 2008, Fletcher 2013, and Rice 2013 have tried to accommodate Resonance within an objectivist framework. For hybrid views see Adams 2002, Darwall 2002, and Kagan 2009.
[3] Here I assume Guy Fletcher's distinction between subjectivism and objectivism. He argues that the key to the distinction between subjectivism and objectivism is that subjectivism accepts Attitude-dependence: "G is non-instrumentally good for S only if S desires G" while objectivism rejects it (Fletcher 2016, 50).
[4] See for example, Rosati 1996 (especially 298-299).
[5] I am going to use "prudential good" and "welfare good" to refer to specific instances of well-being goods.

In section 1, I do some work to clarify and motivate a general intuition for the elusive phenomenon of resonance. I suggest that there is an insightful connection between resonance and the deep self. This connection gives us a clearer understanding of resonance and reasons to regard a cognitive aspect as central to resonance.

In section 2, I argue for Belief-Resonance and that resonance is not only motivational, but that it can be cognitive too. I present cases where, intuitively, something resonates with an individual because she believes that it is good for her. In one family of cases, motivation is absent. The individual believes that something is good for her, so it resonates with her. In the other family of cases, motivational and cognitive elements clash, and yet cognitive resonance contributes to overall resonance.[6]

In section 3, I argue that cognitive resonance plays a crucial role in a defense of objectivism. I argue that objectivism can meet the Resonance Constraint as well as subjectivist views that appeal to idealization. The core idea is that idealized individuals would have true beliefs about their well-being. What is good for a person would then resonate with her. In section 4, I address some objections to my arguments.

1. Resonance and the Deep Self

Taken the notion of resonance literally, the sound of a bell resonates in the walls of a cathedral. However, the notion of resonance is usually metaphorical. A

[6] Dorsey also calls attention to cognitive resonance (Dorsey 2012). I say more about the differences between Dorsey's view and mine in section 4.

story or an idea, for example, resonates with us, even though there is no sound involved. A key question is how to cash out this metaphorical notion in a non-metaphorical way. What is it for our well-being to resonate with us?

Resonance is a relation between an individual and her well-being. More specifically, it is a relation between an individual's mental states and her well-being. Surely not all mental states lead to resonance. Intense back pain does not resonate with me at all.[7] We want to know what the relevant mental states are. In the well-being literature, it is usually assumed that the relevant mental states are motivational. A central claim in this chapter is that the relevant attitude for resonance can be cognitive too.

In the moral responsibility and free will literature, some philosophers argue that a person's actions are attributable to her - they are truly hers - only when they originate in her deep self.[8] Moreover, she can be morally responsible for her actions only when they are attributable to her. Some argue that the deep self consists in motivational elements such as desires (Frankfurt 1988, 11-25), others, that it consists in cognitive elements. Gary Watson identifies the deep self with a person's evaluative stance. We might have many desires that ultimately move us to act, but only judgments have the authority to endorse or reject actions and motivation (Watson 2004, 29). David Shoemaker argues that both cognitive and motivational elements constitute the deep self (Shoemaker 2015).

[7] Resonance is probably more general such that things other than well-being resonate with us, but I will focus on well-being set those aside.
[8] Susan Wolf seems to coin the term deep self. She uses it to describe views like Gary Watson's and Harry Frankfurt's (Wolf 1987).

The connections between the literature on the deep self, and the well-being literature on resonance are intriguing. Further exploration is a task for further work. But I take on board the plausible claim that some mental states better express who a person is. In a sense, they speak for her. Others might merely happen to her. I do not need to embrace other aspects of the deep self literature, for example the claim that one is morally responsible only for what can be attributed to one's deep self.

I do not think that everything that resonates with a person constitutes her deep self and everything that constitutes the deep self resonates with her. Consider what we might call "matters of mere taste." Many of our preferences might not constitute our deep self, yet they seem to be part of who we are, and they seem to resonate too. My preferences for chocolate ice cream over vanilla, beach over forest vacation, coffee over tea might not be essential to who I am. I would be the same person even if I preferred tea over coffee. However, what I prefer resonates with me and it also shapes who I am, even if not at the deep self level. There is much to discuss and I could be persuaded that matters of mere taste also constitute the deep self. But matters of mere taste give us a reason not to equate what resonates with a person and what constitutes the deep self. For now I appeal to considerations about the deep self only to illuminate and motivate the notion of resonance.

It is telling that in the deep self literature, it is controversial whether motivation, beliefs or both constitute the deep self. The view that cognitive elements constitute the deep self is a well-established theory. Some reject Watson's cognitive view, but it is discussed in depth. To defend his view that both motivational and cognitive elements constitute the deep self, Shoemaker argues for two main claims:

that beliefs, independently from desires, express the deep self, and that desires, independently from beliefs, express the deep self. Shoemaker sees the latter as the weaker claim. Motivation that operates independently or even against our judgments does not seem to be truly ours. "Worthless desires" and "whims" might be paradigmatic examples. Acting on them seems to make us "wantons" rather than autonomous individuals (Shoemaker 2015, 152). It is surprising that in the well-being literature cognitive elements are almost never mentioned as central to resonance.

The connection between the deep self and resonance is a step toward a better understanding of the nature of resonance in general and motivational and cognitive resonance specifically. But more needs to be said about how resonance can be cognitive. I take on that task in the following section.

2. A Defense of Belief-Resonance

In the well-being literature, discussions about resonance have focused on the Resonance Constraint (the claim that resonance is necessary for well-being). The predominant assumption is that resonance must be motivational. However, even classic formulations of the Resonance Constraint seem to appeal to intuitions that are not necessarily tied to motivation. The classic formulation of the resonance constraint appeals to notions such as "compellingness," "attractiveness," "engagement," "suitability," and "fitness:"

> something can be made or suited to an individual, the thought goes, only if a concern for that thing lies within her motivational capacity…In this way, there must be a 'fit' between an individual and her good (Rosati 1996, 298-299).

> [W]hat is intrinsically valuable for a person must have a connection with what he would find in some degree compelling or attractive, at least if he were rational and aware (Railton 2002, 47).
>
> It would be an intolerably alienated conception of someone's good to imagine that it might fail in any such way to engage him (Railton 2002, 47).

It has been assumed that these features can only involve motivation. But they are compatible with both a motivational and a cognitive interpretation. The object of my desire is compelling and attractive to me because I want it. This is a motivational connection to well-being, but there are cognitive connections too. I engage with something when I want it, but also when I believe that it is good for me.

In the quote above, Connie Rosati assumes that suitability and motivation amount to the same thing. However, there are two separate claims in that passage, one about suitability, one about motivation.[9] The suitability claim is that something good for a person must suit her. The motivational claim is that something good for a person must be connected to her motivational capacity. The motivational claim does not follow from the suitability claim.[10] Something might suit an individual cognitively. Something suits me when I believe it is good for me because it connects

[9] Dorsey makes a similar point. He argues that the Resonance Constraint does not have to be understood in terms of motivation and that people like Rosati have understood the constraint in terms of pro-attitudes. He points out that beliefs can be pro-attitudes too, since believing that something is good for you is being in favor of it (Dorsey 2012, 434).

[10] Dorsey argues that the resonance constraint does not support *motivational* subjectivism over non-motivational versions of subjectivism (Dorsey 2012, 432-433). Judgment subjectivism is the view that well-being depends on the agent's beliefs and not on her motivation. According to motivational versions of subjectivism, well-being depends on the agent's motivation. See for example, Sobel 2009.

with who I am. It goes well with me because beliefs are central to my perspective. Motivational and cognitive resonance are both part of my point of view.

What we might call "the first-person perspective" is the way a person sees the world. It is her point of view. Well-being beliefs play a crucial role in a person's first-person perspective. This role has to do with features of beliefs in general, and with properties of well-being beliefs in particular. Beliefs in general play a crucial role in a person's perspective, so it is not surprising that we often say that ideas resonate with us. For example:

> **Convictions:** Richard used to believe that climate change was a hoax designed to control people's behavior. He went to a climate change conference to tell the scientists how wrong they were. However, once he got the evidence, he changed his mind. He now believes that climate change is real and the result of human actions.

Suppose that I want to get to know Richard. Even a detailed motivational profile would miss something essential about him, namely his beliefs. To get a full picture of who he is, I must understand both his motivation and his beliefs. Richard's beliefs speak for him. They are an expression of who he is, of his identify, just as much as his emotions and desires.

Beliefs about one's own well-being are even more central to one's first-person perspective. Here's some information about my well-being: I love crime novels and long walks. You now believe that both activities are good for me. Upon reflection, you realize that you enjoy crime novels and long walks, so these activities are good for you too. They resonate with you. It would be odd if you were indifferent to them

given your recent discovery. Beliefs about what is good for us are different from other beliefs, such as the belief that two plus two equals four. They are even different from beliefs about other people's well-being. A person's well-being is about something vital to that very person. Her well-being is what is good *for* her. Even when it involves people other than herself (for example, her kids or romantic partner), it has to be about her. She has a stake in all this. Even though the object of non-well-being beliefs resonates with us, one's own well-being resonates in a special way.

One might object that we believe that some things are good for us, yet they do not seem to resonate with us. Take my random belief that the paleo diet is good for me. To address this worry, notice that we can rank well-being beliefs according to their credence. Suppose that I believe that the paleo diet is good for me, but I know I have little evidence for it. I would drop the belief rather quickly if pressed for any evidence. In contrast, I am convinced that friendship is good for me, so it resonates with me cognitively more than keeping the paleo diet. I have different degrees of credence in these beliefs. As long as I do believe that the paleo diet is good for me, it resonates with me to some degree. Its low credence explains why it looks as if there was no resonance at all.

There is a similar ranking of desires. I want to try the novel paleo diet and I want to have friends. Both things resonate with me motivationally, but to a different degree. It is no big deal if I do not get to try the diet. It would be devastating if I were to lose all my friends. Desires are often ranked according to strength.[11] My desire to

[11] For an example of this position, see Schroeder 2017 (section 2.3).

have friends is stronger than my desire to try the paleo diet. However, it seems that the diet motivationally resonates with me, even if to a very low degree. Both cognitive and motivational resonance come in degrees.[12]

Two families of cases show that cognitive resonance substantially contributes to overall resonance. In the first, well-being beliefs make a difference in resonance even in the absence of motivation. In the second, when there are conflicts between motivational and cognitive elements, cognitive resonance plays a key role in explaining why something resonates with a person.

Cognitive Resonance without Motivation

Laura is fully alienated from what is good for her:

> **Depression-No-Belief:** Laura is depressed. She struggles to do even simple tasks such as getting out of bed. Years ago, she tried several treatments to no avail. She does not know that new treatments would be successful, so she believes that treatments for depression are not good for her.

Laura is motivationally alienated, since she does not want to get therapy and she is not even motivated to do her daily activities. She is also cognitively alienated

[12] In a discussion about how a belief system can become coherent, Dorsey argues that "stronger beliefs" should be given priority as well as those that are supported by other evaluative beliefs. He also points out that strength is measured in terms of credence and centrality (how one belief influences the whole of belief system) (Dorsey 2012, 416-417).

because she believes that no treatment could help her. What is good for her does not resonate with her at all. Compare Laura with Sarah:

> **Depression-Belief:** Sarah is like Laura, except that Sarah believes that she can get help. Sarah believes that going out with friends is good for her, but cancels every plan with them. She believes that getting professional help is good for her, but cannot gather enough energy to call the therapist.

Like Laura, in Depression-No-Belief, Sarah is motivationally alienated from seeking treatment. She is not motivated to do what is good for her. However, she is not completely alienated from it because she believes that therapy is good for her. Therapy resonates with her cognitively. Let's stipulate that both Sarah and Laura lack motivation completely. The key difference between them is that Sarah cares about seeking treatment and is not indifferent to it. The presence of cognitive resonance rules out complete alienation. What is good for Sarah cognitively resonates with her even in the absence of motivation. Beliefs make a crucial difference between the two cases. There is no resonance in one, but there is resonance in the other. Dale Dorsey makes a similar point with the following case:

> **Small Town:** Stan lives in Big City. He is motivationally worn out, so he does not have a desire to move to Small Town. However, he believes with a high degree of certainty that moving to Small Town is good for him. Some peace and quiet might also help with his motivation.

Dorsey points out that it is implausible that Stan is alienated from moving to Small Town, even though he is motivationally worn out. (Dorsey 2012, 433-434). Stan has a view about what is good for him, so moving to Small Town resonates with him. It suits him. In Depression-Belief and Small Town, motivation is absent so the only contribution to resonance is cognitive.

One might worry that Depression-Belief and Small Town are still compatible with the presence of second-order motivation. Perhaps Sarah wants to want to get therapy and Stan wants to want to move to Small Town, even if they do not have the respective first-order desires due to depression and burnout. Consider the following case:

> **Depression-Belief-Motivation-Against:** Sarah beliefs that therapy is good for her and she is not motivated to get therapy. Moreover, Sarah has strong feelings against therapy. She is afraid of talking about her private life with others, even if they are mental health professionals. Sarah, due to her depression, feels that she does not deserve anything good. She believes that these feelings are irrational, but cannot get rid of them.

In this case, it is plausible that Sarah does not have a second-order desire to get therapy given her strong feelings against it and her feelings about what she deserves. It is also plausible that therapy still resonates with her cognitively because she believes that it is good for her and because she believes that her feelings are irrational. This is even clearer if we compare Sarah in Depression-Belief-Motivation-

Against with a counterpart who is in that very situation but does not believe that therapy is good for her and believes that her feelings are rational. For the latter individual therapy does not resonate with her at all.

Cognitive and Motivational Clashes

What resonates motivationally usually resonates cognitively too, but in some cases, there are conflicts between motivational and cognitive elements. Understanding these clashes is important in general since they are a common feature of our lives. However, my main goal in this subsection is narrower. It is to show the significance of cognitive resonance in cases where it contributes to overall resonance when it conflicts with motivational elements.

Since my focus is cognitive resonance, I will not map out all possible conflicts. I set aside those where motivational resonance determines overall resonance and cases where there might be no resolution, perhaps because what kind of resonance prevails is indeterminate.

Before the cases, it might be helpful to say more about the notion of "overall resonance." When cognitive and motivational elements point in different directions, we might want to know if something resonates with the person all things considered. This might be important for a practical calculation. One might want to know what to do. We might not always want to determine overall resonance, however. In some cases, it might not be practical to do so. Perhaps the calculation would take too much time or energy best spent in a more important project. I will not provide a formula to calculate overall resonance either. I am even open to the possibility that what resonates with a person is indeterminate in some cases. My

claim here is that cognitive and motivational resonance can be compared and once we compare them, we can determine what resonates with the individual all things considered. In the following cases, there is a conflict between motivational and cognitive resonance, and the latter contributes substantially to overall resonance.

> **Bubbles:** Reginald "Bubbles" Cousins is addicted to heroin. He is a homeless man in Baltimore. He wants heroin and it is an important part of his life. He does not want to be addicted to it. He believes that addiction has been devastating for him and his family. He is convinced that heroin is bad for him and he has the second-order desire not to want heroin.[13]

There is a deep tension in Bubbles' perspective. He does want heroin. His desire is intense and overwhelming. It determines most of his actions. In a way, heroin resonates with him motivationally, yet Bubbles is overall alienated from it. His second-order desire not to have it and his belief that heroin is bad for him account for this alienation. They are not experienced as intensely as his desire for it. To borrow Hume's vocabulary, the second-order desire and the belief are experienced as "calmer passions" (Hume 1975, III.IV). These calmer passions explain why Bubbles is overall alienated from heroin, even though it motivationally resonates with him. Even though Bubbles is alienated from heroin, he cannot stop using. Addiction is often seen as a paradigmatic case of weakness of the will.[14]

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[13] I am stipulating the features of the case, rather than giving a description of the general phenomenon of addiction. As a consequence, many cases of addiction might be substantially different from Bubbles'. We meet Bubbles in Season 1 of *The Wire* (Simon 2002).

[14] See Stroud and Svirsky 2019 (especially section 3.4.2) for an overview of the contemporary debate about whether addiction should be understood as weakness of the will.

In short, there is motivational resonance because Bubbles wants heroin and his life spins around it. There is also motivational alienation because he has the second-order desire not to want heroin. Finally, there is cognitive alienation because he believes that heroin is bad for him. The conflict is between motivational resonance on one hand, and motivational and cognitive alienation on the other. Despite the strength of motivational resonance, intuitively his beliefs speak for him rather than his stronger motivation. Cognitive resonance contributes to overall resonance.

Bubbles believes with great confidence that heroin is bad for him. In contrast, in the following case, Alice's belief is held with a low degree of confidence and there is powerful motivational alienation, yet cognitive resonance determines overall resonance:

> **Imposter syndrome:** Alice, a journalist, has been assigned to interview a tough political figure. She believes that she can get the job done, but has fallen prey to impostor syndrome. She realizes that the negative feelings are irrational, but she has trouble feeling that she can get the job done. Her belief that she is a competent journalist is not strong, but she takes steps to strengthen the belief and control the negative feelings. She gathers evidence about her skills from reliable sources and learns techniques to fend off negativity.

Motivational alienation is strong. However, Alice's belief is an expression of her deep self. She knows that reliable testimony will provide further evidence for her belief. Her negative feelings are so alien to her that she seeks to control them. In this case, there is tension between motivation and beliefs. She does not feel like a

competent journalist, but she believes that she is. Motivational alienation is powerful, but cognitive resonance is even more so. In this case, cognitive resonance determines overall resonance.

Bubbles' strong desire for heroin provides motivational resonance. His belief that heroin is not good for him and his second-order desire not to want it are expressions of his deep self. Alice's belief that she is a competent journalist speaks for her despite the negative feelings. Well-being beliefs in these cases contribute to overall resonance, despite the presence of motivational alienation.

Now that we have a clearer picture of what resonance is and how beliefs are a source of resonance, we can move on to my objectivist strategy based on cognitive resonance to respond to alienation worries about objectivist views.

3. Cognitive Resonance Strategy: An Objectivist Move

Objectivism has been assumed to have an alienation problem. It seems unable to meet the Resonance Constraint:

> **Resonance Constraint:** If something is good for a person, it must resonate with her.

The objection is that objectivism implies that something can be good for a person, even if it does not resonate with her. In this section I argue that objectivism can meet the Resonance Constraint as well as a powerful family of subjectivist views can. The usual starting point in the debate between subjectivists and objectivists is that objectivists are unable to respond to alienation objections. The cognitive resonance strategy appeals to a resource previously used only by subjectivists. That makes it

especially powerful as an objectivist strategy. It levels the playing field between objectivism and all subjectivist views that appeal to idealization.[15] Consider a version of Bernard Williams' famous gin case (1981, 102):

> **Gin:** Jimmy has ordered a gin and tonic in his favorite bar. The bartender gives him a glass with a liquid that looks like gin and tonic. Unbeknownst to Jimmy it is gasoline. Jimmy wants to drink the liquid in the cup.[16]

Gin is a test for desire satisfaction views. Roughly, the central idea is that what is good for an individual is the satisfaction of her desires. Jimmy wants to drink the liquid in the cup, but intuitively it is bad for him. Many desire-satisfactionists would argue that Jimmy's current imperfect desire does not determine his well-being because it is based on false information. A fully informed Jimmy would not want to drink the liquid in the cup. This idealization process does not give him the desire not to drink the liquid directly, but only information about it.

In Railton's classical formulation of the resonance constraint, he appeals to idealization, writing that "what is intrinsically valuable for a person must have a connection with what he *would* find in some degree compelling or attractive, *at least if he were rational and aware*." (Railton 2002, 47; italics are mine).[17]

[15] For instance, see Rosati 1996, Sobel 2001 and 2009, Railton 2002, and Dorsey 2012.
[16] Williams discusses this case in the context of reasons for action, not well-being specifically, but the issues are similar enough that analogous cases also put pressure on desire-satisfaction views about well-being.
[17] For other formulations, see Rosati 1996, Dorsey 2012, Fletcher 2013 and Heathwood 2017.

The intuition in favor of idealized rather than actual attitudes as relevant to well-being is that actual agents are often poorly informed and reason imperfectly. Actual agents might not be *objectionably* alienated from what is good for them. If this is right, alienation *full stop* is not normatively significant in itself and does not have to be accommodated by any plausible view about well-being. Jimmy, in Gin and Tonic, is not *objectionably* alienated from his well-being. We should instead be concerned about alienation *under certain conditions*, for instance, alienation when the person reasons well and is well informed. The focus on idealized attitudes has been forcefully questioned.[18] Fully addressing this discussion would take me too far afield and the cognitive resonance strategy is not a defense of idealization as such, but a dialectical move to explore the resources of objectivist views to meet the Resonance Constraint.

The idea at the core of the cognitive resonance strategy is that idealized individuals would have true beliefs about their well-being. If that's correct, objectivism can meet the Resonance Constraint because what is good for an individual would resonate with her cognitively. The following case illustrates the core idea of the strategy:

> **Frustrated Mathematician:** Diana hates her math homework and thinks that studying math is bad for her. She thinks that she is terrible at it. Her teachers and parents behave as if girls are naturally bad at math. She hates the frustration, but enjoys solving math problems. She

[18] See Enoch 2005, Heathwood 2005 and Lin 2018.

does not hate math itself, but only her current imperfect experience of it. Unbeknownst to her, she also is quite talented at math.

Assume that studying math is objectively good for Diana. Consider a possible world where she is idealized (reasons well and is fully informed). In that world, she would believe that studying math is good for her.

Idealized individuals would come to have all and only true beliefs about what is good for them. If objectivism is true, there are objective truths about well-being. Idealization would give individuals access to these truths. If the objective list theory is true, idealized agents would come to believe that the items in the list are good for them and that instances of those goods are good for them too. If perfectionism is true, idealized agents would come to believe that, for example, developing their talents is good for them. We are not questioning the metaphysics of objectivism here, but focusing on whether they can account for resonance with the metaphysics that they have.

A common way to understand idealization is that individuals have full relevant information and reason well. These individuals are not drunk or otherwise impaired. The key for my strategy is that individuals come to have true beliefs by any means necessary. Idealization would provide those means.

There might be some questions about how the idealization process would do that. How exactly the process would go will depend on the epistemology of well-being and the process of belief formation. It is crucial to emphasize that my strategy is not tied to any particular epistemology of well-being. Subjectivists who employ idealization do not tell us how exactly idealized individuals come to form their

desires. They do not give us a model for desire formation. They only tell us that idealized agents get full information and reason well. It might be helpful, however, to take a closer look at how the idealization process would go if we have different assumptions about the epistemology of well-being.

First, suppose that we come to know well-being truths a priori. In such a case, idealization might idealize the capacities engaged in the a priori knowledge of well-being truths. Perhaps when the idealized agent reasons about well-being, she has the intuition that the items in the list are good for her or that developing her talents is good for her, for example.

Second, suppose that we come to know well-being truths a posteriori. In that case an idealized individual would have full relevant information and would reason well. She would get information about what makes something good for a person. This would be empirical information about what she likes and dislikes, what she wants, about her talents, abilities, needs, and psychological profile in general.

Idealized Diana has full information about her preferences, desires, talents, what makes her happy and what makes her experience pleasurable or painful. She knows she is talented, how much she enjoys math and why her teachers and parents are not more encouraging. Idealization gives the person complete evidence to support true beliefs.

Idealized individuals come to have true beliefs about their own well-being because they process the relevant information correctly. They might reason according to bridge principles like the following: if certain facts about me and the rest of the world obtain, then studying math is good for me. Bridge principles would

not be added to the individual's mind in the idealization process. Instead, absent information or reasoning errors, our mind would already work according to bridge principles.

Kieran Setiya's moral epistemology is based on the claim that ethical beliefs rest on evidence and that such evidence is not ethical itself. Setiya argues that ethical truths supervene on empirical facts. The evidence amounts to descriptive facts about the world. The ethical truth that setting a cat on fire is wrong supervenes on empirical facts about the cat's pain. The evidence for my belief is not ethical itself, but empirical, a fact about pain (Setiya 2012, 40-46).

Suppose that empirical facts ground well-being too. Suppose that studying math is good for Diana and that perfectionism is true. What makes it good for her is that it develops her talents. The belief that studying math is good for Diana is justified by empirical evidence. Idealized individuals come to know those facts. Since they have full information and reason well, they will come to have true beliefs about their well-being. For instance, consider the bridge principle "if certain facts about me and the rest of the world obtain, then studying math is good for me." An idealized person gets information about what makes math good. She knows the facts in the antecedent. Those facts ground the goodness of studying math. Since the idealized individual reasons well, she concludes that studying math is good for her.

I have argued that we can idealize in whatever way is conducive to forming true beliefs. However, one might worry that some views might require for well-being knowledge something that cannot be given to the individual in the idealization process. For example, suppose that a theory requires that knowledge of

certain aspects of well-being requires a virtuous motivational structured acquired overtime. These aspects might not resonate for an idealized individual.

If this view requires practical wisdom, that can be given through idealization. Perhaps the skills of how to deal with very specific circumstances can only be lived, but that might be true of all theories. Such a view might benefit from relaxing knowledge requirements to be able to apply the strategy that I suggest.

It is also worth noticing that views such as objective list theories, perfectionism and subjectivism are metaphysical views about the nature of well-being. In principle then they are compatible with different theories of knowledge about well-being. So I am hesitant to link objective theories too closely to an epistemic view.

It is crucial to emphasize that idealization does not play the same role in my strategy and for subjectivist views. In my strategy, I appeal to idealization to address resonance worries. Subjectivist views like Railton's appeal to idealization to determine well-being facts. For objectivists, there are objective facts that are not determined by attitudes. What idealization does is to give idealized agents access to those facts via their beliefs.

Objectivists who appeal to my strategy explain resonance failure by appealing to epistemic issues. Perhaps the actual agent does not have enough information about the case or reasons poorly about the evidence that she does have. In contrast, for subjectivists who appeal to idealization, the satisfaction of the desires of an idealized agent constitutes well-being. For subjectivists, this move to idealization is supposed to give us the right result in difficult cases, avoiding undesirable results

(Railton 1986, 12-13). It also supposed to guarantee that we get at the desires, the satisfaction of which, actually increase our well-being. Perhaps the actual agent wants to eat sushi only because he got his facts about sushi all wrong, for example (Sobel 2009).

Objectivists do not need to worry about these issues. According to objectivism, our attitudes do not determine well-being facts. Objectivists do not face some of the most pressing objections against subjectivists who appeal to idealization.

David Enoch points out that a natural answer to the question of why we should idealize instead of settling for the agent's actual desires is that the relevant ideal conditions are needed to reliably track the relevant facts of the matter (Enoch 2005, 761-762). Subjectivists want to give normative priority to our attitudes, they determine well-being. If this is so, subjectivists cannot consistently employ the natural rationale for idealization (Enoch 2005, 765).

Objectivists have no such consistency problem to employ the natural rationale, since they do not give normative priority to our attitudes. In my strategy, beliefs do not determine well-being facts and idealization is indeed used to reliably track well-being facts. Idealization only helps us tie resonance to objective facts. This project is consistent with the natural rationale for idealization. We fail to have resonance for objective facts because our ways of tracking them are defective.

4. Objections and Replies: On Motivation, Judgment Subjectivism and Nihilism

In this section, I address three potential objections to my view. The first two are about the connection between motivation and cognitive resonance. The third is about whether objections to Dale Dorsey's judgment subjectivism target my view too, since they are both belief-based.

The first potential objection is that motivation might be present in all cases where a prudential good resonates with an individual. Suppose, for instance, that Judgment Internalism about well-being is true. Judgment internalism has been formulated as a view about moral rightness (Smith 1994, 61), such that believing that something is morally right requires being motivated by it. To my knowledge nobody has defended a well-being version of Judgment Internalism, but I formulate it here to explore the potential consequences for my view:

> **Judgment Internalism about Well-being:**[19] if an agent believes that something is good for her, then either she is motivated by it or she is practically irrational.

According to Judgment Internalism, for a rational person to believe that something is good for her, she must be motivated by it. As a consequence, whenever a person believes that something is good for her, she is also motivated by it (if she is practically rational). This implies that whenever a prudential good resonates cognitively with a person, it resonates both cognitively and motivationally" (18). One might think that the presence of motivation is a serious problem for my claim

[19] From now on "Judgment Internalism" or "JI" for brevity.

that cognitive resonance contributes to overall resonance. Cognitive resonance might not be important at all if motivation is always present.

Judgment Internalism about moral rightness is quite controversial.[20] I prefer to stay neutral about the prudential counterpart in this chapter. However, even if it is true, cognitive resonance still contributes to overall resonance and even determines it sometimes.

Judgment Internalism only says that for there to be a judgment about well-being there should be motivation too. It does not say how much motivation there must be. It does not say, for instance, that the amount of motivation should be proportional to the degree of certainty of the belief. There is much to say about a plausible connection between degrees of motivation and degrees of belief. But that goes beyond the truth of Judgment Internalism. It might be true that whenever a person believes that something is good for her, she is motivated, but that leaves space for different combinations of degrees of belief and degrees of motivation. Take, for instance a variation of the depression cases:

> **Depression-Belief-Some-Motivation:** Clara believes that therapy is good for her and she is only somewhat motivated to go to therapy.

Clara is practically rational because she believes that therapy is good for her and is motivated to get it. However, we still need to consider her beliefs to get a full and accurate picture of overall resonance for Clara. Since therapy resonates with Clara both motivationally and cognitively, it resonates overall. Cognitive resonance

[20] For an overview of the debate see Rosati 2016, section 3, especially 3.2.

explains where the strength of the overall resonance comes from. Cognitive resonance is strong and motivational resonance is weak. If we focus on motivational resonance only, we get an incomplete picture of what resonates for Clara. If motivation were the sole focus, it would seem that therapy resonates with her because it resonates with her motivationally a little. That would be wrong.

In Clara's case, she believes that therapy is good for her and is motivated to get it. However, in many daily life cases where the individual is not ideal, motivation and beliefs come apart. The clause "or she is practically irrational" in JI introduces idealization. Judgment Internalism does not say that in all circumstances when there is a prudential belief, there is motivation. Belief and motivation go together only when things go well, when the agent is practically rational. There is a great deal of discussion about what practical rationality is, but here I only assume that it involves these two features: an individual is practically rational when she is thinking clearly, and her motivational capacities are not impaired.[21]

According to Judgment Internalism, in the case Depression-No-Belief, and Small Town, individuals make judgments about well-being, but are not motivated because they are practically irrational. Their lack of motivation is evidence of that.[22] These leaves a substantive number of cases where cognitive resonance and motivation come apart. In all these cases, cognitive resonance is crucial because it provides the only source of resonance for the non-idealized individual. In

[21] For an overview of the discussion, see Wallace 2020 (especially section 3).
[22] One might think that my defense of cognitive resonance requires that JI is false, since I give cases where there is cognitive resonance, but no motivation (Depression-No Belief, for instance). However, cases like Depression-No-Belief are compatible with JI, since the traditional interpretation includes a clause about practical rationality. In a case like Depression-no Belief and Small town, agents are practically irrational because there are issues with their motivational capacities.

Depression-No-Belief, Laura's well-being resonates with her because she believes that it is good for her. As I argued in section 2, if we focus only on Laura's motivation, we have to falsely conclude that her well-being does not resonate with her at all.

The second potential objection is about the role of motivational resonance in my view, given the emphasis on cognitive resonance. One might worry that a life that has cognitive resonance, but no motivational resonance would be lacking. I agree that something would be missing. My focus is on resonance as related to individual prudential goods at a time. The question about whether an entire life is good for the person who has lived it is entirely different and demands a different kind of answer. A life without motivational resonance would not be the best for an individual, even if it resonates cognitively. However, a life without any cognitive resonance would not be perfectly good either, even if it has plenty of motivational resonance. In this life, a person might be moved to act in a way that she does not believe is good for her or that she believes to be bad for her.

The third worry is that my view about cognitive resonance shares some pressing problems with Dorsey's judgment-based view. His judgment subjectivism combines a subjectivist view about well-being with what he calls a "judgment-based theory of value." Roughly, a person values what she believes is good for her if her beliefs are rendered coherent (Dorsey 2012, 415-417). It is a subjectivist view because what is good for the person is determined by her beliefs. Well-being does not consist in perspective-independent facts.[23]

[23] See also Dorsey 2021, especially chapter 5 "The Valuing Attitude."

One might find objectionable that beliefs can play the formidable role that Dorsey gives them. It might be plausible that something becomes good for a person because she wants it, but it seems implausible that something is good for her because she believes it is. Belief-Resonance is the claim that if someone believes that something is good for her, it resonates with her. It does not imply that it is in fact good for that individual.

My view is about the phenomenon of resonance. Dorsey's is about what suffices for well-being. The only potential objections that Dorsey and I share are about cognitive resonance. Objections to judgment subjectivism as a view of well-being are Dorsey's alone. Unlike Dorsey, I do not claim that an individual's belief that something is good for her makes it the case that it is good for her.

5. Conclusion

In this chapter I suggested that a connection between resonance and the deep self is helpful to understand the nature of resonance. Expressions of an individual's deep self resonate with her. I also argued for Belief-Resonance, the claim that if a person believes that something is good for her, it resonates with her. Closer attention to cognitive resonance is a new development in the literature because the main focus has been motivation.

It is usually thought that subjectivism does not have alienation problems while objectivism does. Having cognitive resonance on the table allowed me to formulate and argue for a novel objectivist strategy for objectivists to respond to alienation concerns. I argued that idealized individuals would believe that what is good for them is good for them. Their well-being resonates with them. If I am right,

objectivism is as well equipped to deal with alienation problems as prominent subjectivist views that appeal to idealization.

Chapter 2

Enjoying Things Right: Fittingness and Well-Being

The claim that the punishment must fit the crime is normative. It is about what punishment is appropriate for what crime. The punishment should not be too severe if the crime is minor, and it should be severe if the crime is terrible. Something goes wrong when a punishment does not fit the crime. Something similar happens with our attitudes and their objects. Sometimes those attitudes fit their object. When I get good news about a dear friend, that makes me happy. Sometimes our attitudes do not fit their object. A callous person might see somebody suffering and rejoice in their misfortune.

The idea that goodness (of some kind) calls for some attitudes has played a crucial role in prominent theories about morality, politics and well-being. P. F. Strawson famously argued that reactive attitudes (guilt, resentment and indignation) have appropriateness conditions. It is appropriate to feel guilty when one does something morally wrong, for example (Strawson 1962). Thomas Hurka argues that it is virtuous to love the good and to hate the evil (Hurka 2001, 10). Elizabeth Anderson, following Franz Brentano, claims that "something is good when it is correct to love it, and bad when it is correct to hate it." She adds that correctness is a rationality concept tied to self-understanding and that there are many ways to love or hate (Anderson 1993, 5).

According to Michael Walzer, different political goods have different evaluative standards. In a democratic society, the kind of identity ingrained in citizenship cannot be sold or bought, for example (Walzer 1983, 106). Valerie Tiberius, writing about well-being, argues that "Different values call for different emotional, motivational, and cognitive dispositions" (Tiberius 2018, 11). In this chapter I argue for Fit, a principle that is a prudential version of the claim that attitudes must fit their objects:

> **Fit:** if an individual fully benefits from something, her attitudes towards it must be fitting to that object.

When a person does not react to something with fitting attitudes, she cannot fully benefit from it, even if she still benefits to some extent. I argue that Fit explains a phenomenon instantiated in the following two cases:

> **Achievements:** Cocoa spends a great deal of time working on her drawing skills. After much practice, she can draw beautiful landscapes. She does not feel joy and she is not proud of herself for her achievements. Instead, she reacts to her achievements with chocolate ice cream pleasure.

> **Deep Connection:** Cocoa is in a romantic relationship. Cocoa and her partner have been through a lot together. They share a moment of deep connection when they look into each other's eyes. Cocoa does not react to this moment with appreciation of her partner or gratitude to have

somebody like that in her life. Instead, she reacts with chocolate ice cream pleasure.

Let's stipulate that chocolate ice cream pleasure is the combination of the sensations we get when eating chocolate ice cream and the pleasant reaction to the sensations (substitute with favorite flavor if different from chocolate). In Cocoa's bizarre situation, when achieving something or when in a moment of deep connection, her taste buds are activated, and she finds those sensations pleasant.

Each of these cases instantiates the prudential phenomenon that concerns us in this chapter. I argue that Cocoa is not as well off as she could be because her reactions are not fitting. In order to fully benefit, we must have appropriate reactions. Recall the Resonance Constraint:

Resonance Constraint: If something is good for an individual, it resonates with her.

Fit falls within the tradition of the resonance constraint because it draws a connection between an individual's well-being and her attitudes. The resonance constraint states a necessary condition on something to be good for a person at all. I will argue that Fit involves a prudential phenomenon. As a consequence, it is a desideratum of an adequate theory of well-being that it is compatible with Fit. Even thought Fit states a necessary condition for full benefit only, it has powerful and surprising consequences for first-order theories of well-being. I argue that two versions of the objective list theory, hedonism, desire views and hybrid views are

not compatible with Fit as they are. Suitable modifications change the views so much that only views with hybrid elements will be compatible with Fit.

I lay out my arguments in two parts. In part one (sections 1 and 2), I argue for Fit and why what goes wrong for Cocoa is indeed a prudential phenomenon. I sketch three tests that provide evidence for the latter claim. In part two (sections 3-7), I examine the resources to accommodate Fit of five families of first-order theories of well-being: the bare objective list theory, the desire theory, hedonism, the essential attitudes objective list theory and a hybrid theory. First, I argue that theories that are compatible with Fit are hybrid in some way. Second, I argue that a family of hybrid views that accept the general claim that well-being consists in loving the good is best suited to satisfy the Fit desideratum. I address some objections to my view in section 8.

1. Fit Principle: Why Prudential Attitudes Must Fit their Object

To get a better grasp of Fit, let's compare it with a principle that is similar, but importantly different:

> **Fit:** if an individual fully benefits from something, her attitudes towards it must be fitting to that object.
>
> **Strong Fit:** if an individual benefits at all from something, her attitudes towards it must be fitting to that object.

According to Strong Fit, the individual does not benefit from the object at all when her attitudes are not fitting, not even a little bit. But that does not follow from Fit.

Instead, Fit implies that when attitudes are not fitting, the person does not benefit fully, but there might still be some benefit.

I do not lay out all necessary conditions for full benefit. My only claim with Fit is that an individual cannot fully benefit from something without fitting attitudes towards it. There might be several fitting attitudes for a given object. I mention joy and pride as fitting reactions to one's achievements. One might wonder if both attitudes should be present for the necessary condition stated in Fit to be met and what happens when there are unfitting attitudes alongside fitting attitudes. These are complexities worth exploring, but for the purposes of this chapter, even if there is one fitting attitude, the necessary condition is met and the presence of unfitting attitudes does not imply that the necessary condition has not been met. For the case of Achievements, Fit would take the following form:

> **Fit-Achievements:** If Cocoa fully benefits from her achievements, her attitudes must be fitting to achievements.

Fitting attitudes for achievements are emotions such as joy and pride. Achievements involve setting goals and the capacity to follow through.[24] Given the effort that we invest in our achievements, it makes sense that we are proud of ourselves for accomplishing something. However, at contemplating her achievements, Cocoa reacts with chocolate ice cream pleasure, instead of joy and pride (let's stipulate that she invested only minimal effort to get that chocolate ice cream). Since she does not react to her achievements with fitting attitudes, it follows from Fit that she does not

[24] See Bradford 2015 (88-91) for a theory of what achievements are and why they are valuable.

fully benefit from her achievement. She might benefit to some degree because she experiences pleasure, but she does not fully benefit. If she felt appropriate attitudes, she would benefit more. The added benefit comes from the fact that pride and joy are fitting attitudes for achievements, while chocolate ice cream pleasure is not. For Deep Connection, Fit takes the following form:

> **Fit-Connection:** If Cocoa fully benefits from a moment of deep connection with her partner, she must have fitting attitudes towards those moments.

When one has the chance to be a part of these moments, one reacts with affection and appreciation towards one's partner, gratitude to be so lucky to participate in that moment. To fully benefit from the moment, one should react with such attitudes. Otherwise, one does not fully benefit. Cocoa reacts with chocolate ice cream pleasure to a moment of deep connection. That might be pleasant, but Cocoa would benefit more from the connection if she reacted with fitting attitudes.

Cocoa's case is farfetched, but there are familiar circumstances when we find ourselves in such moments of connection and we do not react with fitting attitudes. Perhaps we are too absorbed in ourselves to realize how precious a moment it is. Maybe we are too hurt to feel something so strong and we react with defensiveness or fear. In those cases, like Cocoa, we do not fully benefit from the moment.

In Achievements and Deep connection, Cocoa reacts with what I have called chocolate ice cream pleasure. One might wonder what that is and how different theories about the nature of pleasure would understand it. The following quick exploration of the issue cannot do justice to the complexity involved and to how

much philosophers have written about what pleasure is. Consider two families of views:

> **Phenomenological view:** pleasure is a mental state characterized by its phenomenology, that is, by what it feels like to be in that mental state.
>
> **Attitudinal view:** pleasure is an attitude, an intentional mental state that has an object. Phenomenology is not what defines pleasure.[25]

According to a phenomenological view, Cocoa experiences chocolate ice cream sensations when she eats chocolate ice cream. This might not be pleasure yet, since some people could experience the same sensations as unpleasant. The sensations cause pleasure for Cocoa. The pleasure has a distinctive feeling, a phenomenology. According to an attitudinal view, chocolate ice cream pleasure is an attitude that has as its object the chocolate ice cream sensations. For the purposes of this chapter, we can take either of these views about what chocolate ice cream pleasure is.

Before moving on, it might be helpful to clarify a couple of points about Fit. First, fitting attitudes are different from merely useful attitudes. Jeff Bezos offers me two million dollars to admire him as a moral saint. It would be most useful for me to admire him in that way (my bank account tells me so), but it might not be fitting to admire him. According to the standard of moral sainthood admiration, Jeff Bezos does not merit to be so admired.

[25] See Moore 2019, section 2.1. Moore 2019 and Bramble 2016b discuss different views about the nature of pleasure and their impact for hedonist theories.

Second, I have argued that fittingness of attitudes is a necessary condition of full prudential benefit, but not for the claim that it is sufficient. Attitudes towards something could be fitting given the information that one has and yet be directed at an object that is bad for us or that does not even exist. I find plausible that fittingness is not a sufficient condition for well-being, but I do not argue for this point here.

Finally, in this chapter, I use terms such as "attitudes," "reactions," "experiences," and "pleasure" to refer to the mental state relevant for Fit. I am torn about what the best term is. At this point in the inquiry, I am leaving open what exactly that mental state is. We can treat it as an umbrella term for a wide variety of states.

2. Why the Phenomenon is Prudential: Care, Compassion and Rewards

The following three tests provide evidence for the claim that what goes wrong for Cocoa is prudential.

Care

In his "Welfare and Rational Care," Stephen Darwall argues for a theory of well-being based on the idea that there is a strong connection between well-being and care: "A person's welfare is, I claim, the object of a desire spawned by concern for that person" (Darwall 2002, 24). For Darwall, well-being just is what we want for those that we care about. Even if one rejects his view about what constitutes well-being, a weaker claim is still plausible. Think about those you care about, perhaps your spouse, kids, parents, siblings, friends, your pets, or yourself. Think about what

you want for them. When we care about somebody, we want what is good for them for their own sake.[26] The resulting test would go as follows:

> **Care test:** when something X is prudentially good for a person A, when we care about A, we want X for A for her own sake.

Happiness passes the care test. When we care about somebody, we want them to be happy for their own sake, not just to make us happy or because we find happiness to be a fine thing. Fittingness of attitudes passes the care test too. Think about somebody that you care a great deal about. When they achieve something, would you want them to react with chocolate ice cream pleasure or with pride and joy? I take it that the answer is "pride and joy." That is evidence for the claim that fittingness of attitudes is a prudential phenomenon.

Compassion

Compassion has been tied to well-being across philosophical and religious traditions. Augustine claimed that "pity (*misericordia*) is a kind of compassion (*compassio*) in our hearts for the misery of others which compels us to help them if we can" (*De civitate Dei* IX.5). According to Christopher W. Gowans, "fundamental Buddhist virtues such as compassion and loving kindness involve a concern to promote the well-being of other people" (Gowans 2016, 71).

In these quotes, we see two main features of compassion. It is an emotional reaction to the suffering of others, and it motivates us to act, to come to the aid of

[26] Adams 2002 (91-93, 97-98) and Feldman 2004 (9-10) also accept a connection between care and well-being.

those who suffer. Tobias A. Fuchs (2018) even suggests a test based on compassion that "yields a sufficient condition for knowing when welfare is affected" (Fuchs 2018, 137). For the purposes of this chapter, we can take the following version of the test:

> **Compassion test:** When something X is prudentially bad for a person A, we feel compassion for A when she has X.

Unhappiness passes the compassion test. When somebody is unhappy, we feel compassion for them. Reacting with unfitting attitudes passes the compassion test too. Imagine that you meet Cocoa and learn about her situation. You see her drawing and working so hard to improve her skills. You learn that she does not feel pride or joy when she draws a beautiful landscape, but only chocolate ice cream pleasure. We would feel compassion for her. Imagine that there is a readily available tea that Cocoa could drink to be able to feel pride and joy for her achievements. We would also feel motivated to give it to her. We feel compassion for Cocoa because we think that she is not doing as well as she could. If we thought that everything was well for her prudentially, we would not feel compassion for her and we would not want to do anything about her situation.

Rewards and Punishment

There is a connection between rewards and well-being on one hand, and punishment and suffering, on the other. We reward people by making them better off and we punish them by making them worse off. As Ben Bradley puts it:

> One way to try to figure out whether something is an element of well-being is to think about reward and punishment. When someone has done something bad, we might try to punish someone by doing something that would negatively impact his well-being. (Bradley 2014, 229).[27]

We get two related tests:

> **Reward Test:** When something X is prudentially good for a person A, X is a potential reward for A.
>
> **Punishment Test:** When something X is prudentially bad for a person A, X is a potential punishment for A.

Think about somebody who has done something wrong. Cocoa's condition is a good candidate for a punishment. It might not be a punishment suitable for a terrible crime, but it might be for some crimes. Imagine that Cocoa has done something good for you and you want to reward her. If there is a tea that would change her attitudes so that they fit their objects, you might want to give her the tea as a reward for her good behavior. Our intuitions suggest that Cocoa is not prudentially fine in Achievements and Deep connection. There is something prudentially wrong with her situation.

These tests provide evidence for my claim that fittingness of attitudes is a prudential phenomenon. One might not be fully convinced by this evidence, but

[27] Other philosophers have also seen a connection between rewards and well-being, see for example: Crisp 2006 (638-639) and Heathwood 2010 (646).

detractors now need to explain the evidence provided by the tests. In the next sections, I go over five theories of well-being and argue that as they are, they are incompatible with Fit. I suggest that views that accommodate Fit are hybrid. I sketch the general features of the theories, but many versions of each have been defended in the literature, so I am bound to abstract from some details. I hope that this approach does not make a significant difference for present purposes.

3. Bare Objective List Theory

According to Richard Arneson's bare objective list theory (BOLT), there is a list of objective goods and it is intrinsically good for a person to have those goods in her life (Arneson 1999, 119). The items in the list are good for the person who has them independently of her attitudes towards them. Arneson claims that for something to be objectively good, it is neither necessary nor sufficient that the individual desires it, or that she enjoys it (Arneson 1999, 141-142).

Fit states a necessary condition on full benefit that involves fitting attitudes. In the absence of fitting attitudes, a person cannot fully benefit from something. BOLT cannot accept that attitudes, fitting or otherwise play such a role. For BOLT, a person fully benefits as long as an objective good is in her life.

Suppose that achievements are an objective prudential good. According to BOLT, for Cocoa to fully benefit from her artistic achievements, it is necessary and sufficient that she achieves something, that she draws well for example. She benefits equally whether she reacts with pride and joy or chocolate ice cream pleasure. Her attitudes towards those achievements are irrelevant for full benefit. BOLT is incompatible with Fit.

4. Desire Theories

According to desire theories, well-being just is the satisfaction of our desires. One might think that these theories naturally accommodate intuitions about fitting attitudes, since they are attitude-based. Surprisingly, these views are incompatible with Fit. They cannot even make sense of the phenomenon instantiated in the Cocoa cases. Consider a classic desire satisfaction view:

> The desire-fulfillment theory of well-being – also known as desire satisfaction, preferentism, or simply the desire theory – holds, in its simplest form, that what is good in itself for people and other subjects of welfare is their getting what they want, or the fulfillment of their desires, and what is bad in itself for them is their not getting what they want, or the frustration of their desires (Heathwood 2016, 135).

According to desire views, the satisfaction of a person's desires constitutes their well-being. According to Fit, full benefit requires fitting attitudes. Fittingness is a constrain on attitudes. But for desire views, the satisfaction of a person's desires is necessary and sufficient for her to fully benefit.

Cocoa wants to draw well and she wants a moment of deep connection. As long as her desires are satisfied, Cocoa fully benefits, according to desire views. Whether her reactions fit their objects is irrelevant for how much she benefits. Strength of desire might make a difference, but not fittingness. For desire views, Cocoa would benefit more from her improved drawing skills if her desire for them

had been stronger, but the fittingness of her reactions to her achievements is irrelevant.

According to Fit, only if a person reacts appropriately, she can fully benefit. When her reactions are not fitting, she might still benefit, but not fully. Fit sets constraints on the power of desires to determine well-being. Plausibly, what sets purely subjectivist views aside is the role they give to attitudes. David Sobel and Steven Wall characterize a normative role that attitudes can take. When attitudes take this role, they "have free play to create value for the agent wherever they go, even if they settle on objectively worthless or disvaluable objects" (Sobel and Wall 2021, 2832).

According to Sobel and Wall, "Fully subjectivist views of well-being place no jurisdictional limits on the sovereign power of these attitudes" (Sobel and Wall 2021, 2833). To borrow their terminology, Fit places jurisdictional limits on the power of desires. If Fit is right, desires are not sovereign, they get to contribute more or less to well-being depending on whether they fit their object. Desire views are incompatible with Fit. They cannot even make sense of the phenomenon instantiated in the Cocoa cases. They cannot explain why we feel compassion for Cocoa, why we do not want her situation for somebody that we care about, and why her situation would be a good punishment.

This problem extends to any attitude-based view, as long as it accepts the claim that attitudes have sovereign prudential power. Dale Dorsey's judgment subjectivism is a belief-based subjectivist view. Roughly, a person values something only if she believes that it is good for her when her beliefs are rendered coherent

(Dorsey 2012, 415-417; Dorsey 2021, 144) and she would take the relevant attitudes towards it under conditions of full consideration (Dorsey 2021, 147). It is a subjectivist view because what is good for the person is what she values. As long as beliefs determine well-being, judgment subjectivism is incompatible with Fit too.

For judgment subjectivism, Cocoa's belief that drawing well is good for her is necessary and sufficient for her achievement to be good for her. Whether she feels pride and joy, or chocolate ice cream pleasure is irrelevant for her well-being. Judgment subjectivism is also incompatible with Fit and it cannot make sense of the prudential phenomenon that Fit explains.

5. Hedonism

Hedonism faces similar challenges to accommodate Fit. Consider the following view:

> *Classic hedonism:* "All and only pleasure is good for you, and all and only displeasure is bad for you" (Gregory 2016, 115).[28]

According to classic hedonism, well-being just is pleasure. As the sole constituent of well-being, pleasure is all that matters to fully benefit from something. Fit, in contrast, states a necessary condition of full benefit. In the absence of fitting attitudes, a person cannot fully benefit from something. We might agree that Cocoa benefits to some extent in Achievements and Deep connection, since she feels

[28] It is complicated to formulate a statement of hedonism that does justice to the nuances and important differences between hedonist views. What I call "Classic Hedonism" strikes me as a good general view. It is what Alex Gregory calls "Classic Hedonism+." See Gregory 2016 for details about different hedonist views and the chalnges they face.

pleasure. But according to hedonism, as long as Cocoa feels pleasure, she fully benefits. When she achieves something and reacts with chocolate ice cream pleasure, she fully benefits. According to Fit, she does not fully benefit because her attitudes are not fitting. She would benefit more if she felt pride and joy when achieving something instead of chocolate ice cream pleasure.

Like desire views, hedonism can account for degrees of benefit too, but not in a way that accommodates Fit. Cocoa would benefit more from chocolate ice cream pleasure when she reacts to her achievements if that pleasure was more intense. Imagine two cases. In one Cocoa reacts to her achievements with joy and pride. In the other, she reacts with chocolate ice cream pleasure. Assume that the intensity of both reactions is the same. The initial phenomenon is still there. Cocoa is better off when she reacts with fitting attitudes.

For hedonism to be compatible with Fit, the connection between pleasure and its objects would have to matter prudentially. This strikes me as too big a departure from the spirit of the view. Fittingness is external to pleasure itself and it sets constraints on how much pleasure as such can contribute to well-being. In contrast, hedonism gives pleasure all the prudential weight regardless of its connection to anything else.

Similarly to desire theories, hedonism gives sovereign prudential power to pleasure, and Fit sets constraints on that power. Hedonism is not compatible with Fit. To see more clearly what the issues for hedonism are, let's consider different versions of hedonism that result from taking on board different views about the nature of pleasure. A hedonist view that adopts a phenomenological view about the

nature of pleasure identifies as the basic unit of well-being a mental state defined by its phenomenology.

Fit is external to the phenomenology of pleasure. It sets constraints on how much that phenomenology can contribute to well-being. Pleasure, understood in this way, lacks intentionality. Pleasure does not take an object. It has causes, but it is not pleasure about something. It is a mental state that could even be artificially stimulated in our brains. Pleasure does not have the right structure to take on an object. Like desire views, hedonism in combination with the phenomenological view about pleasure is incompatible with Fit.

One might wonder if a hedonist view combined with an attitudinal view about the nature of pleasure does better with Fit. Fred Feldman holds a view of this kind, his attitudinal hedonism. According to Feldman, attitudinal pleasure is the "chief good" for us (Feldman 2004, 57). This view is different from the desire theory with respect to Fit. The main problem for desire views to accommodate Fit is that attitudes are sovereign to determine well-being. Feldman's view is not subjectivist in this way. Attitudes in Feldman's view are not sovereign, they are constrained by their objects. According to Feldman, "pleasure taken in higher-altitude objects is said to be better" (Feldman 2004, 75).

It is this ability to incorporate constraints that might allow attitudinal hedonism to accommodate Fit. We could add to the view that to fully benefit from something, attitudes must fit it. This is an additional layer of normative structure. We can set aside the issue of whether the view is still a hedonist view. The crucial

conclusion to draw is that while this resulting view is compatible with Fit, it is so in virtue of its hybrid features.

6. Essential Attitudes Objective List Theory

Several suggested lists of objective goods include loving relationships, meaningful knowledge, achievement, and pleasure. According to what I call "the essential attitudes objective list theory" ("EA" for short), some attitudes are "necessary components" of the items in an objective list of prudential goods (Fletcher 2013, 216). Guy Fletcher and Christopher Rice claim that being in a loving relationship, for example, contributes to the person's well-being in virtue of the essential features of loving relationships, for instance mutual care and affection (Fletcher 2013, Rice 2013). A person cannot have the objective good of a loving relationship if there are no positive attitudes involved (Rice 2013, 197, 206).

The essential attitudes view has some initial resources to accommodate Fit. First, unlike BOLT, attitudes play at least some role in well-being. Second, the EA view, as an objectivist view, can accept that attitudes are constrained by their object, unlike desire theories. However, upon closer examination, EA faces significant challenges related to Fit too.

According to Fletcher, "It is plausible to claim that achievement has an attitudinal component because in achieving something one succeeds in one's aim and so one has an attitude of aiming towards some goal" (Fletcher 2013, 216, fn. 24). Cocoa has the attitude of aiming towards a goal because she wants to draw better. She achieves something, so it follows from the essential attitudes view that Cocoa

fully benefits form her achievements. It follows from Fit that Cocoa does not fully benefit because her attitudes towards her achievements are not fitting.

Pride and joy are reactions to, not constituents of, achievements. One can achieve something and feel no pride and joy. It happens quite often when people are too worn out to feel proud of themselves, for example. Since pride and joy are not constituents of achievements, according to the essential attitudes view, they play no prudential role. Their presence or absence is irrelevant for whether and how much Cocoa benefits from her achievements.

A moment of deep connection is not an item in the list, so according to EA, there is no direct benefit from it. But perhaps one benefits from a moment of deep connection in so far as it is part of a loving relationship (which is an item in Fletcher's and Rice's lists). Suppose that a moment of deep connection is an essential constituent of a loving relationship. According to EA, if the other essential components of a loving relationship are present, Cocoa fully benefits. It is irrelevant whether her reactions to the moment of connection are fitting or not. It follows that EA and Fit are incompatible.

Perhaps the combination of a moment of deep connection and our fitting reaction is a constituent of a loving relationship. If the fitting reaction is not there, it would follow that there is no benefit at all, since an essential component of the prudential good is missing. This is problematic if we want to say that Cocoa benefits to some extent, just not as much as she would if her attitudes were fitting.

Fletcher himself might be reluctant to make space for Fit in his view: "my theory is attitude-sensitive, without giving attitudes a role over and above being

necessary constituents of the states that are good for us" (Fletcher 2013, 217). This rules out Fit, since Fit states that fittingness of attitudes is a necessary condition of full benefit. Even if Fletcher is not on board with the resulting view, we can still explore the possibility of giving fittingness of attitudes a place in an essential attitudes objective list theory. One way to do that is to make fittingness of attitudes an item in the list.

If it was an item in the list, Cocoa would fully benefit from her achievements, for example, when her attitudes are fitting because she would have two goods (if all necessary and sufficient conditions are present). In Achievements, where she reacts with an unfitting attitude, she would only have one good in the list instead of two. That would explain why she does not fully benefit.

I see a couple of issues with the resulting view. First, it might give us the right result, but the wrong explanation of the phenomenon. According to the view, Cocoa does fully benefit from her achievements and her moments of deep connection. This does not seem to capture an important intuition about Cocoa's situation. She does not fully benefit from her achievements, she misses out on something about them because her attitudes are not fitting. The problem is not that she lacks a separate good.

Second, fittingness seems to be a property of goods, not a good itself. The items in Fletcher's objective list are achievement, friendship, happiness, pleasure, self-respect, and virtue (Fletcher 2013, 214). Fittingness would be the odd one out. Relatedly, the resulting view incorporates attitudes in a way that is problematic for the EA view in so far as it is an objectivist theory. Adding fittingness to the list

makes the resulting view hybrid. This is so because fittingness as an item in the list makes it the case that attitudes set constraints on objective goods. For a person to fully benefit, it is not enough that she has the current items in Fletcher's list, she must also react with fitting attitudes. This might explain why Fletcher is reluctant to give attitudes a more expansive role in his view.

As it is, the essential attitudes view is incompatible with Fit. Moreover, the changes that are necessary to make it compatible with Fit move the view closer to a hybrid view. This is further evidence for my claim that hybrid views are in a better position to accommodate Fit.

7. A Hybrid View: Loving the Good

Derek Parfit, Robert Adams and Shelly Kagan have sketched views that, although different in important ways, belong to a family of hybrid views according to which well-being consists in loving the good:[29]

> Pleasure with many other kinds of object has no value. And, if they are entirely devoid of pleasure, there is no value in knowledge, rational activity, love, or the awareness of beauty. What is of value, or is good for someone, is to have both; to be engaged in these activities, and to be strongly wanting to be so engaged (Parfit 1984, 501-502).

> I wish to explore the idea that what is good for a person is a life that is hers, and that two criteria (perhaps not the only criteria) for a life being

[29] For an overview and discussion of hybrid views see Woodard 2016.

> a good one for a person are that she should enjoy it, and that what she enjoys should be in some objective sense, excellent (Adams 2002, 93-94).
>
> I am well off if and only if there are objective goods in my life and I take pleasure in them, I enjoy having them (Kagan 2009, 255).[30]

According to this view, there is more to well-being than just pleasure. Pleasure must be "properly 'connected' to objective value" (Kagan 2009, 255). Kagan points out that "there must be the right sort of connection between the goods that one possesses and the pleasure that one takes" (Kagan 2009, 257). Kagan leaves unspecified what exactly the proper connection between pleasure and objective value is. He says that he will only take that point onboard "whatever, precisely, that connection comes to" (Kagan 2009, 260). I suggest below that a proper connection has to do with fitting attitudes.[31]

The view has some initial resources to accommodate Fit. First, the connection between pleasure and its object is prudentially relevant. For hedonism, the desire view and the bare objective list theory, the connection is prudentially irrelevant. Second, this hybrid view accepts an evaluative component for the connection between attitudes and object, since the connection must be "of the right sort" (as

[30] Susan Wolf argues for a hybrid view about meaning of life. For her, meaning is a component of a good life, but not the only one. According to Wolf, meaning arises from an "active engagement in projects or activities of worth," when "subjective attraction meets objective attractiveness" (Wolf 1997, 209, 211). Since I am primarily interested in well-being in this dissertation, I do not discuss Wolf's view about meaning. However, it is worth keeping in mind the similarities between her view and the hybrid views I sketch in this section.

[31] Valerie Tiberius's value-fulfillment view about well-being seems like a promising view to accommodate Fit, especially the way she connects values, attitudes and appropriateness. The relation between Fit and Tiberius' unique and intricate view would deserve a section or even a paper of their own. In this chapter, I focus on families of views instead.

stated above in a quote by Kagan). This feature allows Fit to specify that the proper connection is also about fitting attitudes.[32]

Thomas Hurka calls attention to the property of fittingness in order to criticize a common conception of hybrid views like the sketched above. The common conception is that they are subjective-objective views, as Christopher Woodard puts it (Woodard 2016, 161-174). The idea is that hybrid views incorporate a purely subjective and a purely objective component that get together to create prudential value. As Parfit put it, hedonist and desire views got half the truth, and objectivist theories got the other half of the truth (Parfit 1984, 501-502).

Hurka argues that these views should be understood as objective-objective because they should incorporate an element of fittingness of attitudes, which, Hurka argues, is an objective phenomenon. Setting aside Hurka's aims in discussing fittingness, it is crucial to examine his views on the phenomenon, especially to see how fittingness as I understand it differs from Hurka's view.

Consider one of Hurka's examples. Imagine that you are reading poetry and experience at the same time the pleasure of eating chocolate or getting a massage. You do not take any pleasure in the reading of poetry as such. Hurka, plausibly, argues that the combination of the pleasure of eating chocolate and the reading of poetry does not create additional value: "Additional value requires a specific

[32]It is worth to distinguish between two possible versions of this view. Radical hybrid view: only the combination of a relevant attitude directed at something of objective prudential value can be good for us.
Moderate hybrid view: relevant attitudes directed at objects of neutral prudential value can be good for us. Objectively valuable things even absent positive attitudes can be good for a person. I am borrowing Hurka's terminology here and his characterization of the distinction from Hurka 2019 (453). For a similar classification of hybrid views and a defense of what Hurka calls a "moderate hybrid view," see Sobel and Wall 2021.

pleasure, one directed *at* the objective state it's joined with, or in this case a pleasure *in* reading poetry" (Hurka 2019, 453).

Hurka goes on to flesh out what fittingness is. First, Hurka cashes out fittingness in terms of the causal connection between the pleasure and the reading of poetry. The pleasure in the example does not fit reading poetry. It is not directed at it because reading poetry does not cause the pleasure. The two things are not causally connected. Hurka interprets Kagan's claim that the two states must be properly connected as involving the pleasure "being conjoined with the objective good and, in a plausible addition, being causally dependent on it, so the objective good's existence causes, or is responsible for, the pleasure" (Hurka 2019, 454).

Second, Hurka claims that a pleasure might not fit its object when their orientation does not match:

> [the attitude's] positive orientation, as a pleasure in or desire for its object, matches the positive value of its object, where this positive-to-positive matching makes for or is the fittingness (Hurka 2019, 454-455).

There would not be fittingness in this sense if the pleasure, which has a positive orientation, was connected to something of negative objective value. If Cocoa felt pleasure caused by her being in a relationship of mutual hate, pleasure would not be fitting in this second understanding of fittingness. The lack of fittingness in the Cocoa cases is different. There might be fittingness as Hurka understands it and yet Cocoa's attitudes might not be fitting in the way I suggest. The key idea is that an attitude might be caused by its object and the object and the attitude might have a

positive orientation, and yet the attitude might be the wrong kind of attitude for its object.

Assume that in Achievements, Cocoa's achieving something causes her taste buds to activate in the same way as they do when she eats chocolate ice cream. Cocoa's pleasure is directed at the relevant objective good in Hurka's view. Cocoa does not just happen to experience chocolate ice cream pleasure at the same time as she achieves something. Moreover, chocolate ice cream pleasure and the achievement both have a positive orientation. It follows from Hurka's view that Cocoa's attitude is fitting.

Something similar happens in Deep connection. The relevant attitude is caused by the moment of deep connection and both attitude and object have a positive orientation. It follows from Hurka's view that Cocoa's attitudes are fitting. However, it is still true that Cocoa reacts with the wrong kind of attitude to a moment of deep connection.

The hybrid view that results from adding Hurka's view about fittingness does not rule out Fit, but it does not incorporate it yet, since there can be fittingness in Hurka's sense even if there is no fittingness as required by Fit. To the hybrid view, we must add that fittingness is also about the right type of attitude being connected to its proper object.

8. Addressing Some Worries

One might worry that my methodology puts the cart before the horse. Shouldn't we give more credence to well-regarded first-order theories of well-being? If we did, we would conclude that there must be something wrong with Fit since it is

not compatible with them. A related worry is that my argument begs the question against subjectivist views. If fittingness is an objectivist-friendly phenomenon to start with, subjectivism never had a chance.

It strikes me as methodologically suspect to first accept a view or views and then reject Fit because it is incompatible with them. This approach rejects from the start our pre-theoretical intuitions about the phenomenon instantiated in the Cocoa cases, the tests and Fit. That subjectivism is incompatible with Fit and that Fit is best explained by hybrid views are conclusions of my arguments. It might be that we uncovered an objectivist phenomenon that is unfriendly to subjectivism, but that discovery should not be held against us.

One might also worry about fittingness and blame. I have argued that when our attitudes do not fit their objects, we cannot fully benefit. One might wonder if that adds an additional source of blame and error for us. Cocoa does not fully benefit, but nothing follows about whether she has done anything wrong, prudentially or otherwise. If Cocoa's situation is due to a chip implanted in her brain unbeknownst to her, for example, she is completely blameless for her situation.

One might object to the idea that that there are right and wrong ways to feel, enjoy and even love. If I am right and the phenomenon instantiated in the Cocoa cases is a prudential phenomenon, the evaluative standard set by Fit is about the nature of well-being. This standard determines that there are right and wrong ways to relate to an object to fully benefit from it. It is just how the normative world is.

The final worry is inspired in Ben Bramble's view about diversity of pleasures. Bramble argues that diversity of pleasures directly contributes to well-

being. He claims that purely repeated pleasures do not add anything in themselves to a person's well-being. In contrast, the pleasures of love, learning, and aesthetic appreciation, etc. directly contribute to well-being because they involve qualitative diversity in pleasures (Bramble 2016a, 98). One might wonder if what goes wrong for Cocoa is not that her attitudes are not fitting, but that she does not have a diversity of experiences.

Cocoa gets one kind of experience, but misses out on others. She gets chocolate ice cream pleasure, but does not experience pride and joy for her achievements or appreciation and gratitude for her partner. Cocoa's life is monotonous.[33]

For the sake of argument, let's assume that Cocoa's prudential issues are in part due to a lack of diversity of experiences. It does not follow that that is the only prudential problem for Cocoa. Consider the following scenario:

> **Diversity–No-Fit:** Cocoa gets a wide variety of experiences, but they do not fit their respective objects. When there is a moment of romantic connection, she only reacts with chocolate ice cream pleasure. When she draws something beautiful, she feels romantic love for her drawing, and so on for all the goods in her life.

[33] Bramble even considers a similar case to Cocoa's. Imagine a being, let's call them Blue, who cannot have the experiences associated with love, friendship, and other goods. Instead, they have blue experiences that they like very much. Bramble suggests that Blue would be better off if they had the experiences that we have and could enjoy them (Bramble 2016b, 205).

There might be different potential explanations for Cocoa's situation. Perhaps somebody has implanted a chip on Cocoa, she is in the experience machine, or she is born wired that way. Now consider a Cocoa whose diverse attitudes fit their objects:

> **Diversity–Fit:** Cocoa experiences a wide variety of experiences and they fit their objects. She feels deep romantic love for her partner, pride towards her achievements and so on for all the goods in her life.

Diversity contributes to well-being equally in Diversity-Fit and in Diversity-No-Fit. Yet, Cocoa is better off when her pleasures fit their objects. If Cocoa was somebody I cared about, I would choose Diversity-Fit for her, instead of Diversity-No-Fit. I would feel compassion for Cocoa if she was in Diversity-No-Fit, but not if she was in Diversity-Fit. If I wanted to punish Cocoa, I would put her in the Diversity-No-Fit situation rather than in a Diversity-Fit situation. If I wanted to reward her, I would do the opposite.

9. Conclusion

I have called attention to the effect of fittingness of attitudes on well-being. When one's attitudes do not fit their object, one cannot fully benefit from it. This follows from the principle that I call Fit. I argued that being compatible with Fit is a desideratum on an adequate theory of well-being. On the surface, Fit is a modest principle, it only states a necessary condition on full benefit, rather than on benefit as such. Yet the surprising and groundbreaking consequence is that most first-order theories are incompatible with Fit. Only views with hybrid features can accommodate Fit. Views that satisfy the Fit desideratum must accept that our

attitudes as such do not determine well-being and also that attitudes still play a robust role to determine well-being. The first commitment rules out purely subjectivist views and the second rules out purely objective views. Other things being equal, we must prefer hybrid theories over their purist counterparts.

Chapter 3

Loving the Good and a Desideratum on Theories of Ill-being

In this chapter I focus on the phenomenon of ill-being. Ill-being is the opposite of well-being. It is what is intrinsically bad for us. Shelly Kagan first emphasized the importance of theorizing on ill-being directly. He is right that philosophers of well-being often assume that the focus must be well-being and once we have a well-being theory, the ill-being theory will follow from it in a straightforward way. He is also right that it is not quite as simple. Things get complicated very quickly (Kagan 2014).

Each theory of well-being faces its own challenges to account for ill-being. In this chapter I focus on one theory. Derek Parfit, Robert Adams and Shelly Kagan have sketched views that, although different in important ways, belong to a family of hybrid views according to which well-being consists in loving the good:[34]

> Pleasure with many other kinds of object has no value. And, if they are entirely devoid of pleasure, there is no value in knowledge, rational activity, love, or the awareness of beauty (Parfit 1984, 501-502).

> I wish to explore the idea that what is good for a person is a life that is hers, and that two criteria (perhaps not the only criteria) for a life being a good one for a person are that she should enjoy it, and that what she

[34] For an overview and discussion of hybrid views see Woodard 2016.

> enjoys should be in some objective sense, excellent (Adams 2002, 93-94).
>
> I am well off if and only if there are objective goods in my life and I take pleasure in them, I enjoy having them (Kagan 2009, 255).[35]

According to this view, there is more to well-being than just pleasure or just objective value. For this view, pleasure and objective value in isolation, unrelated to each other, do not suffice for well-being either. Kagan claims that "there must be the right sort of connection between the goods that one possesses and the pleasure that one takes" (Kagan 2009, 257).

I will not argue the point here, but I find this feature of the view particularly compelling. That goodness (of some kind) calls for some attitudes has played a crucial role in prominent theories about morality, for example. P. F. Strawson famously argued that reactive attitudes (guilt, resentment and indignation) have appropriateness conditions. It is appropriate to feel guilty when one does something morally wrong, for example (Strawson 1962).

The general idea as applied to prudential value is that the connection between our mind and the world matters a great deal for well-being. I am particularly interested in whether a loving the good theory as extended to ill-being can

[35] Susan Wolf argues for a similar view about meaning of life. For her, meaning is a component of a good life, but not the only one. According to Wolf, meaning arises from an "active engagement in projects or activities of worth," when "subjective attraction meets objective attractiveness" (Wolf 1997, 209, 211). Since I am primarily interested in well-being in this dissertation, I do not discuss Wolf's view about meaning. But it is worth keeping in mind the similarities between her view and the views I focus on in this chapter.

successfully accommodate the connection between mind and world. In this chapter, I explore the resources of loving the good theories to account for ill-being.

While I will not provide an account of ill-being, I take on board a compelling and minimal assumption. If ill-being is something that is intrinsically bad, ill-being is not just the absence of well-being. In his 2014 paper "An Introduction to Ill-being," Kagan argues that ill-being should be something robust, not merely the absence of well-being. It might be controversial what "robust" amounts to. I will interpret it as something distinct from mere absence of well-being. This minimal assumption generates an equally minimal desideratum on loving the good theories as extended to ill-being. They must give us an explanation of ill-being as something over and above a mere absence of well-being.

I focus on Kagan's view because he is, to my knowledge, the only philosopher who has suggested an extension of loving the good theories to ill-being. He sketches potential extensions and gives some reasons for the possibilities that he favors in his paper "What is the Opposite of Well-being?"[36] I argue that Kagan's loving the good theory does not provide an explanation of ill-being. This specific result is limited to Kagan's view, but it is, I hope, an important step in our collective exploration on the nature of ill-being.

1. Well-being: the Ideal Case

Before our discussion of ill-being as such, it is worth emphasizing some key features of well-being according to loving the good theories to appreciate the

[36] In his 2018 dissertation "Asymmetries and Ill-being" Eric Mathison engages with the unpublished version of Kagan's "What's the Opposite of Well-being?" I mention Mathison's views as they become relevant.

contrast with ill-being. In this chapter I focus on loving the good theories that accept what Christopher Woodard calls "the joint necessity model." According to this model, objective value and subjective engagement with that value are each a necessary condition of well-being (Woodard 2016,164).

For Kagan's view, pleasure on its own does not contribute to well-being and objective value on its own does not contribute to well-being. Even when a person has objective value in her life and she experiences pleasure, they do not contribute to well-being when they are completely unrelated to each other. Kagan emphasizes that there must be the right sort of connection between the elements. This connection must not be accidental. The right connection rules out bizarre causal processes that lead, in a miraculous way, to one feeling pleasure towards an objective good. According to Kagan, for there to be well-being, we must enjoy an objective good in virtue of its good-making features (Kagan 2009, 257-258).

Well-being is a prudential ideal. When the above necessary and sufficient conditions are met, the individual has well-being. Well-being is a reference point for our examination of ill-being. When one or more of the above necessary conditions are not met, the individual does not benefit. She does not get well-being. In this sense, well-being is absent from the individual's life. Given our minimal desideratum, an extension of a loving the good theory to ill-being must explain why, in a given case, there is ill-being rather an absence of well-being.

Kagan considers a situation where there is pleasure in a person's life and she possesses objective goods, but there is no connection between the pleasure and the goods. For example, a person might mistakenly believe that she has good friends

and take great pleasure in that thought. She might also have achieved great things, but take no pleasure in them. Kagan tells us that this "won't do" (Kagan 2009, 257). In this case, these elements are merely present, happen simultaneously, but they are not connected (Kagan 2009, 257). One must conclude that the individual is not better off.

Consider a situation where an individual has some objective goods. Perhaps this person has achieved something great, but she does not enjoy her achievements at all. She takes no pleasure in them. Kagan concludes that this person is not made better off (Kagan 2009, 256-257; 2021, 118). One does not benefit at all. The absence of the connection implies that there is no well-being.[37]

Kagan distinguishes between how well somebody does and how well her life goes. How well a person does is about her individual well-being. How well her life goes is about "the quality of her life" (Kagan 2009, 257).[38] When a person has objective goods, but does not enjoy them, her life might go better, but her level of well-being does not increase. I will not take a stand on the distinction, but it is helpful to keep in mind when comparing cases where the theory tells us that there is no well-being and cases where there is ill-being.

A key lesson to take from these cases is that the connection between pleasure and objective goods is crucial for well-being. When the connection breaks, there is no well-being at all. A reasonable expectation is that something similar would be true

[37] This seems to be the right interpretation of what Kagan says or in any case what he should say. He does say that in this case, the individual is "not very well off" (Kagan 2009, 258). This leaves open that there could be well-being but that does not seem consistent with his own requirement that the connection be present.

[38] He argues for this point in his "Me and my life" (1994).

about ill-being too. We would expect that the connection between the elements matters, not only for how much ill-being there is, but for whether there is ill-being.

2. Ill-being when Well-being is Loving the Good

In his "What is the Opposite of Well-being?" Kagan identifies three non-ideal cases, where something has gone prudentially wrong, such that the individuals involved have ill-being. These individuals do not merely lack well-being, but they have something that is intrinsically bad for them. According to Kagan, there is ill-being when:

1. We experience pain towards something that is objectively bad. For example, a person loses a loved one and she is sad over that loss (Kagan 2021, 137).
2. We experience pleasure towards something that is objectively bad. For example, a person is happy to lose somebody that she loves (Kagan 2021, 124, 136).
3. We experience pain towards something that is objectively good (Kagan 2021, 122). For example, a person feels sad to have accomplished something.

It follows from a loving the good theory that individuals in these cases do not benefit, that they do not get well-being. This is because at least one of the necessary conditions of well-being is missing. In the first case, the individual does not experience pleasure and her attitude is directed at something objectively bad. Two necessary conditions of well-being are absent. In the second case, the individual experiences pleasure, which is a necessary condition on well-being, but it is directed at something objectively bad. Objective goodness is missing. In the third case, there

is something objectively good, but the individual experiences pain towards it instead of pleasure. One necessary condition of well-being is absent too.

That the individuals in these cases fail to benefit does not yet satisfy the desideratum of explaining why in these cases there is ill-being. I reserve the term "non-ideal" for the three cases above, even though there are cases where at least one necessary condition of well-being is missing, but the result is that well-being is absent, not that there is ill-being. Let's go over each of the three non-ideal cases.

2.1. Pain towards an objective bad

According to Kagan, experiencing pain directed at something objectively bad leads to ill-being. Consider, for example, being pained by the loss of a loved one. Intuitively, in this circumstance, the individual is not well-off (Kagan 2021, 137). The view must tell us why this leads to something that is intrinsically bad for us, rather than a mere absence of prudential goodness. It is straightforward why there is no well-being, according to a loving the good theory.

Two of the necessary conditions of well-being are absent. There is no pleasure and there is no objective value. As a consequence, there is no well-being. The connection between pain and what is objectively bad is appropriate in the sense that it is a negative reaction to something objectively bad. It is plausible that one must respond with pain to something objectively bad.

"Error of orientation" is a helpful piece of terminology.[39] There is an error of orientation when the response to an object is incorrect in the following way. Objective bads call for negative responses and objective goods call for positive

[39] I follow Madison in his use of this terminology. See Mathison 2018, ch. 7.

responses. There is an error of orientation when one reacts with a positive attitude to something objectively bad and when one reacts with a negative attitude to an objective good.

In this non-ideal case, there is no error of orientation. Kagan's explanation is based on the following constraint on the nature of well-being:

> **Hedonist Constraint (HC):** "pain cannot be intrinsically good for you" (Kagan 2021, 126).[40]

It follows from HC that the individual who grieves the loss of a loved one is not made well-off by her pain. This goes well with our intuitions about the case.

Kagan accepts HC because he feels pressure to explain why the individual who loses a loved one is not well-off. His worry is that his view implies that she is, a conclusion that is unacceptable. Kagan reasons that the connection between pain and objective bad is appropriate. There is no error of orientation. There are also two reversals of value that might cancel each other:

> if we hold the presence of objective good constant, but toggle from pleasure to pain, we get a kind of reversal of value. And similarly, if we hold the presence of pleasure constant, but toggle from goods to bads, we get a reversal of value as well. In our remaining case, however, we move from pleasure in the good to pain in the bad: we are

[40] Kagan distinguishes between this constraint and a second. According to the latter, pleasure cannot be intrinsically bad for you. Kagan rejects this second constraint. Since Kagan accepts only the first constraint, I will simply refer to it as the "Hedonist Constraint."

> toggling both variables simultaneously. So it seems natural to suggest that we will get two reversals of value—from well-being to ill-being and back again, as it were—with the two reversals canceling each other out. Which is to say, our final case will be an instance of well-being, rather than ill-being. (Kagan 2021, 124).

I find Kagan's reasoning puzzling. As I have argued, two necessary conditions of well-being are missing. If I am right, it is clear why there is no well-being. Kagan does not have anything to worry about that here. However, he does miss a real problem for his view, namely that it does not give us an explanation of ill-being.

If HC is true, it only follows that, in our non-ideal case, the individual does not benefit, since she experiences pain and pain is never good for us. That does not yet tell us that the person has ill-being. Nothing about ill-being follows from HC. HC is even compatible with the claim that there is no such thing as ill-being, for example. We need a principle that implies that there is ill-being in our non-ideal case, not only that there is no well-being. This reveals something crucial about the nature of the view. What we need is a variation of HC:

HC*: pain is always intrinsically bad for you.

It follows from HC* that the individual has ill-being in our non-ideal case. Kagan does not explicitly accept or discuss this principle. But it is what's needed to justify the presence of ill-being and not merely the absence of well-being.

If HC* is true, we got a justification of why there is ill-being in the present non-ideal case. However, this reveals a key problem for Kagan's view. It is not clear that a loving the good view can take HC*? on board. This is so because pain does all the work to explain ill-being. A key and distinctive feature of a loving the good theory about well-being is that pleasure on its own does not constitute well-being. Well-being only arises when pleasure is directed at something objectively valuable. It is reasonable to expect that the analogous claims would be true about ill-being.

If HC* is true, it is irrelevant what the object of the pain is or what the connection between the pain and the objective bad looks like. Kagan himself explicitly accepts that HC implies that pain cannot be good for you, regardless of object: "here we have a plausible constraint on the nature of well-being: being in pain (no matter what the object of the pain) cannot constitute well-being" (Kagan 2021, 126).

Kagan gives a role to fittingness in his account. He argues that it is inappropriate to feel pain without limit. Instead, there is an appropriate amount of pain to feel towards a certain bad. If one experiences a greater amount of pain than the ideal, one is worse off. If one experiences less than the ideal amount of pain, one is worse off too. The appropriate amount minimizes ill-being (Kagan 2021, 139-140).

The notion of appropriateness here is about quantity of ill-being. However, for well-being, the connection between pleasure and objective value plays a role to determine whether there is well-being at all. One would expect the connection between mind and world to play a similar role for ill-being.

2.2. Pleasure towards Objective Bad

According to Kagan, when we experience pleasure towards something objectively bad, we get ill-being (Kagan 2021, 123). In our dramatic, extreme example, a person loses somebody she loves, but reacts with pleasure. The task for a loving the good view is to explain why this person has ill-being, rather than a mere absence of well-being.

In this non-ideal case, it is also straightforward to see why there is no well-being according to a loving the good view. There is pleasure, but it is directed at something objectively bad, not at something objectively good. Since objective value is a necessary condition on well-being for loving the good theories, we can conclude that the individual does not have well-being. We need an explanation of ill-being.

In this non-ideal case, there is an error of orientation because we react with a positive attitude to an objective bad. In this sense, there is a failure of fittingness. An initial hypothesis is that an error of orientation might explain why there is ill-being rather than a mere absence of well-being in this case. If this error of orientation fully explained that there is ill-being, it would follow that if it is absent, then there is no ill-being. However, in the non-ideal case where an individual feels pain towards an objective bad, there is no error of orientation, since pain is an appropriate response to something objectively bad. It follows that the error of orientation cannot fully explain why there is ill-being rather than an absence of well-being when one experiences pleasure towards an objective bad.

The main difference between the two non-ideal cases is that there is an error of orientation when the person is pleased by something objectively bad and there is no error when she is pained by it.

According to Kagan, being pained by something objectively bad is intrinsically bad for us, but less so than feeling pleasure towards something objectively bad. Consider the tragic situation where a person loses somebody she loves. The loss is objectively bad. She could feel bad for that loss or she could be pleased by it. Kagan claims that it is worse for her to be pleased than to feel pain (Kagan 2021, 137). At most, an error of orientation might explain an increase of ill-being, but it does not explain why there is ill-being to begin with. We are left with no explanation as to why there is ill-being in the present non-ideal case.

Pleasure is an unlikely explanation. Perhaps it is the objective bad in the person's life. In our example, it is the fact that the person lost someone she loves. As plausible as that might be in its own right, it is not a suitable explanation in the spirit of a loving the good view.

It is very similar to the previous appeal to HC* to explain ill-being. In that case, we found that explanation at odds with a loving the good theory. Something similar happens here. We are left with no explanation for ill-being that is suitable for a loving the good theory as extended to ill-being.

2.3. Pain towards Objective Good

In our last non-ideal case, a person experiences pain towards something that is objectively good. According to Kagan, she has ill-being, for example, when she is pained by her accomplishments.

It is also straightforward to see why there is no well-being for the person according to a loving the good theory. There is something objectively good, but the

person does not love it. That by itself implies that she does not benefit from it. But what explains ill-being according to the view?

Similar to the non-ideal case where one experiences pleasure towards an objective bad, there is an error of orientation. As I argued in that case, this cannot fully explain why there is ill-being. The best candidate is pain, but appealing to HC* brings problems to the view, since it is at odds with a loving the good view.

3. Conclusion

I began the chapter by assuming what I took to be a minimal claim about ill-being, that it is not a mere absence of well-being. I argued that in order to be suitably extended to account for ill-being, a loving the good theory must explain why in key cases, there is ill-being rather than an absence of well-being. I argued that the only extension to date in the literature fails to explain ill-being.

General Conclusion

In this dissertation I have explored the connections between the phenomena of resonance, fittingness of attitudes and prudential value. As I argued in chapter 1, resonance can be cognitive too and the Resonance Constraint can also be met by objectivist theories of well-being. If this is correct, the constraint does not break ties between subjectivist and objectivist theories.

In chapter 2, I argued for a different role of the phenomenon of resonance, broadly understood, in well-being. Fit, the principle I formulated and defended, does not state a necessary condition of well-being as such, but a necessary condition on full benefit. Our attitudes must fit their objects for us to fully benefit from their objects. What attitudes we experience towards what objects matters for how much we can benefit from them. This seemingly modest claim has impactful consequences for theories about the nature of well-being. I argued that theories with hybrid features are best equipped to accommodate Fit. Surprisingly, purist views, even if they are subjectivist, have trouble accommodating the principle.

Finally, in chapter 3 I took the first steps in an exploration of how loving the good theories (a family of hybrid views) can account for ill-being. I argued that the current extension to ill-being does not explain why in key cases there is ill-being rather than just an absence of well-being.

I find hybrid views attractive because they have a natural space for resonance while accepting certain objective features of well-being. The next few steps in my research will be to explore the development of a plausible hybrid view about well-being and its resources to explain ill-being too.

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Central Division meeting, American Philosophical Association February 2015

On "Can we Believe for Practical Reasons?" by Juan Comesaña (University of Arizona)

20th meeting of the Sociedad Filosofica Iberoamericana, Huatulco, Mexico January 2015

On "On the Causal Import of the Looping Effects of Kinds of People" by Lourdes Ortiz (UCSC)

7th meeting of the American Association for Mexican Philosophers, Stanford University March 2014

On "Willing that Others" by Carlos Núñez (Stanford University)

6th meeting of the American Association for Mexican Philosophers, Princeton University May 2013

On "Is Historical Injustice beyond the Scope of Rawlsian Theory?" by Moises Vaca and Juan Espindola

4th meeting of the American Association for Mexican Philosophers, UNAM, Mexico City May 2011

Home Institution Presentations and Comments

Paper Presentations

"Group Well-being and Paternalism"

Working Papers, Syracuse University Philosophy Women's Group November 2019

"Objectivism without Alienation" (minor title changes)

Syracuse University ABD Workshop December 2015

Working Papers, Syracuse University Philosophy Women's Group October 2014

"Moral Categoricity and Pragmatics"

Working Papers, Syracuse University November 2014

"Inescapability and the Nature of Moral Normativity"

Working Papers, Syracuse University November 2013

"Reflective Equilibrium, Emptiness and Conservatism" (minor title changes)

Ethics Reading Group, MIT November 2011

Graduate Student Colloquium, University of Kansas March 2011

Comments

On "Failing to Resonate with Subjective Accounts of Well-being" by Nikki Fortier March 2019

Syracuse University ABD Workshop

On "Non-Sensory Phenomenology and the Metaphysics of Pleasure and Pain" by Lorenza D'Angelo April 2018

Syracuse University ABD Workshop

On "Moral Torch Fishing: A Signaling Theory of Blame" by Manuel Vargas and David Shoemaker September 2016

9th meeting of the American Association for Mexican Philosophers, Syracuse University

On "Hypocrisy: Tribute Vice Pays to Virtue" by Sam Elgin

Syracuse University Philosophy Graduate Student Conference March 2015

On "Rational Identities and the Myth of the Taken" by Andrew Flynn

Syracuse University Philosophy Graduate Student Conference February 2014

Teaching Experience

The Pennsylvania State University

Department of Philosophy

Main Instructor

- PHIL 001 The Big Problems, Fall 2022

August 2022 -

- PHIL 10 Critical Thinking, Fall 2022
- PHIL 134 Food, Values and Health, Fall 2022
- PHIL 12 Symbolic Logic, Fall 2020

August 2020 – May 2021

- PHIL 132 Bioethics, Spring 2021

Syracuse University January 2020 – May 2020

Department of Philosophy

Main Instructor

- PHI 175 Introduction to Social and Political Philosophy, Spring 2020

Syracuse University August 2019 – December 2019

Department of Philosophy

Teaching Assistant

- PHI 191 Ethics & Contemporary Issues: The Meaning of Life, Fall 2019. Instructor: Dr. Verena Erlenbusch-Anderson

The Pennsylvania State University August 2016 – May 2019

Department of Philosophy

Main Instructor

- PHIL 105 Philosophy of Law, Spring 2019
- PHIL 132 Bioethics, Fall 2018
- PHIL 13 Philosophy, Nature and Environment, Spring 2018

- PHIL 12 Symbolic Logic, Spring 2017
- PHIL 106 Introduction to Business Ethics, Fall 2016

Syracuse University August 2014 – May 2015

Department of Philosophy

Main Instructor

- PHI 192 Introduction to Moral Theory, Fall 2014
- PHI 192 Introduction to Moral Theory, Spring 2015

Syracuse University August 2012 – May 2014

Department of Philosophy

Teaching Assistant

- PHI 107 Theories of Knowledge and Reality, Fall 2012. Instructor: Dr. Robert Van Gulick
- PHI 192 Introduction to Moral Theory, Spring 2013. Instructor: Dr. Ben Bradley
- PHI 251 Logic, Fall 2013. Instructor: Dr. Thomas McKay
- PHI 192 Introduction to Moral Theory, Spring 2014. Instructor: Dr. David Sobel

University of Kansas January 2010 – May 2010

Department of Philosophy January 2011 – May 2011

Grader, Medical Ethics, Dr. Donald Marquis

National Autonomous University of Mexico August 2007 – June 2008

Department of Philosophy and Literature

Grader

- Ethics I and II, Dr. Gustavo Ortiz
    - Topics in Metaphysics (The Metaphysics of Intentional Action) I and II, Dr. Enrique Villanueva

Visiting Positions

Global Priorities Institute, University of Oxford May – June 2019

Summer Research Visitor Programme

Hebrew University of Jerusalem June – July 2015

Ph.D. Summer Fellowship

Massachusetts Institute of Technology September 2011 – December 2011

Ph.D. student visiting position

University of California, Riverside September 2008 – December 2008

M.A. student visiting position

Academic Service

Chairing

Madison Metaethics Workshop, session on James Brown's "Conceptual Role Expressivism and Defective Concepts" September 2020

Madison Metaethics Workshop, session on Daniel Wodak's "Approving on the Basis of Moral and Aesthetic Testimony" September 2019

Madison Metaethics Workshop, session on Dan Korman and Dustin Locke's "Against Minimalist Responses to Moral Debunking Arguments" September 2018

Athena in Action. A Networking and Mentoring Workshop for Graduate Student Women in Philosophy June 2018

Central Division meeting, American Philosophical Association, session on Robert Gruber's, "Evaluating the Uncooperativeness Solution to the Mismatch Problem" February 2018

Eastern Division meeting, American Philosophical Association, session on Eden Lin's "Attitudinal and Phenomenological Theories of Pleasure" January 2018

Madison Metaethics Workshop, session on Michael Milona and Mark Shroeder's "Desiring under the Proper Guise"

September 2017

Syracuse Philosophy Annual Workshop and Network (SPAWN) on Well-being, session on Steve Campbell's "The Good Death" June 2016

Arizona Normative Ethics Workshop, session on Adam Cureton's "The Concept of Right as the Proper Adjudication of Conflicting Claims" January 2016

Chapel Hill Metaethics Workshop, session on Ralph Bader's "The Grounding Argument against Non-Reductive Moral Realism" October 2015

Community Outreach

PIKSI-Boston, Graduate Fellow July 2016

Philosophy Class Discussion Leader, Southside Academy Charter School (sessions on racial discrimination, social rules, facts and opinions, and gender stereotypes) Spring 2014 – Fall 2015

Referee Work

Ergo, An Open Access Journal of Philosophy 2019

Graduate Student Conference, Institute of Philosophical Research (UNAM) 2019, 2014

Australasian Journal of Philosophy 2017

SWIP Analytic Mexico, First Essay Contest 2017

Diánoia, Institute of Philosophical Research (UNAM) 2017, 2012

Revista de Filosofia, Complutense University of Madrid 2016

Crítica: Revista Hispanoamericana de Filosofía, Institute of Philosophical Research (UNAM) 2012, 2011

Coordination

Associate Editor for PEA Soup Blog January 2017 – August 2019

Co-President of American Association of Mexican Philosophers (with Arturo Javier) May 2015 – September 2016

Co-Founder and organizer of Metaethics Reading Group at Syracuse University (with Nicole Dular) 2012-2015

Co-Organizer of the Syracuse University Philosophy Women's Group (with Nicole Dular) 2013-2014

Founder and organizer of Graduate Student Reading Group at the University of Kansas 2010-2011

Honors and Awards

Phi Beta Delta International Honor Society Member	March 2013 – February 2014
Fulbright Scholarship	August 2009 – May 2012
Templin Award, The University of Kansas	March 2010
Intern, Institute of Philosophical Research (UNAM)	January 2008 – June 2009

Other Work Experience

Syracuse University August 2014, August 2015

Teaching Mentor

- Small group leader and mentor during the SU teaching assistant orientation

National Autonomous University of Mexico March 2005 – July 2007

Institute of Law Research, Dr. Enrique Villanueva (supervisor)

Research Assistant

- Assisted with Dr. Villanueva's research on moral philosophy

Languages

Fluent English and Spanish, basic French

References

Research

David Sobel, Dissertation Advisor

dsobel@syr.edu

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Syracuse, NY 13210

Ben Bradley, Dissertation Committee

wbradley@syr.edu

533 Hall of Languages

Syracuse, NY 13210

Janice Dowell, Dissertation Committee

jldowell@syr.edu

541b Hall of Languages

Syracuse, NY 13210

Hille Paakkunainen

Dissertation Committee

hpaakkun@syr.edu

532 Hall of Languages

Syracuse, NY 13210

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