Evaluative Perception: Introduction

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Evaluation is ubiquitous. Indeed, it isn't an exaggeration to say that we assess actions, character, events, and objects as *good, bad, cruel, kind, beautiful, ugly,* etc., almost every day of our lives. A paradigm of evaluation is evaluative judgment. For example, Jen makes the judgment that the northwest Scottish Highlands are *beautiful*, while Phil judges that the rise of religious intolerance is a *bad* thing. Indeed, if we are liberal about how we classify the 'evaluative'[1] such that it includes the *deontic – rightness*, *wrongness*, *obligation, blameworthiness,* etc. – then the pervasiveness of evaluative judgment is even more striking.

So far, so uncontroversial. A more contentious set of issues arise when we consider whether evaluative judgments are expressions of cognitive or non-cognitive states, whether they deploy distinctively evaluative concepts, whether they are ever true, or can be epistemically justified*,* etc. Note, however, that recent developments in meta-ethics, in particular the emergence of versions of Quasi-Realism[2], somewhat complicate debates about these questions.[3] For example, if we adopt a deflationary view of truth, then even Non-Cognitivists can agree that some evaluative judgments are true. Given this, assuming that evaluations can be true, etc., is perhaps not as controversial as it might first seem. In what follows we will speak as if evaluative judgments can indeed be true and epistemically justified.

Historically, it has been thought that a distinctive kind of evaluation is *perceptual* or *experiential*. Further, some have also believed that this sort of evaluation can be veridical, and can play significant roles, e.g., epistemic.[4] To illustrate: in aesthetics, many philosophers have claimed that adequate aesthetic judgment must be grounded in the appreciator's first hand-hand experience of the item judged. Thus, Frank Sibley asserts that

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[1] We won't attempt to provide some set of necessary and sufficient conditions for what gets to count as "evaluative". Suffice to say that we are assuming a broad notion.

[2] See, e.g., Blackburn, S. (2006). Antirealist expressivism and quasi-realism. In D. Copp (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of ethical theory* (pp. 146–162). Oxford: Oxford University Press

[3] See, e.g., Drier, J. (2004) "Metaethics and the Problem of Creeping Minimalism", *Philosophical Perspectives* 18 (1):23–44.

[4] Note, that as was the case with value judgments, notions of veridicality, etc., can presumably be understood in a deflationary sense too.

we have to read the poem, hear the music, or see the picture (not merely have it described in non-merit and even determinate terms if that were possible) and then *judge* or *decide* whether an aesthetic merit term applies to it or not.[5]

This claim is often treated as a truism about aesthetic discourse.[6] Further, some philosophers[7] have also made a positive claim about what critical debate involves: that its purpose is to bring one's audience to see the object in a certain way. Some also think that criticism does not depend for its plausibility on general aesthetic criteria, if that means deductive reasoning from general aesthetic claims, for no such claims are available.[8] In any case, the point of critical discussion is not the formation of belief, but the engendering of perception. Related to this, within the tradition from Hume through to Sibley in analytic aesthetics, acquired sensibilities of taste (and similar conditions such as a sense of humour) are seen as cognitively necessary in the appreciation of aesthetic merit qualities.[9] This is suggestive of an important role for experience in the normative standing of aesthetic beliefs.

In ethics, Aristotle and modern day Virtue Ethicists such as John McDowell[10] characterise practical wisdom in terms of a perceptual ability. Along somewhat similar lines, other philosophers[11] have emphasised the importance of ethical 'vision' as a matter of seeing things *aright*, particularly with respect to its ability to lead us to revise our preconceptions about particular objects, persons, and events. As Iris Murdoch puts it, goodness is

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[5] Sibley, F. (2001), 'Particularity, Art, Evaluation', reprinted in John Benson, Betty Redfern and Jeremy Roxbee Cox (eds), *Approach to Aesthetics: Collected Papers on Philosophical Aesthetics by Frank Sibley,* Oxford: Clarendon Press, p. 99.

[6] But see Livingston Livingston, P. (2003), 'On an Apparent Truism in Aesthetics', *British Society of Aesthetics* 43(3): 260-278.

[7] See, e.g., Hampshire, S. (1967), 'Logic and Appreciation', in W. Elton (ed.): *Aesthetics and Language* Oxford: Oxford University Press; Sibley, F. (1959) 'Aesthetic Concepts', *Philosophical Review* 68: 421–450; Sibley, F. (1965) 'Aesthetic and the Non-aesthetic', *Philosophical Review* 74: 135–159; Sibley, F., (1983) 'General Criteria and Reasons in Aesthetics', in J. Fisher ed. *Essays on Aesthetics: Perspectives on the Work on Monroe C. Beardsley,* Philadelphia: Temple University Press; Strawson, P.F. (1966), 'Aesthetic Appraisal and Works of Art', in his *Freedom and Resentment* London: Methuen.

[8] See, e.g. Bergqvist, A. (2010). 'Why Sibley is Not a Generalist After All', *The British Journal of Aesthetics* 50 (1): 1-14; Isenberg, A. (1967), 'Critical Communication', in W. Elton (ed.): *Aesthetics and Language,* Oxford: Oxford University Press; Mothersill, M. (1984), *Beauty Restored*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

[9] For further discussion of this point, see e.g. Hopkins, R. (2006) 'Critical Reasoning and Critical Perception', in D.M. Lopes & M. Kieran eds. *Knowing Art*, Den Haag: Springer: 137-153; Hopkins (2011), 'How to Be a Pessimist About Aesthetic Testimony', *Journal of Philosophy* 108 (3): 138-157.

[10] McDowell, J. (1998) *Value, Mind and Reality,* Princeton Press

[11] See, e.g., Blum, L. (1994), *Moral Perception and Particularity*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; DePaul, M. (1993), *Balance and Refinement*, London: Routledge; McNaughton, D. (1988), *Moral Vision*, Oxford: Blackwell; Murdoch, I. (1970) *The Sovereignty of the Good*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul; Sherman, N. (1989) *The Fabric of Character*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.

a refined and honest perception of what is really the case, a patient and just discernment and exploration of what confronts one, which is the result not simply of opening one's eyes but of a certain perfectly familiar kind of moral discipline.[12]

Elsewhere, Moral Sense Theorists like Frances Hutcheson[13] seemed to think that an emotional or affective experience of moral (dis)approbation constituted our primary awareness of moral qualities.

Contemporarily, there has been continued and renewed interest in the connection between the evaluative and the perceptual. We here note five examples.

Firstly, in aesthetics there has been growing discussion of the idea – introduced by Richard Wollheim[14] – that the phenomenon of Seeing-In, which is often claimed to be typical of pictorial experience, marks out a sui generis kind of perception.[15] Second, a relatively substantial literature on the existence and nature of ethical perception has sprung up over the last decade.[16] Much of this has been informed by recent work in the philosophy and epistemology of perception. Specifically, (and this is our third example) it has been influenced by the emergence of High-Level views[17] about the contents of perceptual experience, i.e., roughly, views which allow that we can perceive (in the canonical modalities) complex properties such as natural kinds and other categorical properties. Interest in ethical perception has also been informed by recent work on the view that perception in the canonical sensory modalities is Cognitively Penetrable, i.e., roughly, perception is susceptible

[12] Murdoch, I. (1997), *Existentialists and Mystics: Writings on Philosophy and Literature,* ed. Peter Conradi, New York: Penguin, p. 330. For in-depth analysis of the implications of Murdoch's account of moral perception for the possibility objectivity in ethics, see Bergqvist's contribution in this volume. For its importance to the history of moral philosophy in the 21st Century, see Bergqvist, A. Bergqvist, A. (2016) 'Thick Description Revisited: Tanner on Thick Concepts and Perspectivalism in Value Philosophy', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, The Virtual Issue 3 'Methods in Ethics' ed. Colburn, B.

[13] See, e.g., Hutcheson, F. (1728) *An Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections. With Illustrations on the Moral Sense*, in Raphael D.D. (1991) (ed.) *British Moralists 1650-1800,* Hackett Publishing.

[14] See, e.g., Wollheim, R. (1980) 'Seeing-as, Seeing-in, and Pictorial Representation', in *Art and Its Objects*, 2nd ed., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

[15] See, e.g., Lopes, D.M. (1996) *Understanding Pictures*, Oxford: Oxford University Press; Lopes, D.M. (2005), *Sight and Sensibility*: *Evaluating Pictures*, Oxford: Oxford University Press; Hopkins, R. (1998), *Picture, Image and Experience: A Philosophical Inquiry*, Cambridge University Press; Pettersson., M. (2011), 'Seeing What Is Not There: Pictorial Experience, Imagination, and Non-localization', *British Journal of Aesthetics*, 51 (3): 279–294.

[16] See, e.g., Audi, R. (2013) *Moral Perception,* Princeton: Princeton University Press; Cowan, R., (2015a) 'Perceptual Intuitionism', *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research,* 90 (1):164-193. McBrayer, J.P. (2010) 'A Limited Defense of Moral Perception', *Philosophical Studies* 149: 305–20; Väyrynen, P. (2008), 'Some Good and Bad News for Ethical Intuitionism', *Philosophical Quarterly* 58 (232): 489-511; Werner, P. (2016) 'Moral Perception and the Contents of Experience', *Journal of Moral Philosophy,* 13 (3):294-317

[17] See, e.g., Bayne, T., (2009) 'Perception and the Reach of Phenomenal Content', *Philosophical Quarterly* 59 (236): 285-404; Siegel, S. (2010), *The Contents of Visual Experience,* Oxford University Press

to non-trivial influence from cognitive states like beliefs and desires (more on this later).[18] Fourth, there has been much recent interest in the development or further refinement of perceptual views of desires[19], emotions,[20] and pains[21] according to which they are experiences of value. Fifthly, and finally, there has been some recent work[22] on the connection between the existence of evaluative perception and views in value theory, e.g., whether perceptual theories of the emotions are compatible with particular kinds of Sentimentalism about value concepts and properties.

Despite this history and recent developments, there has only been limited interaction between philosophers working on these various topics. This volume aims to remedy this by bringing together philosophers in aesthetics, epistemology, ethics, philosophy of mind, and value theory, to contribute in novel ways to debates about what we call 'Evaluative Perception'. Specifically, they contribute to answering the following questions:

Questions about Existence and Nature: Are there perceptual experiences of values? If so, what is their nature? Are experiences of values sui generis? Are values necessary for certain kinds of experience?

Questions about Epistemology: Can evaluative experiences ever justify evaluative judgments? Are experiences of values necessary for certain kinds of justified evaluative judgments?

Questions about Value Theory: Is the existence of evaluative experience supported or undermined by particular views in value theory? Are particular views in value theory supported or undermined by the existence of value experience?

In the following three sections we provide an introduction to some of the main topics of discussion, and to the volume papers.

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[18] See, e.g., Firestone and Scholl (2014), '"Top-Down" Effects Where None Should Be Found: The El Greco Fallacy in Perception Research,' *Psychological Science* 25(1): 38-46; Macpherson, F (2012), 'Cognitive Penetration of Colour Experience: Rethinking the Issue in Light of an Indirect Mechanism'. *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 84 (1):24-62; Siegel (2012), **'**Cognitive Penetrability and Perceptual Justification'. *Noûs* 46 (2):201-222.

[19] See, e.g., Oddie, G. (2005), *Value, Reality, and Desire*, Oxford: Clarendon Press

[20] See, e.g., Döring, S.A., (2003) 'Explaining Action By Emotion', *Philosophical Quarterly* 53 (211):214-230

[21] See, e.g., Bain, D. (2013), 'What Makes Pains Unpleasant?**'**, *Philosophical Studies* 166 (1):69-89.

[22] See, e.g., Brady, M (2013), *Emotional Insight: The Epistemic Role of Emotional Experience,* Oxford University Press; Cowan, R. (2016), 'Epistemic Perceptualism and Neo-Sentimentalist Objections', *Canadian Journal of Philosophy,* 46 (1):59-81; Tappolet, C. (2011), 'Values and Emotions: Neo-Sentimentalism's Prospects'. In Carla Bagnoli (ed.), *Morality and the Emotions*. Oxford University Press.

Before doing so, the reader should note the following. As shall become clear, the fourteen papers in this volume are all concerned with answering one or more of these questions, and often cross-cut different areas, e.g., epistemological, value theory, etc. For that reason, it is somewhat artificial to divide them into discrete subgroups. However, to aid the reader in seeing the connections between the papers, and to contribute to the thematic unity of the volume, we have placed the papers into three subgroups. The first is primarily concerned with the *Existence and Nature of Evaluative Perception*. Here we have placed contributions by Dustin Stokes, Heather Logue, Robert Audi, Paul Noordhof, Pekka Väyrynen, Mikael Pettersson, and Anya Farennikova. The second group is mostly addressed to question about *Evaluative Perception and Epistemology*. Here we have contributions from Sarah McGrath, Michael Milona, Robert Cowan, and Jack Lyons. Finally, the third section is focused on the connections between *Evaluative Perception and Value Theory*. Here can be found the contributions by Graham Oddie, Anna Bergqvist, James Lenman, and Kathleen Stock.

1. Existence and Nature of Evaluative Perception

Many of the papers in the volume are concerned with the existence and nature of Evaluative Perception. As we are characterising it, this involves the experiential representation[23] of value properties, i.e., there are some perceptual experiences with evaluative content.

Before clarifying this and different kinds of evaluative perceptual experience, the phenomenon should be distinguished from two others.

Firstly, there is what we call 'De Re Perception of Values'[24]. That is, we perceive objects, persons, events, states of affairs that as a matter of fact instantiate evaluative properties, e.g., *moral rightness*, *beauty*, etc. Everyone but the value Error Theorist can assent to the claim that there is De Re Perception of Values. For our purposes, the crucial difference between this and Evaluative Perception is that the De Re Perception of some F by a subject is compatible with the subject not having what a perceptual 'experience' of F, i.e., an experience with evaluative content.

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[23] In characterising things this way, we are using the language of an Intentionalist or Representational theory of perception. On a Relational view of perception, by contrast, veridical experiences do not have representational content, but instead involve the obtaining of a perceptual relation between the perceiver and worldly objects, such that the relevant objects can be said to literally constitute one's experience. See, e.g., M. G. F. Martin (2006), 'On Being Alienated' in Gendler, T.S. and Hawthorne, J. (eds.), *Perceptual Experience* (Oxford, Oxford University Press), pp. 354-410. For brevity we will speak of perceptual representation (partly because most of the papers in the volume assume it) but the Relational view ought to be kept in mind.

[24] Or 'non-epistemic seeing'. See Dretske, F. (1969) *Seeing and Knowing*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, esp. chap. 2. See also Dretske, F. (1993), 'Conscious Experience', *Mind* 102:406 263–283.

Second, there is what we call 'Evaluative Seeing-That'. This involves making an evaluative judgment in response to a perceptual experience (often it is assumed that the evaluative judgment has some positive epistemic status, e.g., constitutes knowledge). One way in which some restrict the notion of Evaluative Seeing-That is by insisting that it must be both psychologically and epistemically non-inferential, i.e., the relevant judgments mustn't be the result of, nor be epistemically dependent upon inference.[25] Given this restriction, there is scope for philosophical debate as to whether all putative instances of Evaluative Seeing-That involve some sort of inferential epistemic dependence (for more discussion see §2 of this Introduction). For our purposes, the important difference between this and Evaluative Perception is that Evaluative Seeing-That is consistent with the perceptual experience only representing non-evaluative properties, e.g., the properties upon which the evaluative property supervenes or is consequential.

Now to clarify Evaluative Perception. Although there is an important distinction between non-factive perceptual experience, and perception which is factive, we will mainly focus on the former and for ease of expression simply refer to it as 'Evaluative Perception'. If there is Evaluative Perception, in this central sense, then subjects can have perceptual experiences that represent the instantiation of evaluative properties of the sort described above, i.e., some perceptual experiences are accurate only if they represent evaluative properties. Later we will introduce some other phenomena which, although don't fall under this category, are worthwhile considering alongside discussion of Evaluative Perception proper.

There are at least three different kinds of Evaluative Perception that are worth distinguishing.

The first of these is what we call 'Canonical Evaluative Perception'. This involves a commitment to the representation of evaluative properties in one or more of the five canonical sensory modalities. Some version of this view is defended or endorsed in this volume by Robert Audi (at least on one interpretation), Paul Noordhof, and Dustin Stokes.

The second kind of Evaluative Perception is what we refer to as 'Affective Evaluative Perception'. This involves the representation of evaluative properties in an affective or conative state, such as desire, emotion, or pain. On each of these views, the relevant mental state apparently shares important features with ordinary perceptual experience, e.g., they have phenomenal character, representational content, can be recalcitrant to doxastic changes, exemplify some covariance with subject's environments, and can play a non-inferential

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[25] One might go further and provide a positive characterisation of the aetiology of Seeing-That, e.g., they have their source in modular perceptual systems; see Jack Lyon's paper in this volume.

epistemic role. The point of interest for our purposes is that if such experiences could have an evaluative content – and proponents all seem to think that they can, e.g., Oddie[26] conceives of desires as experiences of *goodness*, Döring[27] thinks that moral emotions such as guilt represent *moral* properties, Bain[28] thinks that pain experiences represent bodily damage as *bad for the subject* – then there could be perceptual experiences with evaluative content, albeit 'non-traditional' ones. Versions of this view are discussed or defended by Robert Cowan, Graham Oddie, Michael Milona and Paul Noordhof in this volume.

The third kind of Evaluative Perception is what we call 'Sui Generis Evaluative Perception'. This involves the representation of evaluative properties in a sui generis kind of experience (by 'sui generis' we simply mean that it doesn't reduce to familiar sensory or affective phenomena). One example of this, which is discussed or defended in this volume by Robert Audi, Michael Milona, and Pekka Väyrynen, is the view that Evaluative Perceptions are 'integrated' experiences, which are an amalgam of sensory, emotional, and imaginative components. This is distinct from, e.g., Canonical Evaluative Perception in part because the sensory component of an integrated experience need not have an evaluative content. Another example of Sui Generis Evaluative Perception, which is discussed by Jack Lyons in this volume, is the view that, although evaluative properties aren't represented in sensory experience proper, they can be represented in perceptual seeming states. Roughly, these are propositional non-doxastic states that are the causal upshot of sensory experience or a sensory system.[29]

Due to space constraints, our discussion will be focused on the prospects for Canonical Evaluative Perception. However, this will still allow us to make extensive reference to other kinds of Evaluative Perception in this section and throughout the Introduction.

It is first worth noting that Canonical Evaluative Perception runs counter to the mainstream view according to which canonical perceptual experience, e.g., vision, only represents what are called 'low-level' properties such as colour, shape and motion. If there is Canonical Evaluative Perception then 'High-Level' properties, e.g., aesthetic, ethical, etc., must also be represented in perceptual experience.

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[26] Oddie, G. (2005) and this volume.
[27] Döring, S. (2003).
[28] Bain, D. (2013).
[29] For extensive discussion of seemings see Tucker, C. (ed.) (2013), *Seemings and Justification* (Oxford, Oxford University Press).

Why would anyone think that there is Canonical Evaluative Perception? One kind of evidence – already noted in this Introduction and highlighted in chapters by Audi, Logue, Noordhof, Stokes, Väyrynen – is that we often use perceptual language when talking about the evaluative. For example, it would not be unusual to hear someone say "the Boticelli looks incredible close-up", or, "I could hear her demeaning tone". However, this sort of evidence is quite weak. Even if we accept that such cases are psychologically (or perhaps even epistemically) non-inferential, this doesn't clearly support the truth of Canonical Evaluative Perception, as opposed to some other kind of Evaluative Perception. Indeed, it doesn't obviously support any kind of Evaluative Perception, if such cases can be explained as cases of Evaluative Seeing-That on the basis of non-evaluative perceptual experience.

A more promising strategy is perhaps to appeal to what have come to be known as 'Contrast Arguments'. This sort of argument has been presented by some philosophers of perception, notably Tim Bayne[30] and Susanna Siegel[31], in support of the high-level (or 'rich' or 'liberal') view of perception, with a focus on natural kind properties, e.g., being a pine tree, and causal relations. Very roughly, Contrast Arguments involve conceiving of two experiences with very similar or identical low-level content, but where there is plausibly a difference in the phenomenology between them, e.g., the contrast between the experiences of looking at pine trees before and then after acquiring a familiarity with what their characteristic look is. The crucial move in Contrast Arguments is to say that the best explanation of the phenomenological difference is a difference in the representational contents of perception as opposed to, e.g., attentional differences.

Put very simply:

> P1: There is a phenomenological difference between target experiences e and e*.
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> P2: The best explanation of the phenomenological difference between target experiences e and e* requires positing some high-level content, c, in experience.
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> C: (Probably) some experiences have some high-level, c, content.

Most are willing to accept P1. Thus the central task for proponents of Contrast Arguments is to show that positing high-level perception is indeed the best explanation of the relevant cases.

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[30] See his (2009).
[31] See her (2010).

Is this kind of argument more or less promising in the evaluative case? In this volume Dustin Stokes provides a Contrast Argument in favour of the conclusion that at least some aesthetic properties, e.g., gracefulness, are represented in canonical experience. Interestingly he thinks that this sort of argument is more promising in the aesthetic case than for other high-level properties such as natural kinds. Stokes argues that there is no way to account for the phenomenology of aesthetic cases without admitting perceptual representation of some organisational gestalt, e.g., an organizational gestalt typical of impressionist works. Crucially, to experience organisational aesthetic gestalts just is to experience the relevant aesthetic properties. Interestingly, this feature is lacking in cases of natural kind or even colour properties (a similar view is defended in Bergqvist's discussion of value theory in this volume).

Against this kind of optimism and the general line of thought, Heather Logue's chapter casts doubt on aesthetic Contrast Arguments. She thinks that there is another quite plausible explanation (which is just as parsimonious as positing Canonical Evaluative Perception) for the difference in phenomenology: appeal to emotional states (Affective Evaluative Perception). Notably, this alternative explanation seems to be absent in the case of other high-level properties like natural kinds. Logue also considers and rejects arguments in favour of Canonical Evaluative Perception of aesthetic properties which appeal to the putative "observationality" of some aesthetic properties – roughly, for an aesthetic property, F, in ideal viewing conditions, if something visually appears to be F, it is F – or to their allegedly "superficial" metaphysical nature. Regarding the latter, Logue draws attention to the idea that aesthetic properties are plausibly response-dependent (a feature that might complicate Stokes' argument).

In his chapter Pekka Väyrynen considers a Contrast Argument for moral perception[32], but finds that the phenomenological difference can be explained just as well by a model which posits a non-perceptual moral representation results from "an implicit habitual inference or some other type of transition in thought which can be reliably prompted by the non-moral perceptual inputs jointly with the relevant background moral beliefs"[33]. The representations involved may be affective in nature (hence Väyrynen may be interpreted as countenancing the existence of Affective Evaluative Perception or Sui Generis Evaluative Perception). Further, he thinks that this alternative model possesses theoretical virtues of simplicity and

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[32] Note that Werner, P. (2016) presents a contrast argument in favour of moral perception.
[33] Pekka Väyrynen, (this volume), pp. 147-8

unity that gives it an advantage. Positing Canonical Moral Perception adds no explanatory power. Thus P2 of a moral Contrast Argument should be rejected.[34]

Another kind of argument that could be offered in favour of Canonical Evaluative Perception is epistemological:

> P1: There could be a certain kind of justified belief, J, only if there were Canonical Evaluative Perception.
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> P2: There is justified belief J.
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> C: There is Canonical Evaluative Perception.

P1 claims that Canonical Evaluative Perception is a necessary condition for a particular kind of epistemic justification (a similar argument could be constructed for knowledge and other positive epistemic properties). We will postpone discussion of this idea until §2 of the Introduction. For now note that Logue discusses and rejects this sort of epistemic argument in her chapter.[35]

Even if one is somewhat sympathetic to arguments in favour of Canonical Evaluative Perception, there remains, inter alia, the question of how value properties could be represented in experience. For example, it might seem highly implausible that value properties are represented in a similar way to that in which low-level properties like colours and shapes are represented in vision. This point is not only noted by opponents of Canonical Evaluative Perception – see Jack Lyons' paper in this volume – but also by proponents of the view, such as Audi and Noordhof (both in this volume). Whether or not this fatal for the view depends upon whether we allow that there are different kinds of representation in perceptual experience. For example, Audi distinguishes, inter alia, between what he calls the "perceptual", associated with "cartographic", "pictorial" and "basic" representation (the sort allegedly involved in the representation of colours and shapes), and the "perceptible", which involves non-cartographic, non-pictorial, and non-basic representation. Crucially, he seems to think that some perception (in the canonical modalities) is of the perceptible. Noordhof also

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[34] Väyrynen thinks that whether a Contrast Argument is likely to succeed depends on the properties in question, and his view is that it is a good deal less promising in the moral case as compared with other high-level properties (as Logue argues with regard to aesthetic properties).

[35] Robert Audi, in this volume, also suggests the following sort of argument for moral perception: *if* there is perception of emotion, e.g., anger, then there is little reason to doubt the existence of moral perception. Of course, one might doubt that the antecedent is true, and in any case might doubt the truth of the conditional. As Pekka Väyrynen argues, admission of perceptual contents should proceed on a case-by-case basis.

distinguishes between "sensory" and "non-sensory" representation in canonical perception.[36] If we admit that there can be different kinds of perceptual representation, then Canonical Evaluative Perception may be a good deal more plausible.

One thing that makes it difficult to determine whether there really is Canonical Evaluative Perception is that it is hard to see how we can satisfactorily resolve disputes between those who, like Audi and Noordhof, think that there is something like non-sensory representation, and those, like Lyons, who think that what is being referred to as non-sensory perceptual representation is actually something post-perceptual, e.g., a perceptual seeming state which has phenomenal character (though perhaps it is *bland* character) and conceptual content. Note, however, that Noordhof provides arguments in favour of admitting non-sensory representation (one which appeals to the phenomenology of chicken sexers and speech perception, the other which appeals to epistemic considerations), as well as reasons for doubting the existence of perceptual seemings in his chapter. Also, in this context it is worth noting Heather Logue's view that there may not be a fact of the matter regarding the question of whether aesthetic properties are represented in canonical perceptual experience.

Even if one allows that there can be non-cartographic or non-sensory perceptual representation, e.g., perhaps this is what all high-level representation involves, some still might think that there are specific problems for Canonical *Evaluative* Perception. In his chapter, Noordhof thinks that there may be some resistance to the idea of Canonical Evaluative Perception even among those who countenance non-sensory representation because of the common thought that value properties are in some way response-dependent (also highlighted by Logue)[37]. In order to address this, Noordhof presents an account of intrinsic response-dependent representation – i.e., representation of a property that has nothing to do with the representation standing in relation to something independently characterised in the world. He illustrates this with reference to the perception of badness in pain and moral perception.

Suppose that a plausible argument can be made for thinking that there is Canonical Evaluative Perception. To support this, proponents will need to identify psychological mechanisms by which this could take place. This is, of course, an empirical matter that can't plausibly be settled from the armchair.

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[36] Although some aspects of Noordhof's distinction appear to be similar to Audi's, Noordhof places emphasis on discriminability of properties in order to flesh out the difference.

[37] Noordhof also thinks that there is a lack of 'phenomenal presence' in the case of aesthetic and moral representation, though not in the case of the representation of badness in pain experience.

One candidate model that has received attention in the recent literature on moral perception is that Canonical Evaluative Perception could be brought about by a process of Cognitive Penetration.[38] Roughly, Cognitive Penetration of sensory experience is possible if and only if it's possible for two subjects to have experiences which differ in content and/or phenomenal character, where this difference is the result of a causal process that traces more or less directly to states in the subjects' cognitive system, and where we hold fixed the perceptual stimuli, the condition of the subjects' sensory organs, the environmental conditions, and, the attentional focus of the subjects.[39]

Potential cognitive penetrators include moods, beliefs, desires, emotions, and character traits. Such a model might help to explain how there can be expertise with respect to values, e.g., in aesthetics. What the expert has, and the novice lacks, is a set of background commitments that cognitively penetrate their sensory experience such that it comes to have an evaluative content.

Although there is growing evidence for the Cognitive Penetrability thesis[40], it is still highly controversial. It is therefore worth noting that adopting the Cognitive Penetrability model requires proponents of Canonical Evaluative Perception to undertake substantial empirical commitments regarding the capacities of ordinary perception and its relation to cognition. In this volume, Bergqvist, Cowan, Lyons, Pettersson, Stokes and Väyrynen discuss Cognitive Penetration.

Another model appeals to Perceptual Learning, which involves a repeated associative process that takes place within the perceptual system. For example, after repeated exposure to a particular kind of artwork (and top-down processing within the visual system) perhaps one's visual system may come to encode information about aesthetic properties. Stokes discusses this possibility in his volume chapter. If we think that there is such a thing as aesthetic expertise, one might think that one feature that distinguishes the expert from the novice is that

[38] Cowan, R. (2015b) "Cognitive Penetrability and Ethical Perception", *The Review of Philosophy and Psychology* 6 (4): 665-682.

[39] See, e.g., Vance, J. (2014) 'Emotion and the New Epistemic Challenge from Cognitive Penetrability', *Philosophical Studies* 169, 257–83.

[40] See, e.g., Bruner, J.S., Goodman, C.C. (1947), 'Value and Need as Organizing Factors in Perception', *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 42, 33-44; Delk, J.L. and Fillenbaum, S., (1965), 'Differences in Perceived Colour as a Function of Characteristic Colour', *The American Journal of Psychology* 78(2): 290-93; Hansen, T., M. Olkonnen, S., S. Walter & K.R. Gegenfurtner (2006), 'Memory Modulates Color Appearance', *Nature Neuroscience* 9: 1367-8. See also Stokes, D. (2013), 'The Cognitive penetrability of perception', *Philosophy Compass* 8, 646-663.

they have been repeatedly exposed to artworks. Note, however, that a similar sort of repeated exposure may be less common in the moral case (although this might be overstating things).

A final model for Canonical Evaluative Perception is that our perceptual systems are hard-wired for evaluative representation (in the way that representation of colours and shapes seems to be). One might think that a necessary condition for perceptual hard-wiring is that possessing the relevant representational powers will be of use to subjects who possess them in almost any environment in which they might be placed.[41] Notice that, while it is not implausible that moral properties meet the necessary condition, it is perhaps a good less so for kind properties, e.g., being a pine tree, and aesthetic properties.

In this volume, Robert Audi may be interpreted as defending a sort of hard-wired view about Evaluative Perception, however, it is not entirely clear whether he is willing to countenance this for Canonical Evaluative Perception or only for a kind of Sui Generis Evaluative Perception (integrated experiences). Finally, it is worth noting that in the case of Affective Evaluative Perception – regarding emotion and pain in particular – philosophers seem to be more sanguine about the claim that evaluative representation is hard-wired.

Although the majority of the papers in the volume are engaged in debates about Evaluative Perception (as we have defined it), two of the volume papers – those by Mikael Pettersson and Anya Farennikova – discuss distinct kinds of phenomena which we think are usefully grouped with these other papers.

Firstly, there is the phenomenon of Seeing-In, typical of pictorial representation, which – as noted earlier – some have thought marks out a distinctive form of perception. For instance it is often said that an important part of our experience of pictures, such as looking at a wedding photograph in the family album, is that we see its subject matter "in" its surface, in a way that is different from watching the world (its pictorial content) face-to-face.

In his chapter, Mikael Pettersson problematises extant accounts – *resemblance*[42] and *recognitional*[43] – of Seeing-In by considering how they fare with respect to the phenomenon of seeing *empty space* in pictures. Although seeing empty space in a picture (and seeing-in more generally) isn't a form of Evaluative Perception (as we have defined it), the alleged distinctiveness of this form of perception, and its apparent significance for aesthetics, e.g., the

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[41] See, e.g., Macpherson, F. (2012).
[42] See Hopkins, R. (1998).
[43] See Currie, G. (1995), *Image and Mind: Film, Philosophy, and Cognitive Science*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

aesthetic appreciation of some pictures will depend on our experience of empty space or void in the picture, make inclusion of discussion of this topic in this collection important. Pettersson rejects cognitive accounts of seeing empty space in pictures (what we earlier referred to as Seeing-That) and goes on to sketch an *imagination* theory of our experience of seeing empty space in pictures, which according to one model involves the cognitive penetration of perceptual experience by imagination.

The second phenomenon is that of perceptual experiences which, though not themselves Evaluative Perceptions, are nevertheless allegedly causally dependent for their occurrence upon subjects having certain sorts of evaluative commitments. For example, perhaps possessing certain aesthetic beliefs makes one more perceptually attentive to particular low-level features of artworks, e.g., colour and shape arrays, even if such experiences don't represent the instantiation of evaluative properties. In addition, we might include *affordances,* as a related kind of evaluative perceptual experience that represents not an evaluative property as such but rather features of the perceived lived environment that bear intimately on action in reasonable perceptual agents – such as giving up one's seat on the bus upon seeing a visibly tired person.[44] Rather than an Evaluative Perception, these are perhaps better called 'Value-Enabled Perceptions'.

In her volume paper Anya Farennikova argues that perceptual experiences of *absences*, e.g., seeing that Pierre is not in the café, or noticing the absence of a ring on someone's fourth finger, are dependent upon the subject's desires or values. Roughly, the idea is that desiring and valuing more generally can make one perceptually sensitive to the existence of the absence of certain things in one's environment. Without those values, one wouldn't recognise what isn't there. Thus, Farennikova thinks that one's desires *enable* the perception of absences: they are value driven experiences.

2. Epistemology and Evaluative Perception

As was noted in the previous section, one kind of argument that is sometimes offered in favour of Canonical Evaluative Perception is epistemological. What is perhaps the crucial premise in that argument claims that Canonical Evaluative Perception is necessary for the existence of some kind of justified evaluative belief or knowledge. One candidate might be the existence of justified evaluative beliefs about concrete particular cases, e.g., John's

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[44] This example is from Bengson, J. (2016) 'Practical Perception', *Philosophical Issues* 26 (1):25-58.

judgment that the hoodlums were wrong to set fire to the cat, or Lucy's belief that the lead ballerina's movements in the final act were graceful.

In this volume there are several papers that argue against this sort of view. In her chapter, Logue at one stage suggests that a (broadly-speaking) inferentialist picture could perhaps accommodate justified beliefs in aesthetic cases, e.g., Lucy's justified belief about the gracefulness of the ballerina might be the result of her justified background belief that features F, G, H are usually sufficient for movements to be graceful, and the belief or perceptual registering that the ballerina possesses those features.

In her paper, Sarah McGrath – focusing primarily on moral perceptual knowledge – argues at length against versions of inferentialism (albeit focused on moral cases): deductive, inductive, and abductive. These models allegedly fail to adequately explain moral knowledge in particular cases. She also considers and rejects a more sophisticated Inferentialist model found in the work of Kieran Setiya[45], according to which the relevant moral 'perceptual' knowledge is actually inferred from non-moral evidence. However, McGrath doesn't think that Canonical Evaluative Perception is necessary for justified belief or knowledge in the relevant cases. Instead, she argues that a non-inferential Evaluative Seeing-That is sufficient. Interestingly, McGrath argues that such non-inferential 'perceptual' judgments about particular concrete cases – as opposed to judgments about hypothetical cases which are implicitly general[46] – can play an important and hitherto unrecognised role in the process of arriving at reflective equilibrium.

Jack Lyons, in his volume chapter, also argues – from an epistemological Reliabilist perspective – that the sort of justification that one might have thought could only be gained by Canonical Evaluative Perception, can also be delivered by Sui Generis Evaluative Perception (perceptual seemings), or what he calls 'value intuitions', i.e., cognitive seemings with evaluative content.

Finally, a more extreme version of the view that Canonical Evaluative Perception plays some epistemically essential role would claim that it is required for the existence of any justified (substantive) evaluative belief. In his volume chapter, Michael Milona argues against this[47], concluding that for any substantive justification gained from Canonical Evaluative Perception, subjects could gain the similar justification by imaginatively considering the

[45] Setiya, K. (2012), *Knowing Right From Wrong,* Oxford University Press

[46] See Kagan, S. (2001), 'Thinking About Cases', *Social Philosophy and Policy* 18 (2): 44-63

[47] Note that Michael Milona (this volume) interprets Audi's Integration model as a form of Canonical Evaluative Perception. Others, e.g., Väyrynen in this volume, do not.

relevant cases and having some sort of affective, e.g., emotional, response to it. Indeed, Milona goes further and claims that the question of whether there is Canonical Evaluative Perception is not important *at all* for debates about evaluative epistemology (but recall McGrath's point about the epistemic significance of perceptual evaluative judgments). Note, however, that Milona seems to think that Affective Evaluative Perception – desires or emotions – is a necessary condition for justified substantive evaluative beliefs. We'll return to this view shortly.

Even if Canonical Evaluative Perception isn't necessary for evaluative justification (and thus epistemological arguments for its existence are likely unsound), we can ask whether it could be sufficient for justified evaluative beliefs. Further, if it turns out that Canonical Evaluative Perception were sufficient for basic or non-inferential justification then it could still have some epistemological significance, i.e., it could be a source of regress-stopping justification. Is it?

On one view of non-inferential experiential justification, in order for an experience to immediately justify a belief that p, this requires that the experience has distinctively *presentational* content with respect to p. Being presented with p is meant to differ in important respects from representing p (contrast seeing a red ball with simply thinking about one). In this volume, Noordhof claims that the moral perception lacks presentational character in a way that other sorts of Evaluative Perceptions, e.g., pain experiences, do not. He suggests that this impacts on the former's capacity to confer justification. On the other hand, Audi has no problem with the idea that moral perceptions could be presentational. One explanation for the difference in view is that there are competing views of what presentational content is.[48] Which is the correct view arguably needs to be settled on independent grounds.

If one thinks that non-inferential epistemic justification requires *reliability*, or that evaluative knowledge requires reliability, then one needs to give an account of how Canonical Evaluative Perception could be reliable. Robert Audi's considered view – in the moral case – is that this has something to do with the possession of moral concepts. However, one might wonder how concept possession could make one reliable in this way, and whether this renders the relevant knowledge/justified belief non-empirical. An alternative view is that reliability will depend upon the background beliefs or value commitments that one has.

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[48] For a particular conception, see Chudnoff, E. (2013), *Intuition,* Oxford University Press.

However, one might worry – as Väyrynen does in his volume chapter – that this introduces an epistemic dependence that is antithetical to non-inferential justification. In this context it is worth noting Lyons' argument (in this volume) against the view that causal cognitive influence (penetration) on some mental item should lead us to posit some sort of epistemic dependence relation. Instead, what matters is whether the cognitive influence is such that the mental item can be said to be *based* upon the influencing cognition. So even if Canonical Evaluative Perception is brought about by cognitive penetration by background beliefs, if this doesn't involve basing then this would be consistent with Canonical Evaluative Perceptions being sources of immediate justification or knowledge (so long as they are reliable).

As was noted earlier, Michael Milona suggests that Affective Evaluative Perceptions could be sources of immediate justification for evaluative beliefs (indeed, he appears to suggest that they may be necessary for such justification). However, one might wonder whether emotions, e.g., could be sources of immediate justification, if they are always grounded in "cognitive bases"[49], e.g., beliefs, perceptions, imaginative episodes concerning non-evaluative objects and events. For example, David's guilt is based upon his belief that he lied to his partner. One might think that for his guilt to justify an evaluative belief, e.g., that he has done something wrong, his belief about having lied must be justified. But then that looks like his emotion isn't a source of immediate justification. Further, this sort of basing/epistemic dependence might make us doubt that emotions really are Affective Evaluative Perceptions (similar points could be made about desires). In this volume, Robert Cowan argues that even if all emotions have cognitive bases, and even if this entails an epistemic dependence of the emotion upon the cognitive base, this is compatible both with emotions playing an epistemically fundamental role with respect to evaluative propositions.

3. Value Theory and Evaluative Perception

If we define Evaluative Perception in terms of a non-factive representational state, then it might seem as though there are little or no connections between its existence and questions in value theory about, e.g., the metaphysics of values.

However, that's a bit quick (see also Noordhof and Stokes, this volume). To illustrate, consider a simple Sentimentalist view of value properties (a similar view could be developed about concepts), according to which X possesses value property, F, iff X elicits emotional response, E, from all who consider X. One way to understand this view would be as a

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[49] See Deonna, J. & Teroni, F., (2012), *The Emotions: A Philosophical Introduction*, Routledge, p. 5.

reductive analysis of value properties, i.e., the right hand-side has explanatory priority. However, if emotional responses have evaluative content, e.g., guilt represents wrongness, that might problematise a reductive version of this view (since the right-hand side will make reference to value properties, albeit the representation of such properties). This might push us in the direction of some other kind of account, e.g., a no-priority view.

Even if one has doubts about the previous line of thought, if we assume that at least some Evaluative Perceptions are veridical, and that they can play some epistemic role, e.g., prima facie justify evaluative beliefs, then there are arguably clearer connections between the existence of Evaluative Perception and Value Theory. For example, it has recently been argued[50] that a view according to which emotions are Affective Evaluative Perceptions, which can non-inferentially justify evaluative beliefs[51], is incompatible with Neo-Sentimentalism about value concepts – according to which X possesses value property, F, iff X merits or justifies an emotional response from those who contemplate X, E, e.g., X is admirable iff X merit admiration. This is because the combination would appear to have the counterintuitive consequence that emotions can confer justification for themselves.[52]

In this volume Graham Oddie defends the view that desires are Affective Evaluative Perceptions, i.e., they are experiences of the *goodness* of things that can confer prima facie justification for evaluative beliefs about *goodness*. However, Oddie argues that if we think *states of affairs* are the primary bearers of value, then the view that desires are value perceptions faces an isomorphism problem. On the one hand, if there is Affective Evaluative Perception then it might seem that it ought to be reflective of the evaluative facts. Certainly, it seems that our evaluative beliefs ought to be this way. But on the other hand, it seems that at least some kinds of value experience – in particular emotional and desire experiences – are legitimately perspectival, e.g., it seems legitimate for me to prefer that my mother be saved rather than someone else's in a scenario where only one can be saved. After suggesting a somewhat metaphorical way of addressing this (which appeals, inter alia, to value distance), Oddie suggests that the isomorphism problem can be dealt with if we adopt the view that *properties/states of being,* e.g., *being happy*, are the primary bearers of value and objects of desire. This is because Oddie thinks properties, in particular, "local" properties (a property

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[50] See Brady, M. (2013).

[51] Defended by, e.g., Doring, S. (2003) and Pelser, A. C., (2014), 'Emotion, Evaluative Perception, and Epistemic Justification" In *Emotion and Value*, edited by S. Roeser and C. Todd, 107–123. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

[52] But see Cowan, R. (2016) for a response.

that can be borne by one thing without everything possessing it), have their own "built-in" perspective.

In her paper, Anna Bergqvist also considers the perspectival nature of evaluative perception. On Bergqvist's reading of Iris Murdoch, moral perception does not only involve the idea of being attuned to one's environment thanks to cognitive penetration through the concepts that we deploy, but also the claim that one's conceptions of these concepts decisively influence what we see. Bergqvist argues that we can nonetheless make good on the robust realist claim that the salient concepts of an individual's life-world can be revelatory of value without appeal either to Platonism or value-constitutivism. Bergqvist distinguishes two readings on the concept of 'non-perspectival value': an epistemic and reading and a non-epistemic one, and argues that commitment to the thesis that value is in some sense always value for us does not as such rule out value's being non-perspectival in the sense of existing independently of any actual worldviews or perspectives in the non-epistemic sense. Bergqvist considers the possible objection as to how to account for the notion of structure and unity of moral thought if we follow through on Murdoch's suggestion and take the central target notion of worldview to be an unruly holistic admixture of evaluative and non-evaluative concepts: are there any limits as to what might plausibly be counted as "value for us"? In her estimation, what is needed is a separate argument that speaks to the practicality of thick moral concepts as action-guiding concepts, and the notion of action-oriented perception more generally.

By contrast with Bergqvist's perspective-neutral view about the nature of value, in his volume paper James Lenman explores the topic of Evaluative Perception within the context of a broadly Expressivist (or Quasi-Realist) metaethical framework. According to this metaethical view, our reasons for action (including moral reasons) emerge out of a relatively stable network of desire-like attitudes and commitments, arrived at via some process of reflection and deliberation. Despite a sort of ultimate dependence of reasons on desire, it can apparently still make sense to speak – from within our web of commitments – of desire-independent moral reasons and moral truth within this framework. With this view on the table, Lenman rejects the idea that Canonical Moral Perception takes place: this sort of position would only seem to make sense if we assumed some sort of naturalist realism. Even then, Lenman thinks that the real epistemic work would be done by moral theorising about the relation between natural and moral properties, not sensory perception. Instead, he affords a limited role to Affective Evaluative Perception (emotions and desire) in disclosing value to us, where the latter process is understood more as self-interpretation rather than some sort of

perceptual-like engagement with an external evaluative reality. However, it is clear that Lenman is more favourable to a picture of ethical thought as reflective and interpretative, rather than immediate and perceptual.

Finally, in her volume chapter, Kathleen Stock appeals to a particular kind of perception in order to illuminate a particular kind of practice with evaluative and normative significance: *objectifying* behaviour, i.e., treating people like objects. Specifically she argues that a mediating role between objectifying images (e.g., those found in pornography) and objectifying behaviour is played by a distinctive kind of perception: what she calls 'mind-insensitive seeing-as'. This amounts to a mode of perceiving people on a par with looking at mindless inanimate objects, and involves a sort of Gestalt which can come in various types, e.g., *seeing-as body, seeing-as fungible*. Positing this phenomenon explains some important kinds of objectifying behaviours, e.g., the attentional and cognitive habits towards members of objectified groups. Now, although the sorts of experiences that Stock appeals to may not themselves have an evaluative content (strictly-speaking), they may be said to be evaluative perceptions in a broader sense, due to the morally significant way they involve presenting their intentional objects (persons). Even if it were objected that the phenomena that Stock points to is not a class of Evaluative Perception, one significant feature is worth noting. The experiences that Stock describes would themselves seem to be the appropriate *object* of evaluation, whether or not they represent value properties, i.e., they nevertheless constitute *Morally Evaluable Perceptions*.