Value in Ethics and Economics

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Preface

Why not put everything up for sale? I first began wondering about this question more than a decade ago, when political theories that advocated virtually unlimited market expansion were enjoying a resurgence that continues to this day. Since then the market itself has expanded into new domains, such as human organs and women's reproductive powers. We have seen the labor union movement, which once imposed powerful constraints on labor markets, in dramatic retreat from the private sector in the United States. Market deregulation and privatization have dominated economic policies in North America and Western Europe, while Eastern Europe is now opening up to capitalist development. People have increasingly withdrawn from civic life to malls and privately developed, sheltered "communities," while public spaces in inner cities are used to "house" the homeless and the mentally ill.

Most of the debates about these developments have concentrated on questions of efficiency and income distribution. Although these are important issues, I do not believe that they exhaust the concerns we should have about the ethical limitations of the market. We should also care about what sorts of people and communities we make of ourselves when we treat women as commercial baby factories, public spaces of social interaction as places either to shop or to avoid, and the natural environment as just another economically exploitable resource. In this book I attempt to articulate and justify these other sorts of concerns.

When I first turned to philosophy and social science to help me think about the proper scope of the market, I didn't find what I was looking for. The dominant models of human motivation, rational choice, and value in

these disciplines seem tailor-made to represent the norms of the market as universally appropriate for nearly all human interaction. According to the prevailing theories of value, people realize their good in having their wants satisfied. Markets are represented as generically appropriate vehicles for satisfying anyone's wants. According to the prevailing theories of rationality, people act rationally when they maximize their "utility" (welfare or want-satisfaction). Market choices provide the paradigm for this kind of rationality, which social scientists have eagerly generalized to cover the entire domain of human action. So markets are represented as the generically rational form of human organization. To count as rational, any other domain of human interaction would have to be governed by the same principles as the market. People can maximize utility only if they can find a common measure of value for all their options. Markets seem to provide such a common measure because they can put a cash value on almost anything people want.

One could find room within the prevailing theories of value and rational choice to question much of what markets do. Still, these theories share with economistic political theories several features that make this task more difficult. One is a socially impoverished conception of the individual. These theories represent an individual adult as freely forming and expressing his rational preferences apart from any particular social contexts or relations to others. This individualistic picture of a rational person, as self-sufficient and independent of others, supports a consumerist ideology that represents the individual as most free and rational in his market choices, where he need not concern himself with anyone else in deciding what to buy. This obscures the role of dialogue with others in making sense of ourselves and the role of social norms in shaping reasonable desires. It also leads to a psychologically impoverished conception of an individual's concerns. The prevailing theories of value and rationality suppose that when people value or care about something, they are engaging only one basic attitude or response—desire, perhaps, or pleasure—which can vary quantitatively but not qualitatively. And this view, in turn, leads to a drastically reductionistic or monistic view of value. Being valuable becomes a matter of having a single property or arousing a single response in us. Goods differ in quantity, as they arouse more or less of the same response, but not in quality or in kind.

My original interest in the limits of markets led me to formulate a new theory of value and rationality that avoids the defects of the dominant theories. My theory emphasizes the richness and diversity of our concerns and finds a place for the full range of our responses to what we value. We

don't respond to what we value merely with desire or pleasure, but with love, admiration, honor, respect, affection, and awe as well. This allows us to see how goods can be plural, how they can differ in kind or quality: they differ not only in *how much* we should value them, but in *how* we should value them. In trying to make sense of the different ways we have of valuing things, we arrive at a socially integrated conception of the rational person. Being rational is a matter of intelligibly expressing our varied concerns to others. To do this, we must govern our conduct by shared norms established in dialogue with others, norms that are constitutive of different spheres and roles of social life. This socially grounded view of value and rationality, in turn, provides the key to understanding the ethical limitations of markets. If different spheres of social life, such as the market, the family, and the state, are structured by norms that express fundamentally different ways of valuing people and things, then there can be some ways we ought to value people and things that can't be expressed through market norms. We have to govern their production, circulation, and enjoyment through the norms of other social spheres to value them adequately.

This book covers a lot of ground, from theories of value and rational choice, to disputes about justification and the objectivity of values, to theories of freedom, autonomy, markets, and politics. Different readers are therefore likely to be interested in different parts of this book. Those who are primarily interested in markets and politics should read Chapter 1, and then Chapters 7, 8, and 9. Those who are primarily interested in the theory of value should read Chapters 1 and 6, then §2.3, §§3.2–3.3, and §4.2. Those who are primarily interested in the theory of practical reason should read Chapters 1 through 5. Those who are interested in asking what value judgments mean, whether they express beliefs or emotions or other attitudes, and whether they refer to really existing values will not find me much engaged with these issues. Because my own inclinations are pragmatic, I prefer to set aside these semantic and metaphysical disputes and concentrate on normative questions. However, my investigations expose some features of our evaluative practices and experiences that any metaethical theory should accommodate. In Chapters 1 through 6 I discuss phenomena potentially relevant to these disputes.

The last three chapters of this book contain material I have published before. Chapter 7 is a revised and expanded version of "The Ethical Limitations of the Market," *Economics and Philosophy* 6 (1990): 179–205. Chapter 8 is a revised version, with replies to my critics, of "Is Women's Labor a Commodity?" *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 19 (1990): 71–92.

Portions of Chapter 9 are drawn from "Values, Risks, and Market Norms," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 17 (Winter 1988): 54–65. I thank Cambridge University Press for permission to reprint the first article, and Princeton University Press for permission to reprint the last two.

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Value in Ethics and Economics

1 • A Pluralist Theory of Value

1.1 A Rational Attitude Theory of Value

People experience the world as infused with many different values. Friendships can be intimate, or merely convenient, charged with sexual excitement, or mellow. A subway station can be confining, menacing, and dumpy, or spacious, welcoming, and sleek. When people attribute goodness or badness to some thing, person, relationship, act, or state of affairs, they usually do so in some respect or other: as dashing, informative, or tasty, delightful, trustworthy, or honorable, or as corrupt, cruel, odious, horrifying, dangerous, or ugly. Our evaluative experiences, and the judgments based on them, are deeply pluralistic.

I aim to explain and vindicate this pluralism of ordinary evaluative thought and to develop some of its practical and theoretical implications. This requires an investigation into the ways people relate to goods: in experiencing values, in valuing or caring about things, in expressing and justifying value judgments. Understanding these phenomena will help us home in on what it is to be good and how we know things to be good.

The suggestion that we have evaluative experiences has struck many philosophers as metaphysically eerie: science has discovered no "evaluative facts," or any organs of "moral sense," that enable us to discern the properties of "good" and "bad" in the world (Mackie 1977, pp. 38–42). We can dispel this mystery by recalling what ordinary experiences of value are like. We experience things not as simply good or bad, but as good or bad in particular respects that elicit distinct responses in us. There is nothing mysterious about finding a dessert delectable, a joke hilarious, a soccer match exhilarating, a revolution liberating. We also can find someone's compliments cloying, a task burdensome, a speech boring. To experience something as good is to be favorably aroused by it—to be

inspired, attracted, interested, pleased, awed. To experience it as bad is to be unfavorably aroused by it—to be shocked, offended, disgusted, irritated, bored, pained. Evaluative experiences are experiences of things as arousing particular positive or negative emotional responses in us.

Evaluative experiences are relevant to questions concerning the good because they typically arouse or express our concerns about what we experience. Valuing or caring about things is more fundamental to understanding values than are experiences of value, for many things can be good which are not directly encountered in experience, but are known only through theory or description (Johnston 1989, p. 142). No particular qualities of experience need to accompany knowledge of the literacy rate, the justice of patterns or processes of wealth distribution, or the stability of habitats for endangered species. What makes such things candidates for goodness seems to be that we can care about them or value them.

To value something is to have a complex of positive attitudes toward it, governed by distinct standards for perception, emotion, deliberation, desire, and conduct. People who care about something are emotionally involved in what concerns the object of care. Parents who love their children will normally be happy when their children are successful and alarmed when they are injured. They will be alert to their needs, take their welfare seriously in their deliberations, and want to take actions that express their care. These all express the way loving parents value their children.

To experience something as valuable and to value it are not to judge that it is valuable. A person may laugh at a racist joke, but be embarrassed at her laughter. Her embarrassment reflects a judgment that her amusement was not an appropriate response to the joke. The joke was not genuinely good or funny: it did not merit laughter. A person could also judge that a joke is funny, but be so depressed that she can't bring herself to laugh at it. Such a judgment could be the occasion of further depression, because it makes her aware of her own deficient state of mind, too miserable even to appreciate a good joke.

These observations support the following proposal: to judge that something is good is to judge that it is properly valued. And to judge that it is bad is to judge that it is properly disvalued. Often people judge that something is good in some particular respect, as in being charming, or inventive. I suggest that the proposition "x is F," where F is a respect in which something is judged to be genuinely valuable, entails that x meets a particular standard F, and that x merits valuation in virtue of meeting F.[1] One intrinsically values something when one values it in itself—that is,

apart from valuing anything else. I propose that the judgment that x is intrinsically valuable entails that (under normal conditions) x is properly intrinsically valued, independent of the propriety of valuing any other particular thing. Extrinsic values include but are not confined to instrumental values. One may treasure an ugly, useless gift because it was given by a loved one. Such a gift is extrinsically valuable, in that one's valuation of it depends upon one's valuation of the giver.

Reflective value judgments commit one to certain forms of self-assessment which are embodied in second-order attitudes, or attitudes about other attitudes. As we saw above, one may be embarrassed or depressed by one's failure to respond appropriately to what one judges to be good. One may be pleased by or proud of one's appropriate valuations. I propose that this is so because the concepts of meriting valuation and being properly valued are rationality concepts. When we wonder whether something is appropriately valued, we wonder whether *we* would be making sense in valuing it. On my view, the investigation into what is worth our caring about is a quest for self-understanding, an attempt to make sense of our own valuational responses to the world. In §5.1, I will tie the project of rational self-understanding to social practices of justification. Here I will offer a provisional account of the story to come. The link between self-understanding and justification is provided by the fact that valuations are expressive states. They are bearers of meanings and subject to interpretation. Since meanings are public, I can understand my own attitudes only in terms that make sense to others. Attitudes are also partly constituted by norms that determine their proper objects. So the interpretation of attitudes involves their evaluation as well. I will argue that people interpret and justify their valuations by exchanging reasons for them with the aim of reaching a common point of view from which others can achieve and reflectively endorse one another's valuations. To judge that one's valuations make sense is to judge that they would be endorsed from that hypothetical point of view. To be rational is to be suitably responsive to reasons offered by those attempting to reach that point of view.

The terms in which we make sense of our valuations are given by our evaluative concepts. The opening of this chapter sampled some of the rich variety of concepts through which we describe evaluative experiences and express value judgments. Call a person's values whatever standards she accepts for evaluating persons, actions, and things. Evaluation is the process by which a person judges how far and in what ways different things meet her standards. An object's values consist of whatever properties it has, in virtue of which it meets various standards of value. I have proposed that

the judgment that an object meets an authentic standard of value entails that its meeting that standard makes it sensible for someone to value it. The standards of value for objects are standards of rationality for our responses to them. One of my values could be that bedrooms be cozy. If a given bedroom is cozy, then coziness is a value it has. Its coziness gives me a reason to feel comfortable in it and makes sense of my feeling snug when I retire there. Standards rationally adjust our valuations to their appropriate objects.

Although all authentic values set standards for rational valuation, not every rational valuation of something depends upon its meeting some standard of value (Gaus 1990, pp. 70–71). Some ways of caring about things do depend upon their measuring up to particular standards of value—people don't admire athletes or musicians who lack dedication and skill—but other ways of valuing things do not. Parental love is like this. Parents can love infants independent of any valuable qualities they may have. Of course, loving another person will usually involve delight in some of that person's qualities, as when parents rave over the fact that little Melissa has her father's eyes. But this doesn't imply that the parents think that having father's eyes merits anyone's raving, much less that their love for Melissa depends upon her having her father's eyes. Rather, parents express their love for an infant in part by adoring whatever features she has which can be adored. These features need not merit valuation in their own right: parents can dote even on an ugly face.

It follows that we have two conceptions of goods that do not exactly coincide. On one view, a good is something that is appropriately valued. On the second, a good is a bearer or bundle of qualities that meet certain standards or requirements we (correctly) set for it (Mackie 1977, pp. 55–56). The second conception defines a subset of the objects that fall under the first: those things that *merit* valuation by meeting prior standards of value. But the first conception is more basic, for it can be appropriate to value some things or persons in certain ways without their meeting independent standards of evaluation—that is, without their meriting valuation.

The two conceptions of goods lead to two conceptions of the plurality of goods. On the first, goods are plural in that they are sensibly valued in fundamentally different ways. The opposing monistic view holds that all goods are the proper objects of a single evaluative attitude, such as desire, pleasure, or admiring contemplation. On the second conception, goods are plural in that the authentic evaluative standards they meet are fundamentally diverse. The opposing monistic view maintains that the apparently diverse standards for rational valuation can be reduced to some single

ground or explained by reference to a single good-constituting property, such as being desired or pleasant. The first conception of pluralism is more basic than the second because it explains why the second is true: we need a plurality of standards to make sense of the plurality of emotional responses and attitudes we have to things. The things that sensibly elicit delight are not generally the same things that merit respect or admiration. Our capacities for articulating our attitudes depend upon our understandings of our attitudes, which are informed by norms for valuation. To attempt to reduce the plurality of standards to a single standard, ground, or good-constituting property threatens to obliterate the self-understandings in terms of which we make sense of and differentiate our emotions, attitudes, and concerns. To adopt a monistic theory of value as our self-understanding is to hopelessly impoverish our responsive capacities to a monolithic "pro" or "con" attitude or to mere desire and aversion.

In identifying what is good with the proper objects of positive valuation, my theory follows Franz Brentano's. Brentano (1969, p. 18) held that an object is good if and only if it is correct to love it, and bad if and only if it is correct to hate it. My theory adds two main points to Brentano's. First, it views the concept of "correctness" as a rationality concept, tied to the quest for rational self-understanding. My theory of value could be called a "rational attitude theory," according to which the attitudes engaged when we care about things involve not just feelings but judgment, conduct, sensitivities to qualities in what we value, and certain ways of structuring deliberation concerned with what we value.[2] Second, there is not just one way to love or have a "pro-attitude" toward things. There are different forms of love, such as romantic, parental, and fraternal, and there are ways of valuing things that are not love at all, such as respect and admiration. The variety of ways of caring about things is the source of pluralism in my theory of value.

1.2 Ideals and Self-Assessment

Valuing and evaluation are distinct activities. In evaluation, people determine how far something meets the particular standards they set for it. In valuing something, people meet certain standards for caring about it, although they may be unaware of, may not endorse, and may not try to govern their actions by those standards. A person could care about something but judge himself contemptible for caring about it. For example, Max could discover to his dismay that he is absorbed by his own good looks, even though he judges his vanity contemptible. Evaluation is a

means by which people come to rational self-understanding and self-governance of their own valuations. Because the standards of value people set for objects are the standards of rationality they set for their valuations, every evaluation of an object implies an evaluation of the valuing subject. In bringing their evaluations and valuations into harmony, people judge themselves worthy of positive valuation, or at least not worthy of negative valuation.

This suggests that the grounds of a person's reflectively held values (if she has any) lie in her conceptions of what kind of person she ought to be, what kinds of character, attitudes, concerns, and commitments she should have. I call such self-conceptions *ideals.* Ideals are objects not merely of desire, but of aspiration. The desires to be an exemplary mother or a U.S. Marine, to be a suave, sophisticated cosmopolitan or a self-made man, to be a champion of science over superstition or a zealous missionary devoted to spreading God's word are aspirations toward ideals with which we are familiar. Members of communities may have shared ideals, such as to be a citizen republic, culturally or racially pure, to be the artistic avant-garde, to live in holy matrimony or in harmony with nature. As these examples suggest, to call a self-conception an ideal is not necessarily to endorse it, but to imply that it is a possible object of admiration or condemnation, honor or disdain, and that the people who adopt it regard it as worthy.

Ideals set the standards of conduct and emotion people expect themselves to satisfy with regard to other people, relationships, and things. A U.S. Marine is supposed to be patriotic—to love his country, obey its leaders, and fight to the death for the causes it esteems. A connoisseur of fine art is supposed to cultivate an appreciation of subtle qualities in painting and sculpture and to be appalled at damage done to great works. A labor union activist is supposed to build solidarity with fellow members of the working class and to feel that "an injury to one is an injury to all." Such standards of conduct and emotion tell us how to care about things and people. We care about things and people in different ways, which express what I call different *modes of valuation,* such as love, respect, and admiration. Ideals give us perspectives from which to articulate and scrutinize the ways we value things.

The core of an ideal consists in a conception of qualities of character, or characteristics of the community, which the holders regard as excellent and as central to their identities. Associated with this core is a conception of admirable conduct or worthy practices and projects that demand the cultivation, exercise, and expression of these qualities. An ideal is constitu-

tive of a person's identity if it governs her self-assessments and her responses to her achievement and failure and if she uses it to discipline her desires and frame her choices. Failure to live up to one's ideals will prompt shame, guilt, self-contempt, or other negative self-assessing emotions. Circumstances which prevent a person from realizing her ideals are likely to be experienced as humiliating and degrading, not just as frustrating.

Ideals ground some crucial distinctions in the theory of value. One is between value and importance to a person. I have claimed that goods are things whose valuation is rational. An ambiguity exists here between what anyone could rationally value if she were in appropriate circumstances and what it makes sense for a particular person to value, given her circumstances and characteristics. I reserve the impersonal sense of rationality for the attribution of value to something and the personal sense for what is important to a person. There is a great diversity of worthwhile ideals, not all of which can be combined in a single life. Different ideals may require the cultivation of incompatible virtues or the pursuit of some projects that necessarily preclude the pursuit of others. Individuals with different talents, temperaments, interests, opportunities, and relations to others rationally adopt or uphold different ideals. Since ideals direct a person to specially value some worthwhile projects, persons, and things over others, they distinguish from among all goods those that are particularly important to the individual.

That incompatible ideals are properly adopted by different persons explains why it doesn't make sense for everyone to take up the same attitudes toward the same things. There are far more potentially worthy objects of valuation than could occupy any one person's concern. The different relations individuals have toward persons and things help determine their proper attitudes toward them. This is obviously true for love. Radically different kinds of love are appropriate to different members of one's family, depending on one's relationship to them. That an individual stands in a particular relation to some persons or objects—say, as daughter, business partner, or inventor—partly determines the ideals rationally available to her, the importance these persons and objects have for her, and hence the appropriate attitudes she should take up toward them.

So ideals distinguish among goods that play a more or less important role in a person's life. They also distinguish between goods that are important to a person just because she happens to care about them and goods that are important to her because they command her concern (Frankfurt 1988). In the former case, as long as the goods don't violate minimal impersonal standards for rational valuation, it doesn't matter for her self-

regard whether she cares about them or loses interest in them. In the latter case, whether she cares about them can reflect well or poorly on herself. A person sees her failure to live up to her core ideal aspirations in this light. Call goods of the former type weakly valued and those of the latter type strongly valued.[3]

People use ideals to cultivate and discipline their desires. Ideals function in this way because they are expressed in second-order desires, or desires to have or change other desires. If I uphold an ideal of integrity, I want myself to be motivated to stand up for my beliefs, and I want this desire to govern my actions even when it conflicts with my desire to maintain a favorable reputation. Not every second-order desire expresses an ideal. I could want to get rid of a desire simply because it is inconvenient. Perhaps my desire to linger on the telephone prevents me from getting on with my evening. Here I engage only my weak valuations, for I regard the desires in question as merely optional. I could choose to adopt a more leisurely attitude toward my affairs rather than to get rid of my desire to carry on with my friends over the phone. But I don't regard my desire for integrity as merely optional. No simple, unobjectionable change of perspective is available which would allow me to pander to others' opinions when my integrity is at stake. If I lack the desire for certain weakly valued ends, such as physical comfort, this might make me weird or quirky but not worthy of contempt. If I lack the desire for strongly valued ends, such as integrity, this makes me base or deplorable in my own eyes.[4]

In telling us how to value different goods, and in tying our valuations to our judgments of self-worth, ideals help structure the world of goods into different kinds. They draw boundaries between different classes of goods, setting them into circulation within distinct networks of social relations governed by distinct norms. This differentiation of ways of valuing things, socially embodied in different social spheres, provides the key to understanding how goods differ in kind.

1.3 How Goods Differ in Kind (I): Different Modes of Valuation

Kant's moral philosophy provides a particularly illuminating example of how goods differ in kind: "In the kingdom of ends everything has either a price or a dignity. Whatever has a price can be replaced by something else as its equivalent; . . . whatever is above all price, and therefore admits of no equivalent, has a dignity" (Kant 1981, p. 40). In this passage Kant expresses the view that there are two kinds of value, relative worth and intrinsic worth. Everything is either a mere means, with a price or

relative value, or an end in itself, with an intrinsic worth which Kant calls "dignity." Things that differ in the kind of worth they have merit different kinds of valuation. People value mere means by using them, but they value persons with dignity by respecting them. People express these different modes of valuation in part by deliberating about their objects in different ways—engaging in prudential calculation for use-values and in deliberation according to the categorical imperative for ends-in-themselves.

Kant's ideal of human rationality grounded his distinction between the way we should value persons and the way we should value things. By considering other ideals that are widely recognized in U.S. culture, we can see that Kantian ethics is hampered by the fact that it recognizes only two ways of valuing things, use and respect. These two modes of valuation are not enough to account for the richness of our experiences of value and our practices. Three examples from his *Lectures on Ethics,* concerning the status of animals, inanimate nature, and adultery, illustrate some problems a two-valued ethic has in attempting to account for our concerns in a many-valued world (Kant 1979, pp. 239–241, 169). Although Kant recognized aesthetic value as a distinct category of non-moral worth, he failed to see that even the domain of morality is many-valued.

Animals cannot be respected in a Kantian ethic, for to respect something in the Kantian sense is to act toward it in accordance with laws it would accept as a legislating member of the Kingdom of Ends. Animals are incapable of entering into the reciprocal relations based upon a conscious acceptance of common principles which membership in the Kingdom of Ends requires. But Kant's conclusion does not follow—that animals are mere means and may be used by us for any purpose that does not violate our duties to humans. We shouldn't be cruel to animals. Kant tried to account for this commonsense view by arguing that we have an indirect duty to humans to refrain from animal cruelty, because cruelty to animals makes us more likely to treat humans cruelly.

This attempt to account for our duties to animals is strained. If someone is cruel to her pet, people condemn her action whether or not this behavior will increase her cruelty to people. Neither Kantian respect nor mere use captures the appropriate treatment of pets. The ideal of a pet owner includes much more than even the avoidance of cruelty and the provision of basic necessities—we criticize an owner for failing to show proper affection for her pet. Although we make fewer demands for our treatment of animals in the wild, there is a base line of care which we should show for all animals. I suggest that we call this

kind of valuation "consideration." Consideration is a way of caring which pays due regard for the interests of sentient beings, apart from whether they are rational.[5]

Kant also regarded inanimate nature as a mere means. The only duty we have to conserve natural habitats follows from our duty to leave future generations enough resources. Kant saw no reason to preserve natural habitats from destruction through consumption, only reason to ration this destruction over time. In the United States today, we recognize ideals expressed in environmental movements to preserve ecosystems and natural wonders which express a deeper concern for nature. Most U.S. citizens view the redwoods and the Grand Canyon as beautiful and wondrous things to be intrinsically valued. To regard these wonders only from the standpoint of their use-value to humans is base. But inanimate nature can neither be respected in a Kantian sense nor given the consideration owed to animals, since it has no interests of its own. What seems to be an appropriate mode of valuation for inanimate nature is rather what we may call "appreciation."

A third problem for Kantian ethics concerns the difference between the badness of cheating on a business deal and the badness of cheating on one's husband or wife. Kant condemned both actions for one reason: they reflect a lack of respect for persons. He argued that adultery is a graver sin than fraud because the marriage contract is more important than any business contract. This does not explain why the victims of these acts typically experience different kinds of diminishment. The significance of adultery seems to lie not so much in its failure of respect—which it shares with fraud—as in its betrayal of love. Modern ideals of marriage demand of partners deeper forms of care for each other than commercial contracts do. When these forms of care are no longer forthcoming, their loss is felt more personally.

Use, respect, appreciation, consideration, and love are five different ways of valuing things. A little reflection suggests more modes of valuation, such as honor, admiration, reverence, and toleration. We are familiar with numerous modes and expressions of disvaluation as well: to shun, humiliate, mock, despise, ignore, desecrate, and so forth. My provisional account of how goods differ in kind is thus that they differ in kind if they are properly valued in different ways. Talk of different kinds of goods may be somewhat misleading, if we think of kinds as non-interbreeding species. I think of kinds of goods as more like literary genres: they can be hybridized, like the comedy-thriller; they can stand in different relations to different audiences, as heroic odes do to oral and written cultures; and

they can be categorized differently by different cultures, as myths are by cultures having and lacking a scientific cosmology.

Ideals tell individuals how they should value different things, depending on their value and personal importance. Some goods merit a particular mode of valuation because they meet a standard of value: beautiful things are worthy of appreciation, rational beings of respect, sentient beings of consideration, virtuous ones of admiration, convenient things of use. Here the pluralism of values or standards underwrites the pluralism of kinds of goods. Other goods are appropriately valued in a particular way because of their relation to the valuing agent, which makes them important to him. People who have helped someone are owed gratitude, brothers and sisters are to be loved, one's children to be nurtured. Romantic love, patriotism, loyalty, the treasuring of heirlooms, and the cherishing of friends are modes of valuation connected to importance judgments, not just to impersonal value judgments. Here the kind of good a thing is for a person depends on her particular biography and social situation, her place in a network of relationships.

To value or care about something in a particular way involves a complex of standards for perception, emotion, deliberation, desire, and conduct that *express* and thereby communicate one's regard for the object's importance. To love someone involves the performance of many actions which express that love, which show the beloved that he or she has a special importance to the lover. It entails particular ways of deliberating about questions concerning what is valued, questions which distinctively engage the agent's perceptual dispositions and set certain considerations in priority over others. Parental love involves perceiving and attending to a child's needs and wants and giving the child's needs a certain priority in deliberation (over his wants and over other concerns). Finally, a mode of valuation includes distinctive emotional responses to the apprehension, achievement, and loss of things related to what is valued. Romantic love involves feeling grief when the beloved dies, despondency at her lack of reciprocation, exultation at her confession of a reciprocal love, jealousy when her affections are turned to another, alarm at her being harmed. These different ways of flourishing and suffering with regard to the beloved show her that she is loved, as opposed to merely liked or tolerated.

1.4 How Goods Differ in Kind (II): Social Relations of Realization

I have thus far explained how goods differ in kind in terms of the different ways people properly care about them. Individuals are not self-sufficient in

their capacity to value things in different ways. I am capable of valuing something in a particular way only in a social setting that upholds norms for that mode of valuation. I cannot honor someone outside a social context in which certain actions, gestures, and manners of speaking are commonly understood to express honor. More important, I do not adequately express my honor for another unless others recognize my honor as appropriate. To care about something in a distinctive way, one must participate in a social practice of valuation governed by norms for its sensible expression.

So the difference between, for example, appreciating something and using it lies in the social relations and norms within which we produce, maintain, distribute, preserve, and enjoy or otherwise realize the value of that thing. To realize a good as a particular *kind* of good we place it in a particular matrix of social relations. The following shall be my primary account of the heterogeneity of goods: goods differ in kind if people properly enter into different sorts of social relations governed by distinct norms in relation to these goods. It is proper for them to do so if it makes sense to value the goods in the ways expressed by these norms.

For example, consider the status of music in the United States. We enjoy live "classical" music in special social settings—music halls—governed by distinctive cultural norms that express a regard for this art form as worthy of awe. Silence is to be observed as soon as the orchestra starts playing; even the pauses between movements may not be interrupted by applause. We are supposed to concentrate all our attention on the music itself. The audience may not openly criticize a performance in progress or suggest alterations. We are to be humbled by the majesty of the work and its performance, to receive it as instructive and uplifting, as somehow above us, yet as ennobling us through our polite, restrained admiration of it.

To value the music in this way demands a clear separation between the audience and the music, expressed spatially in the separation of the orchestra pit or the stage from audience seating, temporally by the strictly separate times in which the musicians and the audience may express themselves, and functionally by the fact that audience members don't participate in the creation of the music itself. This ideal of classical music often involves the subordination of orchestral musicians to conductors and composers, who are regarded as superior aesthetic authorities. One extreme expression of this ideal can be found in the authentic music movement, where the virtuosity and interpretive skills of the musicians themselves are subordinated to the goal of reproducing as exactly as pos-

sible the musical sounds, and the techniques for producing those sounds, as they existed in the composer's time. The composer is considered a genius whose original intentions regarding performance must be absolutely respected, lest we fail to do justice to his music. Through these kinds of social norms, classical music in this culture is deemed a kind of sacred good.

North Americans didn't always value classical music as a sacred good, worthy of awe (Levine 1988). Until the late nineteenth century, they celebrated classical music, especially Italian opera, as a highly popular form of entertainment, to be valued as audiences value athletic contests—and closer to the ways they value professional wrestling than golf or tennis! Audience members regarded the music as theirs to criticize, applaud, change, and perform at their own inclination. They made a raucous crowd, prone to rioting when performers did not heed their wishes. They often demanded that popular songs of the day be included in operas at a moment's notice, interrupted performances with critical comments, sat on stage, talked loudly and ate during performances. The social norms of music appreciation gave the audience a powerful set of claims on how the music was to be performed and enjoyed that expressed a view of its value as properly reflecting popular taste and sentiment rather than as educating or uplifting it from a higher standpoint. And they often participated *en masse* in performing the music itself. At the National Peace Jubilee of 1869, the Anvil Chorus from *Il Trovatore* was performed with one hundred Boston firemen beating anvils with sledgehammers (Levine 1988, p. 105).

So the kind of good classical music is—how we value it—is determined by the norms governing the relations among audience, composers, and performers. These norms in turn are governed by different aesthetic ideals. In the ideal of classical music as a sacred expression of supreme genius, performers are subordinated to composers, and audience to performers. The sharp distinction between classical and popular music also functions as a class-marker, giving the wealthier and more educated classes claim to a higher standing in the cultural hierarchy than those who prefer other genres, such as rock and country-Western. In the ideal of music as a popular expression of public taste, the hierarchy is reversed, or rather blurred, since the social roles of composer, performer, and audience are not as sharply distinguished as in the former case and the arbiters of good taste are not confined to a specific class.

The aesthetic conceptions are ideals, because they give us standards for self-criticism as well as for criticism of art itself. We make ourselves different kinds of persons by creating, performing, disseminating, and

appreciating music in different ways, through different kinds of social relations. Music mediates our relations to one another and thereby creates different forms of community with different virtues and vices. Aesthetic ideals are highly contestable. By upholding the sacralized ideal of art, do we heighten our aesthetic appreciation or merely make snobs of ourselves? By upholding popular ideals that celebrate virtuosity and public participation, do we corrupt works of genius and debase ourselves by pandering to uneducated taste? Or do we rejuvenate our cultural identities by providing outlets for creative reinterpretation of our musical heritage? Our answers to questions like these help determine how it makes sense to value music. In §5.1, I will consider the prospects for justifying answers to such questions.

An ideal-based pluralistic theory of goods does not concern itself exclusively with the qualities of the goods people enjoy. It also focuses on the realization of distinct ideals of the person and community, and it views goods as mediating these relations among people. Ideals require people to care about goods in particular ways, by embedding them in appropriate relations of production, protection, distribution, and enjoyment. Treating a good as a particular kind of good is as much a way of realizing and expressing appropriate relations among people as it is a way of properly valuing the good itself.

So far I have just sketched the outlines of a map of the world of goods, taking ordinary practices and commonsense judgments as my guide. Most theories of value acknowledge a pluralism of goods, such as friendship, knowledge, and pleasure. My map reveals a proliferation of pluralisms beyond this. First, it recognizes a plurality of evaluative attitudes, such as love, admiration, and appreciation. Second, it recognizes a plurality of values or standards, such as beauty, convenience, and loyalty, by which we evaluate different goods and adjust our attitudes toward them. Third, it recognizes a plurality of different *kinds* of goods, distinguished by the complexes of attitudes it makes sense to take up toward them and by the distinct social relations and practices that embody and express these attitudes. Finally, it recognizes a plurality of contestable ideals, by which we try to govern the development of our attitudes, character, values, and aspirations. In dividing goods into different kinds, I do not claim that for any one good there is just one mode of valuation appropriate to it. Inanimate nature is a proper object of both use and appreciation, as well as of awe and wonder; animals are proper objects of kindliness and even admiration, as well as of consideration and use. These modes of valuation are often incompatible. The pluralism of ideals and the relational character

of importance also imply that the ways one person should value a particular thing or person need not be the ways another person should value it or him. The respects in which anything is properly valued, and the ways and circumstances in which it makes sense to value it, remain problems. In introducing the notion that goods differ in kind, I suggest that these are the kinds of problems we should be posing ourselves, not that the answers are to be found in establishing a rigid classification of things into kinds.

My socially grounded, ideal-based, pluralistic theory of value goes against the grain of a long philosophical tradition. Philosophy has traditionally expressed impatience with the pluralistic, contestable, historically contingent and socially informed evaluative practices in which ordinary people participate. Since Socrates, a common philosophical aspiration has been to find some means of grasping the good or the right directly, unmediated by the pluralistic hodgepodge of socially particular evaluative concepts and ideals (Plato 1961a). To reach sound ethical judgments, we are thought to require an entirely new mode of ethical justification, independent of the historical and social contingencies in which commonsense evaluative reasoning is mired. Many motivations support this aspiration: the determination to make value judgments unconditionally universal (Plato 1961a) or to represent them as subject only to purely personal intuition (Moore 1903); to overcome ethical disagreement (Bentham 1948; Plato 1961b); to find a determinate rational decision procedure in ethics (Bentham 1948; Brandt 1979; Hare 1981; Harsanyi 1982); to naturalistically reduce "values" to "facts" (Brandt 1979; Railton 1986); to enable critical reflection on our own practices (Brandt 1979; Hare 1981). The attempt to bypass the varieties of pluralism I affirm leads to a monistic or drastically reductionist theory of value.

In emphasizing the intimate connections between the plurality of our evaluative attitudes and the plurality of our ideals, evaluative concepts, and social practices, I aim to highlight the problems involved in adopting such monistic and reductionist programs. If we bypass the plurality of values and ideals in attempting to get a direct grasp on what is good and right, we will lose the resources to make sense of our attitudes and even to have highly differentiated and nuanced attitudes. We could be reduced to expressing a crudely generic "pro-" or "con-" attitude. Monistic theories of value tend to overlook this problem, because they assume that value is normative for just one attitude or response, such as desire, mere liking, or being pleased. It is no accident that the moral psychologies of such monists rarely acknowledge the existence, much less the importance, of other attitudes besides their favored one (§§6.2–6.4). But if it makes sense

for us to have a variety of evaluative attitudes, we can't do without our commonsense pluralistic practices. Monism is inherently defective, because it cannot make sense of the phenomena of values and valuation that any theory of value must account for.

Some of the following chapters will be devoted to elaborating this argument, considering monistic replies to it, and defending pluralism against monistic challenges. My larger ambition is to explore some of the practical implications of my socially grounded, pluralistic rational attitude theory of value. In the next three chapters, I will show how it supports an alternative to the dominant theories of rational choice. In the last three chapters, I will explore some of the political implications of pluralism. In providing an account of how economic goods differ in kind from other kinds of goods, pluralism sharpens our view of the ethical limitations of the market and helps us determine what goods should and should not be treated as commodities.

2 • An Expressive Theory of Rational Action

2.1 Value and Rational Action

A theory of value should help us rationally guide our actions. A rational attitude theory of value must solve two puzzles to show its relevance to rational action. First, it represents value as immediately normative for our favorable attitudes, not for our choices. Its associated theory of practical reason must therefore show how rational choices are related to attitudes. Second, my rational attitude theory locates intrinsic value in persons, animals, communities, and things, whereas action aims at the realization of states of affairs. Hence my theory must show how the intrinsic values of people and things are related to the values of states of affairs.

The theory of rational action that I propose to solve these problems can be called an expressive theory. An expressive theory defines rational action as action that adequately expresses our rational attitudes toward people and other intrinsically valuable things. According to the rational attitude theory of value, something is valuable if and only if it is rational for someone to value it, to assume a favorable attitude toward it. And to adequately care about something requires that one express one's valuations in the world, to embody them in some social reality. This is a demand of self-understanding (Taylor 1979, p. 73). To fully make sense of one's rational concerns, one must be motivated to actually establish the relationship to the object of one's concern which is implicit in one's attitudes toward it. If this project leaves one unmoved and one does not suffer from weakness of will, weariness, or other motivational deficiency, one cannot sincerely ascribe to oneself the attitude it expresses. The rational requirement that attitudes seek their expression is confirmed, not undermined, by the thought that an expressive project may leave one deeply conflicted and ambivalent because one holds attitudes that require incompatible projects.

Practical reason demands that one's actions adequately express one's rational attitudes toward the people and things one cares about. Because expression is a meaningful activity, it requires a publicly intelligible vehicle to make its point. This is provided by the social norms that are constitutive of rational attitudes. To have an evaluative attitude toward something is in part to govern one's deliberations and actions by social norms that communicate distinctive meanings to others. By distinguishing the kind of kiss romantic lovers may exchange from that which "just friends" may exchange, social norms for kissing enable people to effectively communicate distinct attitudes toward others. Social norms typically tell us to direct our desires and actions to the realization or prevention of particular states of affairs. Norms for expressing charitable benevolence direct us to satisfy people's basic need for food, clothing, and education. Norms for expressing civility direct us to avoid embarrassing others. We acquire our rational aims partly by determining what the norms for adequately expressing our attitudes require, encourage, or make apt. Thus, a fully rational action expresses a way of valuing something in being governed by norms constitutive of that mode of valuation.

In tying rational action to social norms, the expressive theory may appear to endorse a form of conventionalism. Conventionalism identifies appropriate action with action governed by whatever norms prevail in society. The expressive theory need not endorse extant social norms for expressing attitudes, however. A social order can be criticized for failing to provide adequate normative vehicles for the expression of attitudes that have come to make sense to its members. The social aspect of the expressive theory reflects not a conventionalist but an anti-individualist theory of rationality. It claims that individuals are not self-sufficient bearers of practical reason: they require a context of social norms to express their attitudes adequately and intelligibly in action, to express them in ways others can grasp.

If a society lacks the social norms needed to adequately express its members' reflectively endorsed valuations, the rational thing to do is to invent and institute such norms. West European and North American societies lack adequate normative vehicles for expressing heterosexual affection on egalitarian terms, although many members of these societies seek to establish loving relationships on such terms. Norms for bodily contact between heterosexual lovers—for example, that the man may express his affection by wrapping his arm around his lover, or by leading her on the dance floor—also express a status hierarchy in which the man is the protector and leader, the woman the dependent follower (Tannen

1990, pp. 283–287). Until alternative norms for expressing heterosexual affection can be instituted, egalitarian couples will not be able to express fully and adequately the kind of love they have for each other. This gives them a reason to invent and institute norms adequate to their attitudes.

The expressive theory of rationality distinguishes between two different sorts of ends for the sake of which we act. First, there are the people, animals, communities, and things toward which we direct our actions. These are the things it makes sense for a person to care immediately about, independent of its making sense for her to care about any other particular thing. Call these intrinsic goods. Intrinsic goods are the immediate objects of our intrinsic valuations (§1.1). Persons are the immediate objects of our respect, benevolence, and love; beautiful paintings of our admiring contemplation; pets of our affection; and so forth. These are the things we rationally value in themselves.

Extrinsic goods, by contrast, are goods which it makes sense for a person to value only because it makes sense for her to value some other particular thing. The value of an extrinsic good depends upon the value of something else, in that one's rational valuation of it is mediated by one's rational valuation of something else. Sharon may cherish an ugly bracelet because it was given to her by a dear friend. The bracelet, valued as a token of friendship, is an extrinsic good. Sharon's valuation of the bracelet is mediated by her valuation of her friend. Were they to become enemies, it would make sense for her to stop cherishing it.

Two points should be noted about the definitions of intrinsic and extrinsic goods. The first is that the definitions are agent-centered: a good is extrinsically valuable if *one's* rational valuation of it depends on *one's* rational valuation of some other particular thing. It may be a condition of any given person's rationally valuing something in a particular way that other people also rationally value it. This is true for all impersonal valuations, such as respect, although not for personal valuations, such as love. The second is that the definitions refer to the valuation of particulars, not of universals. Universals—the standards for rational valuation—provide the *grounds* for our valuations, not their *objects*. A condition of any person's rationally valuing something in a particular way may be that it merit valuation by meeting certain general standards. This is also true for impersonal valuations. The only condition that makes a thing extrinsically valuable is that one's rationally valuing it depends on one's rationally valuing some other particular good.

Kant's famous imperative to regard humanity as an end in itself expresses something like the first sense of "end" I have in mind when I say that

intrinsic goods are the ends for the sake of which we act. To take humanity as one's end is to act for the sake of or with due regard for the persons affected by one's actions. Such action involves not only promoting their welfare, but can also include such activities as participating in projects important to them or taking their opinions seriously in discussion. Kant, however, restricted the possible objects of unmediated rational concern to rational beings alone.

The second kind of end for the sake of which we act is our final aims or goals, the states of affairs we seek to bring about in our actions. These ends are contrasted with means, which are the actions and states of affairs that are rationally desired or chosen because they tend to bring about some other states of affairs (our ultimate goals). It is important to distinguish between intrinsic goods and final aims (Korsgaard 1983). The distinction is often conflated by theories that contrast intrinsic with instrumental goods or that identify intrinsic goods with the states of affairs we rationally and ultimately aim to bring about. Although all instrumental goods are also extrinsic goods, there are some extrinsic goods, such as the ugly bracelet, which are not instrumentally good.

According to the rational attitude theory of value, states of affairs, whether they be final aims or mere means, are for the most part only extrinsically valuable. It makes sense for a person to value most of them only because it makes sense for a person to care about the people, animals, communities, and things concerned with them.[1] This follows from the fact that our basic evaluative attitudes—love, respect, consideration, affection, honor, and so forth—are non-propositional. They are attitudes we take up immediately toward persons, animals, and things, not toward facts. Because to be intrinsically valuable is to be the immediate object of such a rational attitude, states of affairs are not intrinsically valuable if they are not immediate objects of such attitudes. Evaluative attitudes take up states of affairs as their mediated objects through the desires, hopes, wishes, and other propositional attitudes that express them. Jack's love for Margaret can be expressed in the hope that he will be able to see her soon. His favorable attitude toward her is what makes sense of his favorable attitude toward the state of affairs in which he sees her soon. Margaret is the immediate object of his love. The states of affairs he desires, hopes, or aims at are the mediated object of his love. They are mediated by norms for desire, hope, and intention that express his evaluative attitudes.

I do not claim that people actually value states of affairs only because they value the people, animals, or things involved in them. Many of our

motivational states, such as appetites, whims, habits, compulsions, and addictions, can express a concern for the realization of states of affairs without any regard for ourselves, other people, or other things. When we care about states of affairs in these ways, the fact of our caring does not depend upon our caring about anything else. However, these motivations also do not generally depend or change upon reflection on their objects or on our own attitudes and reasons for action. This is why these motivational states are neither rational nor irrational. They are not the motivational states by which we rationally or reflectively govern ourselves. Because what is intrinsically valuable is the object of a rational favorable attitude, not just the object of any favorable attitude, the fact that we have favorable attitudes such as appetites and whims toward states of affairs does not show that these states of affairs are intrinsically valuable.

Although appetites and similar motivations are arational, it can be rational or at least not irrational to act on them. It is rational to do so when they fulfill the aims that would anyway be given to us by our rational valuations of people and things. It is not irrational to act on these motivations, provided that our acting on them does not violate the expressive norms constitutive of our rational attitudes. Consider a person with a gluttonous appetite, who is motivated to eat without any regard for himself. It is rational for him to indulge his appetite to the extent that this promotes aims that are rationally related to his self-concern—for example, to the extent that it promotes his health or pleasure, or to concern with others, as when eating realizes communal relations among people. It is irrational for him to indulge his appetite to the destruction of his health, pleasure, or relationships with others, supposing it makes sense for him to care about these. Between these two extremes, he has considerable scope for indulging his appetites, an activity neither rationally required nor prohibited, but simply permitted.

Raw appetites and similar motivational states do not express rational attitudes toward people and things because they are not the kinds of motives governed by reflection and meaningful social norms. Their expression is not mediated by norms but is at most constrained by them. We can say then that we act with full rationality when we govern ourselves by objectively valid expressive norms constitutive of our rational valuations—that is, when we adequately express our rational valuations. And we act in accordance with reason when we act on other motives within the constraints posed by the norms that adequately embody our rational attitudes.

2.2 The Framing of Decisions

The fundamental task of a theory of rational choice is to select, from among the many actions a person could perform, the action which it makes most sense to perform, or at least some action which makes sense. The theory must generate and rationally ground a ranking of actions from which the top ranked option, or at least some option above a threshold of appropriateness, is to be chosen.

The dominant view of rational action, which I call consequentialist (§2.4), characterizes the end of rational action as the realization of valuable states of affairs. On this view, it is difficult to locate any other basis for ranking actions except the value-rankings of the states of affairs they tend to bring about. Rational action maximizes the value of states of affairs. The expressive conception of action specifies fully rational action as characteristically having dual ends: it seeks to bring about states of affairs *for the sake of* the people and things we rationally care about. In acting rationally, we generally express our rational valuations of people and things *by* pursuing particular states of affairs. In exposing the incompleteness of the consequentialist conception of action, the expressive theory opens up an alternative basis for ranking actions besides the value of their consequences. Actions are ranked according to how well they express our rational valuations, and this is determined by judging how well our actions live up to the norms constitutive of these valuations.

This conclusion may seem puzzling. While there are some types of action, such as those expressing civility, for which our deliberations are preoccupied with living up to social norms, there are others, such as those expressing benevolence, in which the consequences of actions appear to be decisive in ranking alternative courses of action, quite independent of social norms. This thought has prompted some theorists to postulate two radically distinct types of action: one rationally oriented toward bringing about consequences, the other (non-rationally) oriented toward obeying social norms (Weber 1968; Elster 1989).

The expressive theory rejects this false dichotomy. Rational action is characteristically oriented in both ways. Where consideration of consequences alone appears to be relevant to justifying an action, closer examination reveals that background expressive norms implicitly set a context of response and decision which makes some consequences of action more important than others and which determines how they will be incorporated in deliberation. Where benevolence is the primary way we value the people for the sake of whom we act, it makes sense to follow norms that

bring welfare considerations to the foreground and ignore many non-welfare consequences of action. Emergency aid workers do not worry about the aesthetic consequences of setting up refugee camps where they do. And no coherent form of benevolence is generically oriented toward all the welfare consequences of action. Different social norms govern the expression of distinct benevolent attitudes appropriate to persons who stand in different relations to their beneficiaries. These norms identify different welfare consequences of action as important for choice. So, philanthropists provide institutionally given food, shelter, and education to the needy. Friends offer their sympathy, companionship, personal effort, and advice. Parents involve themselves in promoting their children's welfare in ways which are none of a benevolent acquaintance's business.

Thus, our preoccupation with the consequences of action in much of our deliberation reflects not the irrelevance of social norms to rationally ranking actions, but rather the fact that to express our concern for what we intrinsically value we must generally follow social norms that direct our attention to consequences concerning them. These norms are often embodied in unreflective habits and become objects of deliberation only when their expressive significance is called into question. Expressive norms typically tell us to pay attention to particular consequences of action described in terms of particular evaluative distinctions and to incorporate these consequences into our deliberations in a particular way. They select from all the authentic candidates for rational valuation those states of affairs which are *important* to the agent at this time and place. A state of affairs becomes important to evaluating action when the conditions for its having extrinsic value are satisfied—that is, when pursuing it would express one's rational valuations of persons and things.

Call the ways a person describes her relevant options and her conception of what is at stake in her choices her *decision frame* (Kahneman and Tversky 1984). The norms for expressing a person's valuations fundamentally shape the decision frame she uses to ground rankings of her actions. She solves the problem of deciding what frame to use in deliberation when she successfully reaches an interpretation of her predicament that enables her coherently to continue her life. This task amounts to a continuation of the project of rational self-understanding (§§1.1, 5.1). I believe that this project issues in two global norms for making sense of one's actions: one synchronic, the other diachronic.

The synchronic norm tells a person at any given time to act in such a way as to adequately express the ways she rationally values all the persons and things for whose sake she should act. This norm tells a person to

appropriately distribute her concern among the different persons and things she properly cares about in acting. The diachronic norm tells a person to act in such a way that over time her actions can be fit into a coherent narrative (MacIntyre 1981, ch. 15; Velleman 1991). The demands of this norm have only recently begun to be explored. Thus, I will suggest only that the coherence of a narrative of one's life will depend upon an account of how our valuations and evaluations can rationally evolve and develop in the light of new experience (Anderson 1991). Both of these global norms are regulative ideals, which can rarely, if ever, be completely satisfied. Many conflicts arise when we cannot satisfy the demands of caring about one person without violating the demands of caring about another, or when we no longer have the context or resources to coherently continue our lives.

I have argued that only in the context of a decision frame do particular consequences of actions emerge as relevant for evaluating action. This is because the consequences of action generally have no intrinsic value. Their importance emerges only in a setting in which an agent's rational attitudes toward people and things are interpreted through a decision frame. But what determines the rational choice of a decision frame? Ideals that embody conceptions of how goods differ in kind play an indispensable role here.

Recall that the plurality of goods arises from the fact that people care about different goods in different ways, care about the ways they care about goods, and institutionalize different ways of caring about goods by embedding them in distinct social practices of production, distribution, and enjoyment. These social practices are governed by norms that highlight some features of the goods in question as important for action concerning them and subordinate others. In classifying a good as one kind or another, by embedding it in one set of social practices over another, people select the relevant decision frames which will be applied to it. For example, to classify dogs as pets is to call for decision frames regarding dogs as proper objects of affection and domestication and to rule out decision frames which consider their edibility, or their potential life in the wild, as relevant to choices concerning them. To adopt the ideal of being an outstanding defense lawyer in an adversary system of justice is to call for decision frames that reject the justice of punishing one's guilty clients as a consideration important to preparing a defense before trial. Thus, a fundamental implication of the thesis that goods differ in kind is that people should deliberate about them in different ways, according to different frames. In determining which frame a person should use to describe the

options at hand, she consults how she cares about the people concerned with the options, her ideals of how she ought to care about them, and the social roles she occupies that embody these ideals.

People tend to take decision frames for granted because they are often embodied in habits and social roles. Social role differentiation, in enabling people to occupy different roles at different times and places, enables them to establish different priorities in different parts of their lives. The "same" action described in terms of its consequences can have a different expressive significance, and hence a different degree of appropriateness, depending on the social context in which it is performed. When a parent sets aside his child's demands for attention in order to deal with a client's needs, it typically makes a big difference for the expressive meaning, and therefore the appropriateness of the act, whether the parent should be acting in his role as parent or in his role as businessperson at that time, and this in turn typically but not always depends upon whether he is at home or at work. In the former case, the act is more likely to express an inappropriate neglect or indifference toward his child than in the latter.

What things a person cares about, as well as how and how much she cares about them, are not solely a function of the social practices, roles, and relationships she participates in. Her character, history, mood, energy, actions, and reading of her predicament play a profound part in influencing what she values, especially in influencing which practices, roles, and relationships she will make her own, how she will interpret, criticize, and change them, and so forth. In emphasizing how a person's ways of valuing things are structured through social roles, practices, and relationships, I do not want to imply that these structures are to be regarded as simply given to agents, unmediated by their own understandings, or beyond critical scrutiny. Although decision frames embedded in social roles are frequently taken for granted, it is often important to make them an object of deliberation. Do the norms constitutive of these frames adequately express the ways we should value the persons whose interests are at stake in the choices they guide? The parent/worker example presented above offers material for deliberation about appropriate decision frames, since society does not structure social roles and decision frames suitable for parents of either gender. It assigns different meanings to mothers and fathers making the same tradeoffs of work and parental responsibilities, which express such views as that children need to be with mothers more than fathers, that mothers and fathers should value their children differently, and that paid work is more important to fathers than to mothers. As these judgments, along with the gender hierarchies they

help sustain, come to make less sense to people, new social roles and decision frames must be devised.

2.3 The Extrinsic Value of States of Affairs

I have argued that states of affairs are generally only extrinsically valuable, because our intrinsic evaluative attitudes do not generally take them as their immediate objects. It makes sense for a person to value most states of affairs only because it makes sense for him to value people, animals, and other things. This claim may seem counterintuitive. Because its implications for practical reason are dramatic, it is worth exploring in greater depth.

Reflection on a few examples should convince one of its truth. All states of affairs that consist in someone's welfare are only extrinsically valuable. If it doesn't make sense to value the person (in a particular way), then it doesn't make sense to care about promoting her welfare (in the way that expresses that mode of valuation). Enemies, who hate each other, have no reason to promote each other's welfare. Mary may rationally feel self-contempt for betraying her profession as a journalist. (Perhaps she published a story she knew to be false, as a favor to a government official.) Under this condition of self-disvaluation, it doesn't make sense for her to seek her own advancement in it until she has made amends, for she regards her advancement as undeserved and, hence, unworthy of pursuit.

Some believers in the intrinsic values of states of affairs agree that welfare is not intrinsically valuable (Moore 1903; Regan 1989). They find intrinsic value in such states of affairs as knowledge and the existence of art. But states of affairs which consist in the existence of something are valuable only if it makes sense to care about the thing that exists. It doesn't make sense to care about the existence of a painting unless it makes sense to care about the painting itself, perhaps because it is beautiful. And beauty is a valuable attribute of the painting, not of the fact that the painting exists. One may suppose that it doesn't makes sense to care about something unless it makes sense to care about its existence. This would suggest a mutual dependence of the values of a thing and the value of its existence and, in this case, the collapse of the intrinsic/extrinsic value distinction. But the supposition is not true. It may make sense for me to love a person, but this does not imply that I must want that person to continue living. If he is gravely ill, it may be the best expression of my love for him to wish that he die quickly and mercifully. A remarried widow may still love her long-dead husband, but be appalled if he were to pop back into existence.

Notes

1. *A Pluralist Theory of Value*

1. Is this what "x is F" *means?* Following Wiggins (1987a, pp. 188–189), I prefer to call the glosses I make of value, merit, and appropriateness judgments *elucidations* rather than analyses of meaning.
2. After I wrote the bulk of this book, I encountered Gaus's *Value and Justification* (1990), which defends a rational emotion theory of value similar to mine. I regret not having had the time to learn more from his book or to discuss our disagreements.
3. This echoes Taylor's (1985a) distinction between weak and strong evaluation. Taylor grounds his distinction in the nature of the evaluative standards themselves. I ground mine in how people value things meeting different standards and how this valuation reflects on self-evaluation. Many evaluative standards could ground either weak or strong valuations. For example, stylishness usually grounds weak valuations, but for models, it can lie at the core of self-evaluation. Other evaluative standards are thought to command everyone's valuation. People who value goods they think meet such standards value them strongly *and* impersonally.
4. It also makes me irrational, if rationality is defined broadly as responsiveness to reasons, and if it doesn't make sense for me to give up my strongly valued ends (§1.1). However, people commonly reserve the condemnation "irrational" for purely cognitive defects such as fallacious reasoning. We use other terms of condemnation, such as "boorish" and "vile," for the failures of responsiveness resulting from insensitivity or bad attitudes. This usage need not imply that cognitive defects are not also implicated in the latter failures.
5. My interest here is to reveal the variety of ways of valuing things implicit in commonsense ideals in the United States, not to fully endorse these ideals as they now stand. Prevailing ideals sharply distinguish among pets, zoo, show, wild, farm, and laboratory animals and regard the last two types as mere use-

objects, unworthy of consideration. These distinctions are laden with contradictions which can be exploited to reconstruct the variety of ideals we should have toward different kinds of animals. I discuss how to criticize ideals in §5.3.

2. An Expressive Theory of Rational Action

1. Korsgaard (1983), following Kant, identifies the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic goods with the distinction between unconditional and conditional goods. I depart from Korsgaard in calling "extrinsically good" only those things whose value depends on a particular kind of condition: that it make sense for us to value something else. In my usage, something can be conditionally but intrinsically valuable to someone in a particular way. It makes sense for Joe to value Sarah in a brotherly way only on condition that he is her brother, or like a brother, to her. But in valuing Sarah in a brotherly way, Joe rationally values her intrinsically. He values her in herself, apart from valuing anything else in particular, and its making sense for him to value her in this way is not dependent upon its making sense for him to value anyone or anything else.

3. Pluralism and Incommensurable Goods

1. It could be that all *options* are commensurable even though not all *goods* are commensurable, if we never have to choose between incommensurable goods. I set aside this possibility because no major theory depends on it.
2. On the concept of a good internal to a practice, see MacIntyre (1981, ch. 14).
3. Some theorists would deny that the decathlon scoring scheme, and goodness-of-a-kind judgments more generally, express intrinsic value judgments, for people can accept these judgments without being motivated by them. On their view, intrinsic value judgments necessarily motivate those who sincerely accept them. I argue in §5.2 that this dodge fails, for no value judgments have such a necessary connection with motivation.
4. Pragmatists can even give up transitivity, if the action-guiding function of a rational choice procedure need not be interpreted as reflecting a comparative judgment of overall value. Richard Pildes and I argue (1990) that democratic processes aim not to maximize value (collective preference satisfaction), but to generate legitimate outcomes. Hence, Arrow's proof that democratic processes cannot guarantee the transitivity needed to sustain a value-maximizing interpretation does not undermine their normative authority.
5. This serves several reasonable functions: it prevents a skater from winning just because the judges who favor her tend to spread their cardinal scores more widely than the others, and it prevents a skater from losing just because she skated best in the event where she was the first skater. (Because the highest score they can award is a 6.0, judges score the first skater in an event cau-