

Dabney Townsend, *Hume's Aesthetic Theory: Taste and Sentiment*, London and New York: Routledge, 2001.

Hume's Aesthetic Theory is an immensely stimulating book. Its main purpose being to defend the view that taste and sentiment have an epistemological status for Hume, it also advocates that understanding Hume's aesthetic epistemology helps to understand Hume's philosophy as a whole, thus clarifying a series of disputed interpretive questions in the tradition of Hume scholarship - questions concerning Hume's empiricism, atomism, and the theory of ideas, for example. How so? The author argues that Hume's aesthetic and moral theories reveal the distinctive way in which Hume incorporates sentiment in the inner fabric of human thought, belief, and action. They ascribe an evidential role to sentiment, and thus become paradigmatic for probable evidence as well. Townsend's more general claim is that Hume's aesthetic epistemology is revealing of the complex psychological and non-mechanistic turn of Hume's empiricism. His specific claim is that, for Hume, sentiment is evidential, and taste is normative. His main task is to demonstrate how Hume proceeds epistemologically in the theory of aesthetics. Stages in his progress include a historical and an analytical part.

The first two chapters are historical, and set the stage for the remainder of the book, bringing into focus the originality of Hume's concepts of taste and sentiment. They survey early modern developments, with a view to the contributions and challenges that came up as a result for Hume's own theory: Hume's novel theoretical solutions are viewed in context as responses to difficulties met by opponents and empiricist allies alike. Shaftesbury (chapter 1) is the highlight, followed by Hutcheson (chapter 2), and other architects of ancient and modern aesthetics.

Townsend is careful to show how challenges came up from all sides, in the relentless attacks by theologians and rationalist adversaries, with their usual complaints: that sentiment leads to subjectivism, contingency, instability, lack of authority, even sinful hubris; in a word, that it makes knowledge impossible. According to him, Hume met these challenges with an epistemological psychology and aesthetics of sentiment that was superior to all else in the empiricist tradition in two significant ways: first Hume developed a more complex psychology of sentiment; and second, he furthered the epistemological authority of sentiment. The result was the ultimate vindication of the empiricist view of taste as a pleasant emotion *and* as a fully theoretical term.

Chapter 1 identifies Shaftesbury as the main source of the Humean programme. It compares and concludes that both shared the same basic insights, namely that morals and aesthetics rest upon an affective basis, passion is a respectable source of judgment, and taste is judgment that responds to beauty. Also both had to grapple with the same questions: how is taste formed? How

can taste correct fancy? How to make it stable? And how to settle disputes? In Townsend's final assessment Hume surpassed Shaftesbury. Hume's sharp focus - on how passions arise from impressions and ideas - made it possible for him to ground the passions in the perception of reality (a Lockean thing), and to show how they are necessary conditions - the motive forces - to action, taste, and to arriving at a conclusion. Townsend's conclusion is that Hume's analysis alone could raise the passions to the level of epistemological necessity.

Chapter 2 traces the development of the concept of taste from antiquity - Townsend notes that already in Aristotle taste is discriminative and subject to positive and negative evaluation - to the modern age. This chapter brings a large number of references and related concepts (style, manner, and individual artistic expression) to bear on the emergence of taste as a critical faculty of judging. In Townsend's words, during the process "sense becomes more and more a direct judgment, and taste its expression."

But vindicating the authority of taste is itself a laborious process. Important sections in this chapter contrast Hume to Hutcheson, and Hume to Du Bos. Unlike Hutcheson, Hume did not rely on an internal sense to account for the perception of beauty, nor did he define beauty as a simple idea of sense. Unlike Du Bos, who substituted sentiment for argument, Hume assimilated sentiment to reason, and did not renounce argument. For Hume, "sentiment is how one knows that an argument is correct."

The contrasts help identifying Hume's differential. Neither a critical subjectivist, nor a mechanistic, his differential was a philosophy of sentiment that provided aesthetics with an epistemological basis even as it saved beauty and taste (concepts that tend to posit special problems) as thick epistemological concepts. Thus taste was vindicated and empiricism provided with the means to defend its more general epistemological tenets against critics.

In the remainder of *Hume's Aesthetic Theory* Townsend makes good the claims of the preceding comparative historical outline. The sequence of chapters is, as follows: 'Hume's appeal to sentiment' (ch. 3), 'The aesthetic/moral analogy' (ch. 4), 'Rules' (ch. 5), and 'The problem of a standard of taste' (ch. 6). Together they constitute an impressive work of scholarship.

Chapter 3 centers on the aesthetic epistemology implied by Hume's assimilation of sentiment to reason. Having the theory of ideas as a starting point, it addresses numerous issues. Townsend begins by making explicit the aesthetics implicit in the distinction of impressions and ideas. He construes their relations in referential terms, in this scheme ideas are referential to impressions. This allows for a parallel between reference to external objects and reference to aesthetic objects. Art imitates, knowledge represents, and both are referential.

Art operates with ideas to cause impressions - it makes use of ideas and sensations to produce secondary impressions (emotions) - and a work of art succeeds when it does succeed in making the intended reference. As Townsend affirms later in the chapter: 'Art imitates life emotionally'. That's how it has reference.

Aesthetic responses involve both a perceptual and an ideational level. They involve pleasure and judgment. Aesthetic theory must account for this transition, and according to Townsend Hume's concept of secondary impression is the answer. A secondary impression is an emotional response mediated and influenced by ideas and comparisons. Applied to beauty: beauty is a secondary impression, it is felt and it involves comparison. It is an internal emotion, and felt as emotional qualities of things and actions. Stable, it can be made a standard and can have an evaluative function. The emotion itself has aesthetic authority. This finding will assist Townsend later in the discussion of normativity.

For now Townsend concentrates on a few other consequences to aesthetics, such as the status of fictions, audience response, and the work of sympathy. Sympathy effects the sharing of ideas and impressions. In art, fictions are experienced as real representations of subjects for sentiment. Hence art is not deception. Townsend speculates that, for Hume, sympathetic response to fictions – or aesthetic experience – would probably value audience response as a measure of a work of art's accomplishment.

In chapter 4 Townsend explores, as the title indicates, the aesthetic/moral analogy, or rather the analogies and disanalogies to be drawn from a comparison between aesthetic and moral emotions. His checklist includes strength (calm, violence), causal background (direct, indirect), effects, and objects of the passions. He places the divide less in the perceptions themselves (they do not divide in two different kinds) than in the surrounding context and circumstances. Due to them, moral emotions have a settled reference to character and effect action, whereas aesthetic emotions ordinarily do not. The important finding in this chapter is that despite differences in their strength and object, the moral/aesthetic parallel holds: both of them consist of decisions of taste, in reaction to facts, relations, and their effect on sentiment. It moves Townsend's interpretive project one more step ahead.

Chapter 5 is about rules: rules of taste – their non-law-like and non-conventional character – their being paradigmatic of rules in general, and their securing criticism a place in the Humean science of human nature. Townsend's analysis of rules of taste is exemplary. Rule and sentiment must be reconciled if rules are to operate and be followed. That is possible only because general rules do not spring from a source other than impressions and ideas of sentiment. As Townsend notes, general rules are themselves sentiments. In his words: 'Rules are representatives of the bedrock of sentiment;' and they are 'obvious empirical facts raised to the level of causal expectation'.

In aesthetics and morals rules are causes that actuate passions. Through regularity and expectation they extend emotional response. One alternative to rules is sympathy. It too extends emotions, but through imaginative transference, repetition, and association.

But general rules do not simply shorthand expectation based on the experience of past regular associations. Cases of unphilosophical probability, they are

often carried beyond their foundation, and need control. Townsend interprets the problem of a standard of taste as a matter of finding ways to control rules.

By the end of chapter five Townsend has secured a firm epistemological basis for Hume's aesthetics. He has shown how causal processes are embedded in rules of taste. And he has indicated how rules can run out of control and be in need of correction. A discussion of the standard of taste is the next and final step, in chapter six.

Chapter 6 is entirely dedicated to 'Of the Standard of Taste'. This is an excellent choice, for now an interpretation informed by the detailed work of the previous chapters can be attempted. In Townsend's view, Hume's main concern in 'Of the Standard' was with the standard, and not with taste itself. At this point, Townsend expects to have established that particular taste, that taste itself cannot set the standard. He contends that critics endowed with common sense and delicacy, who project the ideals to which judgment is to conform, set it. For him, time-tested rules and principles against which correct and incorrect taste can be measured are the standard. And critics apply them.

To me, Townsend's conclusion came as a bit of a surprise, especially his emphasis on the necessity of a factor exterior to taste to provide the standard. Perhaps a weaker concept of standard would comfortably allow us to settle for a view more accepting of relativism and less indifferent to the sentimental responses of all involved. I find it difficult that, in a true Humean spirit, one would be willing to acknowledge any authority that did not include the possibility of, given more dialogue, shared sentiments.

But the last chapter, much like all of *Hume's Aesthetic Theory* is rich and complex. Original and thorough, it opens new avenues to the understanding of Hume's philosophy.

Livia Guimaraes

Ruth Lorand, *Aesthetic Order: A Philosophy of Order, Beauty and Art*, Routledge Studies in Twentieth Century Philosophy, London: Routledge, 2000.

Ruth Lorand's book on aesthetic order is a very welcome and useful study in the field of aesthetics. It is at once traditional and original: its themes take us back to Plato and beyond, but its questions are addressed in new and fresh ways. It is not polemical, iconoclastic or reactionary, since it does not deal with the *recherché* theories that have been such a familiar part of the philosophy of art in the last twenty years. But it is nevertheless ground-clearing: Lorand's 'inquiry into the nature of beauty and art' is one in which the con-

cepts themselves establish the parameters, and the questions that stem from thinking about them direct the inquiry. Although the starting point of all her investigation is the aesthetic experience, Lorand's method of analysis relies to a significant extent on logical and mathematical structures. We are thus presented with a very clear and comprehensive thesis, and a considerable amount of intelligent reflection. Discussion of the literature is usually relegated to the footnotes, especially in Part II of the book, which contains the bulk of Lorand's argument (Part I spells out the ideas of order, Part III applies them to art). Views from the history of aesthetics generally play a supportive and clarificatory role, except for those of Bergson, whose distinction between geometrical order and vital order is singled out for discussion in Part II, and Kant, whose views about beauty and art must still be addressed. Lorand's application of her theory shows respect for, sensitivity to, and comprehension of the vast range of material to be included under the heading 'art'. There is a fine bibliography and a delightful index (for those who like to tour a book from its themes).

Lorand's basic thesis is that the aesthetic experience is an experience of beauty, and that the principle of beauty is a special kind of order, which Lorand initially calls 'lawless order'. The thesis requires Lorand to argue both that there is such a thing as lawless order and that it is distinct from the 'discursive order' familiar to us in logic, mathematics and systematic thinking. The main aim of the book is to clarify what lawless order is and to show why it deserves to be considered as the principle of aesthetics, that is, why it should be called *aesthetic* order. The principle of aesthetic order is then applied as a sort of subvention to the question of beauty, which had been temporarily put aside. In order to begin the inquiry, however, we must at least adopt a certain attitude to beauty; for it is not uncontroversial to claim that it is the basis of aesthetic experience. Lorand is cautious about this. Her provisional attitude toward beauty is to make the concept inclusive of all aesthetic experience. It is thus paradoxical. It can be said that the elements of a beautiful object 'complement each other and are rightly situated' but 'there are neither constitutive nor stipulative rules that govern beauty' (p.1). The only firm assumption here is that aesthetic objects are composite (not a very controversial assumption, though some have argued that silence and empty space can be aesthetic objects). But the qualification about the lawlessness of beauty shows how weak the notions of complementarity and right situation are intended to be. It seems to me that Lorand's preliminary conception of beauty contains only what makes an object aesthetic: that it is attended to and is in that sense attractive. This is so general an idea, and so little indicative of the content of most conceptions of beauty, that it might have been better to elide beauty from the purely aesthetic theory from the start, and treat aesthetic experience directly as an experience of order. The question of beauty's place in art would then be more difficult, of course, for the concept would have to be established independently of the analysis of

order. If that were the case, beauty might turn out to be an essentially normative concept (as it was, for example, for the ancient Greeks). But Lorand's definition of beauty in terms of aesthetic order has the implication that beauty cannot be a normative concept. There is not much discussion of this point in the book, and it would be interesting to see what Lorand would have to say about it.

Part I of the book discusses the concepts of order and disorder in general. Readers who are interested primarily in the philosophy of art and who have little background in logic and mathematics may find this part of the book, and much of Part II, difficult. But Lorand clearly has taken great pains to explain the concepts involved and to provide instructive examples. The discussion of order in general is a necessary preliminary to showing that there are at least two types of order. Lorand's main task in chapter 1 is just to identify the most general properties of any order. These are: complexity, relation, and degree. By *complexity* is meant just that in any order there must be a set of at least two elements to stand in that order. The *relation* between elements that stand in an order is defined by the ordering principle of a set. And *degree* is a measure of the coherence between a set and its ordering principle. (Degree, Lorand points out, is not actually a property of all orders—for example there are binary orders, whose principles rigidly determine a class—but it is a property of all quantitative orders, which are the orders with which most of the book is concerned.) The discussion of disorder in chapter 2 touches on notions that will probably be much more familiar to most readers. Lorand reminds us of the many ways we can think about disorder: there is the simple state, absolute homogeneity, which is an *absence* of all order (since order entails complexity). There is the disorder that comes from lack of limit, there is randomness, there is disconnection, conflict, chaos. Consideration of these kinds of disorder leads us to refine our understanding of order and disorder in general. We observe that absolute order and disorder are inconceivable. We note that order and disorder have some common features. The value of this discussion, I think, is that it prepares the way for accepting that the aesthetic relations Lorand describes in the experience of beauty constitute a kind of order, aesthetic order. But Lorand does not put it that way. Rather, she says that understanding disorder is important to explaining the process of creation and the function of art. Unfortunately, not enough is said about this in the book to allow adequate consideration of that claim.

Part II carries out the main task of the book, which is to provide a definition and analysis of aesthetic order. There is an illuminating discussion of Bergson and a thorough, difficult analysis of aesthetic order. I shall not discuss either of those things here: not Bergson, because that would be a digression, nor the analysis, because to do justice to it, even in description, would require much more space than this review affords me. Instead I will concentrate on trying to make clear the two kinds of order that Lorand discusses. We have already observed that any order is complex. That means it is

composed of a set of elements. These elements stand in a relation to one another. The relation is given by the *ordering principle* of the set. But the ordering principle and the set *themselves* stand in a relation to one another: the ordering principle can be *external* to the set, or it can be *internal* to it. If it is external, the ordering principle can be understood apart from any particular case. For example, I can express the positive whole integers in the order: 1, 2, 3, etc., and when I do so I order them according to a principle of ordinality. But ordinality is a principle that I can apply to sizes, colours (in terms of wavelength), and a variety of other things. I can order my email messages by date, topic, priority, or any number of principles that could be used to order other things. And I can consider time or sequence as ordering principles without thinking of any particular things that will be ordered by them. If an ordering principle is internal, however, then it cannot be separated from the particular set in which it is found and cannot be understood in abstraction. It is logically possible that there be such a thing as an internal ordering principle, but Western philosophy, with its emphasis on abstraction and theory, has found the idea both uncongenial and impenetrable, and thus there are controversies over any putative example of an internally ordered set (skeptics will argue in any specific case either that there is an external principle or that there is no order). A common intuition is that organic forms are ordered by an internal principle: they are based on 'inner forces or structures that determine the nature of the object from within'. Whether this is so or not (Lorand points out that the concept of organic form exhibits great variety), organic form can't serve as the category of *aesthetic* order, because it lacks the quantitative aspects necessary for evaluative comparison. Lorand argues, however, that beauty is ordered by an internal principle, one which *does* have quantitative aspects and is therefore capable of standing as the principle of aesthetic order. The principle of a beautiful order is internal because novelty is an essential feature of beauty, and this novelty cannot be captured by any *a priori* principles. The remainder of Part II contains the analyses of aesthetic order (the internal ordering principle of beauty).

The last part of the book, Part III, contains 'aesthetic queries', discussions of beauty and art. The first chapter in this part, 'Understanding Beauty' is mainly a reply to Kant. Lorand argues that Kant was mistaken in making a distinction between free and dependent beauty, and she also argues that Kant was wrong to suppose that aesthetic judgment is disinterested. In her view, aesthetic appreciation requires interest in the details of an object as well as in its context. Although the replies to Kant are well grounded and thorough, the more interesting part of this chapter is Lorand's discussion of the opposites of beauty. As with her discussion of the various kinds of disorder, her treatment of the opposites of beauty sheds new light on the concept of beauty itself. We are treated to discussions of 'the ugly, the meaningless, the kitsch, the boring, the insignificant and the irrelevant' (p.248), to give the full list.

The last chapter of the book, 'Defining Art', is the most accessible but perhaps also the most controversial. There are wonderful discussions of the constitution, motivation, function, value, and metaphysics of art. But there is bound to be opposition to Lorand's claim that 'art is the product of the intentional effort to create beauty' (p.305). As definitions of art go, I think this is a considerable one, and I certainly agree that art should be a production, involve intention and realise beauty (although this last condition is bound to be controversial if 'beauty' is understood as anything more than aesthetic interest or attraction). But I think it may well be argued that the artist works, at least sometimes, with only vaguely apprehended intentions and that the creation of beauty is not necessarily one of them. Artists are often driven by a sense of completion, or dramatisation, or improvement, or destruction, or of the texture of reality, and not so obviously by beauty, even in Lorand's weak sense of aesthetic attractiveness.

Had it not been for the chapters on beauty and art which close out the book, it would have appeared much more interesting to a mathematician or logician than an 'aesthete'. This points out one of the problems with the term 'aesthetics' which may variously be taken as having to do essentially with art (a narrow sense) or merely with the logic of perception in general. Books about aesthetic theory in the latter sense often have little to do with art, except insofar as their results specify how the appearances of works of art are to be understood *as appearances*. By making the anchor of her theory the concept of *beauty* Lorand shows that she refuses to separate the two senses of aesthetics. She is committed both to understanding the logic of beauty (conceived as a property or result of a kind of order) and the beauty of art as a sensual experience. The question that remains is whether in applying the idea of an internally ordered set to the concept of beauty she has explained the attraction of art.

Eugenio Benitez

Jerrold Levinson ed., *Aesthetics and Ethics: Essays at the Intersection*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

There are ten articles in this book. 'Introduction: Aesthetics and Ethics' by Jerrold Levinson, 'Three Versions of Objectivity: Aesthetic, Moral and Scientific' by Richard Miller, 'Aesthetic Value, Moral Value and the Ambitions of Naturalism' by Peter Railton, 'On Consistency in One's Personal Aesthetics' by Ted Cohen, 'Art, Narrative, and Moral Understanding' by Noël Carroll, 'Realism of Character and the Value of Fiction' by Gregory Currie, 'The

Ethical Criticism of Art' by Berys Gaut, 'How Bad can Good Art Be?' by Karen Hanson, 'Beauty and Evil: The Case of Leni Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will*' by Mary Devereaux, and 'The Naked Truth' by Arthur Danto. In this review I discuss half (five) of the articles in the anthology and leave the others alone. Before I do that, however, let me say a few words about Levinson's introduction, which does an excellent job of presenting the volume to the general reader. Its summaries and comparisons are superb: detailed, careful, sympathetic, insightful, and eminently fair. In every case, without failure, Levinson has a good grasp of the main points of the article he presents. He is an ideal editor: every paper he introduces is carefully attended to in a precise yet kind way. It is one of the most helpful introductions I have ever seen.

The lead article of the anthology, 'Three Versions of Objectivity: Aesthetic, Moral and Scientific' by Richard W. Miller, argues that of the two criteria of objectivity met by science, subject-independent truth and epistemic universality, aesthetic and moral judgments secure the first albeit not the second. Moral and aesthetic evaluators can make non-perspectival judgments (they are allowed to state 'p' rather than only 'to me, it looks as if p') but they do not attain universality, for they must concede that the contradicting judgments of the object appraised need not be defective (biased, irrational, or flippant). That degree of objectivity of moral and aesthetic judgments, although it does not reach the height of objectivity that can be claimed by science, is yet enough to secure their intersubjective standing as genuine non-merely-autobiographical appraisals of matters of fact.

An author who adheres to such a position must explain how aesthetic evaluations that are not based on meticulously applying rules and principles to the case at hand (as moral judgments are), but on a spontaneous reaction of an observer, can attain objectivity, in any sense of the term. Miller's strategy of addressing this issue is based on what he takes to be a Kantian ploy, but in what follows I shall argue that it is not one at all.

Kant held that we find some objects aesthetically pleasurable because they are intuition-made items that we see as apt for the application of a concept. The presentation of such objects brings about a state of harmony between our two cognitive faculties, intuition and the understanding. Since that congruence is, Kant says, a precondition of our cognizing anything at all, an object that makes us feel that accord is pleasurable as such, as an object, regardless of the kind of object it is and the use we make of it in the service of our interests. The objectivity of the aesthetic is based on an (allegedly) essential trait of the human cognitive mechanism.

Miller's definition is superficially similar. He identifies aesthetic enjoyment as 'the enjoyment of a learninglike response that does not aim at truth or practical attainments' (p. 27). Instead of the neologism 'learninglike response' one may say, 'experience', for experience, being intentional (it is an experience of something) is a way of being acquainted with its inten-

tional object. So, we are to identify aesthetic pleasure with experience that is not aimed at truth or practical achievement. This echoes Kant, who held that an aesthetically enjoyed object is enjoyed as such, regardless of how far it advances our knowledge and practical interests. Yet what Miller says is different: he stipulates that if I experience *x* with an aim to advance my knowledge or practical attainments, I cannot enjoy *x* aesthetically. That is not Kant, and, also, it is surely false. I read the score of Beethoven's *Grosse Fuge*, op. 133 because I have an examination in which I have to demonstrate my knowledge of Beethoven's later works. In perusing the *Grosse Fuge* I aim to expand my knowledge and advance my practical interests, yet there is no reason why, when I experience it, I cannot enjoy it aesthetically. The same is true of anything else I experience: surely, a geologist inspecting a rock for signs of oil may admire its beauty? No aim can be so injurious that it desensitizes its pursuer to the aesthetic features of the inspected object. Miller states that aesthetic enjoyment cannot occur unless 'in the enjoyed process I am not actually engaged in finding further truths or gaining practical or moral insight' (p. 44). As we saw, that is false.

The other part of Miller's definition veers even further from Kant, and gets bogged down in the treacherous marshland between Kant and Sibley, where poor I.A. Richards has been seen last, in the Nineteen-Thirties. Sibley's position is clear and cogent: aesthetic appreciation (enjoyment or its opposite) is appreciation of aesthetic properties of an object, *x*. The objectivity of aesthetic judgment is grounded in the objectivity of the aesthetic properties judged. That view allows for aesthetic grading, for aesthetic properties range from the very negative to the very positive ones. Kant, who denies that aesthetic properties are objective, grounds the objectivity of the aesthetic judgment in its form: ideally, all appraisers aesthetically appraise *x* in the same way because *x* puts them into the same psychological state. That view does not lend itself to grading (in the case of pure, non-conceptualized, beauty), for degree of pleasure may vary between individuals. Objectivity of judgment extends only to the evidence that the cognitive faculties are shown as ready to intermesh. That position is clear and cogent, too.

Miller wants to transplant Sibley's grading into a Kantian terrain. He says: 'How much value a work possesses is determined by the highest such response it can ascertain on a scale determined by how much an intelligent, morally serious person would care about various kinds of aesthetic responses' (p. 27). We are to believe that there are many kinds of aesthetic enjoyments, that intelligent, morally serious people will grade them in the same manner, and it is possible to determine, for each case when a person incurs aesthetic enjoyment, of what kind it is, and hence what is its grade on the said scale. But that is a myth, most effectively and decisively debunked years ago by George Dickie. Indeed, we aesthetically enjoy different kinds of things, which can be shown, upon analysis, to possess various degrees of aesthetic excellence. But what champion of introspection can map and catalogue kinds of aesthetic

enjoyments? We do grade artworks for aesthetic value, but not through hearkening to experiential stirrings and gauging their intensity. A comparative analysis of texts may show why piece *x* is better than piece *y* by pointing out their aesthetic properties, not by counting reader's heartbeats.

According to Miller, 'when one reflects on an enjoyed process of taking in a work that has a bearing on aesthetic value . . . terms for processes of learning become apt: mystery and solution, the discovery of surprising implications, the deepening appreciation of the potential, the absolute encompassing of tense ambiguities, the discovery of order in apparent chaos, and so forth'. (p. 39) Reading such psychological renditions of structural descriptions gives one a sense of *deja vu*: is that not the ploy Beardsley used in his later years, when his erstwhile subjectivism came under attack (e.g., by Dickie)? Did he not say that psychological processes have aesthetic properties? But that ploy was clearly doomed. If you go the Sibley way and admit the reality of aesthetic properties, the objectivity of aesthetic judgment is ontologically secured. The reason to adopt a Kantian gambit is that it seems to ground the objectivity of aesthetic judgment without paying the ontological price exacted of Sibley followers. Miller's language in the above passage appears purely psychological, he seems to characterize and grade experiences only, not artworks and other candidates for aesthetic judgment. (Cf.: 'the learninglike process one enjoys can be more or less sustained, complex, or surprising', p. 40; 'if, listening to the quintet, I responded to the achievement of coherence in the face of constant shifts, the work has value', p. 45; etc.) But that appearance is a sham. Mystery, solution, tense ambiguities, order and apparent chaos, etc. are all structural features of texts and we can point them out and argue for their existence by consulting those texts only. The experimenter who will line up 'rational and morally serious' people and ask them to list what experiences they have had when they listened, e.g., to the *Grosse Fuge* will get only a chaotic array of various bodily sensations, stray thoughts and emotions. The only way to aesthetically grade art works is by attending to them, not to the fluctuations of psychological pacers implanted in some 'rational and morally serious' notables. Miller's limited objectivism is not Kantian: more than anything else, it is a revival of I. A. Richards' speculative psychologism. I do not think it has much better prospects than those of its venerable forerunner.

Miller's argument that science, unlike morality, has universal validity, is that 'a nihilist could understand our moral discourse well enough to deny that anything corresponds to it', but a skeptic who has no inclination to admit that 'current experiences represent the present environment' cannot understand our scientific discourse at all (p. 32). I demur, on both counts. First, the said inclination is not required. One may adopt the thesis that our experiences accurately represent the environment as an explanation of their occurrence. That hypothesis is simple, elegant and powerful, so it is methodologically indicated (at least primarily). A natural inclination to adopt that

hypothesis is handy, but scientifically irrelevant. Second, rational agents act for reasons, and must consider the justification of their purported actions under conditions of uncertainty and conflicting goals. Such considerations cannot take place without a battery of normative concepts (e.g., what goal justifies what means). Thus, if one were sincerely to deny that any norms ever apply, we would have to conclude that this person does not understand the normative discourse.

Ted Cohen's brilliantly original article 'On Consistency in One's Personal Aesthetics' discusses the systematic consistency of aesthetic judgments, hence the availability of objective justification for such judgments, from an entirely new angle: leaving aside the question of their intersubjective universalisability the author points out that even the aesthetic preferences of a single person are expected to make a coherent whole. That is, doubtless, correct. Only few people have a well-developed, systematically inter-supporting body of beliefs, but the consistency and coherence of one's system of desires is essential to the very notion of personhood. Having a character, any character at all, depends on having a personal system of ordered preferences. So, Cohen is indeed right to point out that the consistency requirement with respect to aesthetic judgments can be made independently of the issue of their intersubjective status. Radical relativists who deny that aesthetic judgments are subject to rational critique of any kind undermine, therefore, not only the intersubjective status of aesthetics but also the very notion of the person as such.

It is far less clear, however (Cohen points out) whether that kind of contextual critique requires that there be some general reasons for aesthetic preference, even in one's own case. Cohen asks: 'Do we believe that if there is a coherent aesthetic personality being exhibited, then there must be some [principle] . . . which explains its coherence? And what if we cannot find it?' (p. 122) In this connection Cohen discusses Isenberg's thesis, that there can be no general rule R such that if Rx then x is aesthetically good. Applying it to one's own case, Cohen says, it is always possible for a person A to believe he likes x because it is R, and then find some y such that Ry and yet he does not like y. According to Cohen, to preserve consistency A will withdraw the claim that R makes x likeable 'deciding that although Rx and Ry, it is not, after all, because of Rx that A likes x. And this leads to some discovery, R*x, as the real reason why A likes x' (p. 117). The same problem now recurs with respect to R*, and so on *ad infinitum*.

One may argue, against Cohen, that the above situation need not lead A to draw the conclusion that 'it is not, after all, because of Rx that A likes x'. Another conclusion may be that x is of kind F, and for items in that category

being R is an excellence, while *y*, on the other hand, is of kind G, and for G's being R is a blemish. Thus it is quite possible for A consistently to like *x* because it is R and dislike *y* because it is R. Does that move refute Cohen's argument? I do not think so. Ted Cohen would reply, I presume, that on the above account, A's reason for liking *x* is not really that R*x*, but, rather, that R*x*&F*x*, and R&F is just a property of the kind Cohen called 'R*'. That new property, or justification, or reason, is now subject to the same Isenbergian argument, from the beginning. And again an infinite regress ensues.

The correct reply, therefore, must be precisely the one that Ted Cohen gives. What justifies my liking *x* (and, I will add, what justifies saying that *x* is beautiful) is that it fits *u*, *v*, and *w*, and not that there is a rule R such that R(*u,v,w,x*). That situation, however, is by no means peculiar to aesthetics; it is common to all our judgments and ultimate justifications, be they in ethics, science, or anywhere else. If there is anything we learn from Wittgenstein, it is this: that rules are unable to ensure a single way of applying them. Even if you have a rule that guarantees, that if R*x* then *p*, we still have the problem of whether *x* is or is not R, that is, the problem of applying R. And it will not do if we have another rule R' which regulates the conditions under which R applies to *x*, because then we would need a rule R'' to regulate the application of R': this is a vicious regress. The way to avoid that regress, says Wittgenstein, is to say that *x* is R if and only if it fits *u,v*; and *w*: the items to which R has been applied in the past. Is there such a fit between *x* on the one side and *u,v,w* on the other side? That, says Wittgenstein, is something we have to see; no rule or method can do it for us. There is no decision procedure to mechanically check whether R applies to *x*, because there are some interpretations of R on which R*x* and other interpretations of R on which not-R*x*. Any rule attempting to fix the interpretation of R can itself be interpreted in many ways, and so the vicious regress starts anew. I think Wittgenstein is right on that point: we can go no further than see *u,v,w,x* as fitting each other, seeing them as pertaining to the same style. I therefore think that Ted Cohen is right, too.

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Noël Carroll's contribution to this collection is his richly documented essay 'Art, Narrative, and Moral Understanding'. That article, if I understand it correctly, advocates the highly reasonable thesis that some artworks, especially those that involve a narrative, have a moral significance in that they can serve in the moral education of people and in facilitating a change in people's moral attitudes. The statement I liked most in this article, and with which I entirely agree, is this: '[. . .] reading narrative literature typically involves us in a continuous process of moral judgment, which continuous exercise of moral judgment itself can contribute to the expansion of our

moral understanding' (p. 145). That statement is abundantly illustrated in examples from many works of literature and the cinema, and the case Carroll makes for it is indeed very strong. That is the forte of this article. Unfortunately, on the way to it the reader has to travel a very bumpy road. A great part of the paper is devoted to a discussion of a view, allegedly held by some writers (none of whom, however, is either named or quoted in any of the article's thirty highly detailed footnotes) which Carroll dubs 'Autonomism' or 'The Autonomist Position'. Carroll is surely right to object to that view, but I doubt that anyone would, or could, subscribe to it, so the many pages Carroll devotes to it seem bizarre. According to Carroll, the autonomist 'claims that there should be no moral assessment of art whatsoever' (p. 132). That is odd. Every human activity can be morally assessed. A thinker may find some activities morally laudable, others morally deplorable, and still others morally neutral (depending on the circumstances of their exercise), but surely no one holds that some human activity cannot or should not be morally assessed at all! It may be (as Carroll holds) that some art makes us morally better; it may be (as Tolstoy holds) that some art makes us morally worse; it may be that both claims, or else none of them, are true. But surely it is impossible that the very question, whether art is morally beneficial or detrimental, be 'of the nature of a category mistake' (*ibid.*). Where is the category mistake? I believe Carroll has to be wrong on this issue.

Indeed, some aestheticians hold that moral excellence is irrelevant to aesthetic excellence (with Carroll, I believe that this is not always so). But that is not the autonomist view formulated by Carroll. Carroll says: 'for the autonomist, an essential differentiating feature of art is that it is separate from morality; that is the autonomist's underlying philosophical conviction. Thus, from the autonomist's point of view, that we make moral assessments of certain artworks is a mystery that must signal our lack of taste or lack of understanding' (p. 127). That passage makes no sense to me at all. 'Take wrestling: is it separate from morality? In one sense, it certainly is. One may plausibly hold that excellence in wrestling is independent of moral excellence, and hence it is a category mistake to confuse one's excellence as a wrestler with moral excellence. Yet that does not imply the incredible view that wrestling, as such, is inherently impervious to moral evaluation, and thus pronouncing on moral benefits and drawbacks of wrestling involves a category mistake, or lack of understanding! Carroll says that, according to the autonomist, 'art has nothing to do with anything else. It is a unique form of activity with its own purposes and standards of evaluation' (p. 134). That is a *non sequitur*. Take wrestling again: one may hold that wrestling 'is a unique form of activity with its own purposes and standards of evaluation'; but who, in his right mind, will draw from that that wrestling 'has nothing to do with anything else'? The howler is due, not to any mythical autonomists, but to Carroll alone.

I would not have dwelt on Carroll's confused presentation of the view he calls 'Autonomism', even though it occupies many of the pages of his article.

were it not symptomatic of a certain carelessness in this article as a whole. For example, Carroll argues against Plato: 'there is no cause to conceive of the emotions and reason as locked in ineliminable opposition. Reason - that is to say, cognition - is a constituent of the emotions rather than an alien competitor' (p. 131). Now, first, Plato's Reason cannot be equated with cognition. Second, even if emotions require the use of reason, the opposite can be denied, and hence plain reason, free of emotion, may still advocate a course of action that is opposed to the one suggested by one's emotion. Carroll's use of such lame arguments is evident throughout his paper.

The core of the paper involves the question whether the study of narrative can be a form of moral education and, as I said, I think Carroll is right to answer that question in the affirmative. Yet his answer is highly qualified. His view, which he calls 'Clarificationism', is that we do not 'acquire interesting, new propositional knowledge from artworks, but rather . . . the artworks in question can deepen our moral understanding' (p. 142). The artwork makes 'audience members put together previously disconnected belief segments . . . they are prompted to make connections between the beliefs they already have' (p. 143). How does a play like *Raisin in the Sun* succeed in changing the attitude of white audiences to African-Americans? It is not a matter of learning new propositions, says Carroll, for 'the white audience already knows that African-Americans are persons and that persons deserve treatment as equals. [. . .] What the play succeeds in doing is to create a situation that encourages the audience to forge a salient connection between heretofore perhaps isolated beliefs' (*ibid.*). It is all so simple and nice. Bigots know that African-Americans are persons and that persons deserve treatment as equals (and what does that mean, pray? All persons deserve equal pay? Equal grades? Equal mates? Equal what?). To this mawkish moral mind, the problem of bigots is that they fail to put these two propositions together. The play solves that problem for them by combining these propositions, and so they now draw the inevitable conclusion from the beliefs they held all along: Aha! I now see it clearly: if black people are persons, they should be treated as my equals!

I think I need not comment on that magnificently naive view of human nature. That inveterate, benign spirit is prevalent in the article and crucial to its 'Clarificationist' position. Apparently, not only blacks, but homosexuals too, were persecuted through the ages only because we were such bad logicians, held inconsistent beliefs and failed to draw the logical conclusions from the simple beliefs we held all along. Liberalism is a matter of logic, pure and simple. For example, by calling attention to and emphasizing the fact that gays and lesbians are fully human persons one can often convince heterosexuals that gays and lesbians are thereby fully deserving of the rights that those heterosexuals in question already believe should be accorded to all persons' (p. 148). The trouble with that oh-so-pretty picture of human practices and beliefs is that it is utterly false. Fundamentalists and other gay

bashers do not deny that homosexuals are fully human persons, just as they do not deny that murderers and heretics are persons. It is precisely because they are fully responsible human persons, and yet engage in acts that the bigots consider abominations and perversions, that they are jailed, lashed, or (as is still the case in some countries) executed. Carroll's conclusion is right: artworks do change our moral attitudes. But they do not do that by improving our logical acumen, aiding us to draw the inevitable conclusions from pious, maudlin propositions we held all along. That argument has no merit. The Pollyanna sentiments it shows are admirable, but the reasoning that supports them is not.

Currie's contribution to this anthology is brief, bold, and beautiful. It is a highly condensed article, bristling with ideas and original suggestion, and it is also masterfully written. It is a true gem. The basic question the article poses is, what is fiction good for, and the answer suggested is nothing short of this bold hypothesis: 'fictions aid our natural capacity to plan our lives' (p. 171). How is that? Relying on some psychological research and daringly extrapolating, Currie argues that we learn how to countenance new, complex situations not through constructing theories about the likely behavior and responses of others (that method is fit for computers; it is far too complex for us) but 'by imaginatively projecting myself into their situations' (p. 175). Literature gives us opportunities to exercise our ability to imagine ourselves into novel situations. 'Experimental results suggest that people can improve their performance on various tasks not only by repeatedly carrying out the tasks, but by *imagining* carrying them out', and thus 'imagination helps us to negotiate, say, complex social interactions' (p.166). These ideas of Currie are highly reminiscent of the practice that Wilhelm Dilthey, a hundred years ago, called *Das Verstehen* – self-projection that enables us to empathize with, and hence to comprehend by feeling it, what others sense, feel, believe, desire, and intend to do. That makes fiction an exercise in human-style life-planning.

An underpinning for that view is supplied in a novel theory of realism in literature, and the nature of literature in general. According to Currie, fictional characters are like the people we meet in daily life mainly in that they 'are capable of calling forth from us imaginative responses that are similar to those called forth by our encounters with real people' (p. 163); thus 'a work possesses realism of character when it enables us to engage in that same kind of empathic understanding with its characters. When we can respond *that way* to its characters, we are responding to fiction as to life' (p. 173). Against many aestheticians (e.g., Walton) who deny that imagining involves our experiencing genuine emotion, Currie insists that our reaction to an imagined sit-

uation makes us 'experience – actually experience, that is – emotion' (p. 167). As one who has long advocated that view I, of course, enthusiastically agree; but, as indicated, Currie uses that feature ('calling forth a like response') as definitive of realism in art. Currie's new definition of mimetic realism is thus through similarity, not of object, but of our reaction to it. That is a bold move, an exciting suggestion that deserves close scrutiny (for one may ask what explains that similarity of response if not a similarity between the objects responded to?).

Given that underpinning, Currie can go on to suggest that mimetic literature is supplying us with an occasion for moral education. Unlike Carroll in the previous article Currie maintains that art may cause a thorough moral change in us. Again, I tend to agree with him. Indeed, if realistic literature enables us to 'engage in a systematic sampling of the character's life' (p. 170), if being exposed to art is being exposed to emotional adventures that one empathically experiences, then it is no wonder that these new challenges and encounters that occur when one projects oneself into the fictive world can deeply and irrevocably change one's character, heighten one's appreciation of and sensitivity to others. That is 'how fiction supplements the moral lessons of experience in a way that *more experience* could not easily do' (p. 170).

At this point, after having agreed with Currie down the line, I wish to register my first, and only, reservation against what I think is Currie's excessive optimism. On Currie's view imaginative art can make us only morally better, never morally worse; engagement in fiction is 'a reliable belief-forming process or a reliable improver of moral capacities' (p. 178) and thus can be said to give us moral knowledge. 'Most of us would be better moral agents' by following fictional narratives, says Currie, (p. 164), because meeting fictional characters is (as far as reaction is concerned) a lot like associating with real people and empathizing with them. 'In empathizing with others I come to share their mental states, which powerfully reinforces my tendency to take their interests into account. (It may also be that empathy is the source of moral sense . . .)' (p. 169). It is precisely because I agree with Currie's premise that I cannot accept his benign conclusion. Indeed, meeting with imaginary people and empathizing with them is a powerful force that may bring about moral change in one, but I do not believe that this change must always be for the better. There is such a thing as bad company. Associating with, and sympathizing with, great villains need not change one for the better: it may change one for the worse. It is possible for one to savor, first in one's imagination, and then perhaps crave and seek, kinds of satisfaction that the morally objectionable protagonists of great literature notoriously indulge in. It is therefore true that great literature is a great educator, and the experiences it offers help one mature and morally grow. But I think there is no a priori guarantee that the said moral growth need be of the right kind. The ways of achieving aesthetic excellence need not tally with those of achieving moral excellence.

To my mind, Berys Gaut's contribution to this collection, 'The Ethical Criticism of Art', is, I think, exemplary of philosophical writing at its best. It is a clear, precise, pithy, formulation of a bold philosophical, highly interesting thesis that is accurately presented and lucidly argued for. No smoke screens, no shady subterfuges and evasive maneuvers. The reader knows exactly what the author claims and what are his grounds for holding that view. Needless to say, I love this article. I also strongly disagree with it: I think its core argument is unsound.

Gaut names the thesis he advocates 'ethicism'. It is the claim that 'manifesting ethically admirable attitudes *counts toward* the aesthetic merit of a work, and manifesting reprehensible attitudes *counts against* its aesthetic merit' (p. 182). Having a highly commendable moral stance is not a sufficient condition for finding an artwork aesthetically good, and a reprehensible stance is not sufficient for finding it bad, but being morally good counts toward an artwork's having a high aesthetic value and being morally wicked counts, according to Gaut, against it.

What is Gaut's argument for ethicism? I can do no better than quote Gaut's pellucid formulation of the argument. It is this. 'A work's manifestation of an attitude is a matter of the work's prescribing certain responses toward the events described. If these responses are unmerited, because unethical, we have reason not to respond in the way prescribed. Our having reason not to respond in the way prescribed is a failure of the work. What responses the work prescribes is of aesthetic relevance. So the fact that we have reason not to respond in the way prescribed is an *aesthetic* failure of the work, that is to say, is an aesthetic defect. So a work's manifestation of ethically bad attitudes is an aesthetic defect in it. *Mutatis mutandis*, a parallel argument shows that a work's manifestation of ethically commendable attitudes is an aesthetic merit in it, since we have reason to adopt a prescribed response that is ethically commendable. So ethicism is true' (pp. 195-6).

Gaut argues that the proper consumption of a given artwork calls the consumer to perform certain mental actions. There are elements in it the reader is expected to enjoy or be amused by; some parts in the work call for its reader, listener, or spectator to experience certain emotions: feeling those emotions is called for by the work and needed if one is to appreciate the aesthetic merits of the work. Gaut briefly argues against formalist aestheticians and others (e.g., K. Walton) who deny that claim, but I, as indicated earlier in this review, accept it: I think it is entirely correct; so I shall not linger on it any further and accept that claim of Gaut as satisfactorily established. I also agree with Gaut's claim that the adoption of a certain frame of mind and experiencing certain emotions at certain times (e.g., experiencing pleasure at the suffering of others) are subject to moral evaluation, and thus, some of

them are ethically enjoined while others are morally improper and it is one's moral duty to avoid them, not to engage in them. So, I go a long way toward accepting the premises of Gaut's argument. Yet the argument is not sound.

It is certainly not surprising that a product dictates what its consumer should do in order properly to appreciate it; that feature is common to all artifacts. You cannot appreciate what is good about nails if, instead of driving them into a wall, you try to cook them; etc. An artwork is a certain kind of artifact; and like all other artifacts, there is something specific you must do with it in order to appreciate it and be able to tell good artworks from bad ones. Now, the actions you are expected to perform in order to appreciate a certain artwork are, like all other acts, morally assessable, and some of them may turn out to be morally objectionable, actions that a moral person should be unwilling to engage in. So far, then, Gaut is perfectly right. But this is the last point on which he is right, and I hope it is now clear that the rest of his argument is invalid: his conclusions do not follow from the premises that I hitherto granted. Consider another artifact, say, a handgun. That artifact is made for one purpose: it is designed to kill people. Its degree of excellence can be properly appreciated only if it is used for that purpose: how fast and how accurately its user can kill other people and how many of them she can kill using it. Killing people, however, is not a good thing to do. In the vast majority of cases (some say, always) it is morally reprehensible. Surely, you should not (except under most exceptional circumstances) use your handgun for the purpose it was designed for, i.e., to kill people. But the fact that you should not use that artifact in the manner proper to it is irrelevant to its degree of excellence as the kind of artifact it is. The sentence 'this is an excellent weapon; I hope you never use it' contains no contradiction. The goodness of a given artifact, as the kind of artifact it is, is entirely based on how it functions when its user acts in the manner proper to it, that is, in the way that maximizes the effectiveness of that device, and is entirely independent of the question whether behaving in that manner is moral or not. Had Gaut been right, the following pastiche of his argument quoted above would have been correct: 'The proper use of a gun prescribes certain actions. If these actions are unmerited, because unethical, we have reason not to act in the way prescribed. Our having reason not to act in the way prescribed is a failure of the gun. What actions the gun prescribes is relevant to its excellence as a gun. So the fact that we have reason not to act in the way prescribed is a failure of the *gun as a weapon*, that is to say, is a defect in it as a weapon. So a gun's involving ethically bad actions is a munition-like defect in it. *Mutatis mutandis*, a parallel argument shows that a gun's manifestation of an ethically commendable result, e.g., its being incapable of killing, is a merit it has as a weapon, since we have reason to adopt a prescribed behavior that is ethically commendable'. Surely, that is farce. But then Gaut's argument is no good, either.

The point is general for all artifacts. Take a road: can there be a good road to a casino? The use intended for that road, the position prescribed for us to

take with respect to it so as to appreciate its goodness as a transportation device, is travel on it in great numbers at various times of the day and the night. Yet if gambling is morally wrong, then having a secure, fast and easy way for a great number of people to go to a gambling institution at all times is a morally deplorable state, a state inimical to the public good. Does this imply that a road's leading to a casino in safety and comfort is a drawback from a pure transportational point of view, that being casino-bound is a flaw in a road considered as a mere device for public transit? Will putting sudden curves, bumps and potholes in that road make it *a better road*? No, of course not.

The same holds for the aesthetic appreciation of artworks. An artwork is aesthetically good if, when consumed in the prescribed manner it leads one to experience aesthetic excellence. Now, that manner can be morally objectionable. Indeed, it often is: many great artworks manifest a stand (the hideous morality of Dante's *Divina Commedia*, the arch-conservatism of Dostoevski's *Brothers Karamazov*, the jingoism of Shakespeare's *Henry V*, the racism of Griffith's *Birth of a Nation*, the sexism of Mozart and Da Ponte's *Don Giovanni*, etc.) we should refuse to adopt. Given such a work we have two options. We may either imaginatively bracket our moral sensitivity for a while so as to consume it as intended, or else say that despite its aesthetic excellence, the mental stance required for consuming it is so objectionable that it should not be consumed (by all people, or by young, impressionable people, etc.). Both positions are reasonable, but it is not reasonable to conclude that due to its moral depravity that work is not aesthetically excellent after all.

Apart from this main point there are a few other comments one would like to make a propos Gaut's fine article. For example, on p. 190 Gaut claims that since 'it is essential for a poem that it be composed of the particular words that comprise it . . . it is essential to it that it have in it the particular letters that it has'. I take it that by 'x is essential to y' Gaut means that x cannot survive the elimination or change of its feature y. But then the above claim is blatantly false; as a speaker of English, a language many of whose words are spelt now differently than they were spelt in the past, and are spelt differently in different countries, Gaut should know better. His claim implies, for example, that it is conceptually impossible the same poem should appear in a British and an American anthology (due to the different spelling of some words), that we read English and Scottish Ballads (due to the absence of definitive orthography), etc. I am not even sure that the presence of all the words is essential to a poem. That injunction implies that a poem cannot be amended: strike down one word and the entire poem is annihilated. I admit that Croce did think so, and so did Goodman, but that is not the way we usually speak, and on matters of identity ordinary use is, I think, the last arbiter.

Eddy M. Zemach