

- (3) Factual statements are true or false independently of any value judgments.
- (4) Facts can, and values cannot, be established beyond controversy.
- (5) Evaluative statements are neither true nor false.

Putnam's reference to the view that "the dichotomy 'statement of fact or value judgment' is an absolute one" suggests thesis (1). His reference to the claim that "fact and value are totally disjoint realms" fits (1), but it might also be taken to indicate (2) and/or (3). In one place, he says that he has "defended the idea that something can be both a fact and a value."³ This, again, suggests that (1) is the thesis he wants to attack. In another place, he says the following:

My purpose was to break the grip that a certain picture has on our thinking; the picture of a dualism, a dichotomous division of our thought into two realms, a realm of "facts" which can be established beyond controversy, and a realm of "values" where we are always in hopeless disagreement.⁴

This points in the direction of thesis (4), but it may also be related to theses (1) through (3). Furthermore, it is tempting to assume that a statement is factual just in case it is either true or false. On this assumption, the fact-value dichotomy might also be expressed by (5). In fact, Putnam comes close to this when he describes the fact-value dichotomy as the view that "there is no fact of the matter as to whether or not things are good or bad or better or worse, etc.,"⁵ and when he suggests that the fact-value dichotomy is a close relative of "non-cognitivism", which says that ethical sentences are "neither true nor false."⁶ We could say that (5) is an interpretation of (1). Furthermore, given a verificationist view of truth, such as Putnam's, (5) might indeed be taken to be more or less equivalent to (4). In any case, I believe Putnam's criticism of the fact-value dichotomy is a criticism of more than one of the five theses (1) through (5). Perhaps he wants to reject all of them.

1. *Totally disjoint realms?*

Of the five theses mentioned above, (1) might seem to be the most fundamental. However, it is not at all clear that those who insist upon the distinction between facts and values would accept (1). Many statements seem to have both factual and evaluative content. If such statements are both factual and evaluative, then (1) has to be rejected.

Consider, for instance, the statement "Bill Clinton is a good president." This seems to have a factual content, namely, (at least) that Clinton is a president, but it also seems to express an evaluation. Consequently, it might be regarded as both factual and evaluative. If it is, (1) must be given up. Another example is the statement that "John knows that prom-

³ *The Many Faces of Realism*, 63.

⁴ *Op. cit.*, 71.

⁵ *Reason, Truth and History*, 128.

⁶ *Realism with a Human Face*, 165.

ises ought to be kept." On the standard analysis, this entails that John believes that promises ought to be kept (a factual statement), and also that promises ought to be kept (an evaluative statement). Again, this example seems incompatible with (1). Further counter-examples to (1) may consist of conjunctions with one factual and one evaluative conjunct.

Does this demonstrate that (1) has to be rejected? I think not. One might say instead that evaluative content is *dominant*, in the sense that statements which have both factual and evaluative content are classified—by definition—as evaluative. As it happens, I believe that this usage is rather well established among philosophers and non-philosophers alike. If so, our examples do not refute (1). Rather, the dominance of evaluative content seems to render (1) immune to criticism.

At the same time, of course, this move renders (2) false, since it opens up the possibility that some evaluative statements entail factual statements. This calls for a modification of (2). However, the obvious modification is something that would be quite acceptable to a defender of the fact-value dichotomy. What is important in (2), according to the dichotomy, is only that (purely) factual statements cannot entail (purely) evaluative statements—which, in turn, is a version of what is often called "Hume's Law". (2) should be interpreted accordingly.

So far, so good. In what follows, I shall consider certain arguments against the fact-value dichotomy which are to be found in Putnam's writings. Some of these are fairly explicit, while others are more implicit. As far as I can tell, one could distinguish four different arguments.

2. *Counter-examples to Hume's Law*

One argument consists in presenting counter-examples to Hume's Law. It is possible that Putnam wants to say that there are such counter-examples. In one place, he writes as follows:

Even though each of the statements "John is a very inconsiderate man", "John thinks about nobody but himself", "John would do practically anything for money" may be simply a true description in the most positivistic sense (and notice "John would do practically anything for money" does not contain any value term), if one has asserted the conjunction of these three statements it is hardly necessary to add "John is not a very good person".⁷

It is not obvious that this is meant to be a counter-example to Hume's Law or to the fact-value dichotomy. Putnam may not want to say that the evaluative "conclusion" is entailed by the three factual statements. He might argue instead that "it is hardly necessary to add" the evaluative statement, since the audience can be expected, in a given situation, to add this by themselves because they accept certain moral principles which purport that inconsiderate and selfish persons are not very good. A proponent of the fact-value dichotomy can easily accept this.

⁷ *Reason, Truth and History*, 139.

Notwithstanding, the quoted passage above could be interpreted in other ways. It can be taken to mean that the three descriptive or factual statements are also evaluative—at least in conjunction—or that they entail an evaluative statement. On the first interpretation, the example violates (1); on the second, it violates (2).

A defender of the fact-value dichotomy would not be very worried by Putnam's example, however. I think a standard answer would go somewhat like this. The sentences which are used to make the three statements mentioned in Putnam's example can indeed be used to make purely factual statements, but they can also be used to make evaluative statements. In the latter case, for example, "John would do practically anything for money" would mean much the same as "John would do practically anything—including morally bad things—for money; he has no moral inhibitions." To the extent that they are evaluative, these statements can also be said to entail an evaluative statement, as expressed by the sentence "John is not a very good person." On the other hand, this latter sentence can be used, in different circumstances, to express a purely factual statement (in Richard Hare's terminology,⁸ the word "good" could be used in an *inverted-commas* sense).

A defender of the fact-value dichotomy may well add that, in practice, it is often difficult to determine whether a purely factual or an evaluative statement is being made by an utterance. In *this* sense the boundary is not sharp. But the fact-value distinction is nevertheless a useful and legitimate analytic tool, which can be used when we want to make sense of other people's utterances (as well as our own). The distinction should be understood in such a way that theses (1) and (2), at least, are true—provided that they are interpreted in the manner suggested above.

3. *Putnam's rejection of the two-components theory*

Putnam might object to my treatment of his counter-example that statements such as the three premises in the above inference *cannot* be interpreted as evaluative statements. The reason for this is as follows. If these statements are classified as evaluative, then we need to say that there are two components to their meaning, one factual and the other evaluative—but this is impossible, since the factual component cannot be separated from the statement as a whole.

In this regard, Putnam discusses what he calls the "two-components theory", which says that some statements have two meaning components, one factual and one emotive. However, he rejects this theory. Indeed, he claims that it "collapses".⁹ Putnam considers an example from our "ordinary moral-descriptive vocabulary", namely, the statement "John is considerate."¹⁰ He says that

⁸ See R. M. Hare, *The Language of Morals* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1952), 121-6.

⁹ *Reason, Truth and History*, 205.

¹⁰ *Op. cit.*, 204.

if there *are* two components to the meaning of "X is considerate", then the only description we can give of the "factual meaning" of the statement is that it is true if and only if X is *considerate*. And that trivializes the notion of a "factual component".

To say that the "two components theory" collapses is not to deny that "X is considerate" normally has a certain emotive force. But it does not always have it. As we pointed out in Chapter 6, we can use the statement "X is considerate" for many purposes: to evaluate, to describe, to explain, to predict, and so on. Distinguishing the *uses* to which the statement can be put does not require us to deny the existence of such a *statement* as "X is considerate".¹¹

I am not quite sure how to interpret this. At any rate, it seems clear that Putnam wants to distinguish between *statements*, on the one hand, and the *uses* to which they can be put, on the other. So by "statement" he probably means the same as "sentence" in the generic sense, i.e. a linguistic form which can be used on many different occasions. Thus a statement, in Putnam's sense, is not an individual utterance or what is expressed by such an utterance. Or maybe he means that a "statement" is what is *always* expressed by the utterances of a given sentence, irrespective of the various uses to which the sentence is put on different occasions. This would explain the last sentence in the above passage; for surely nobody would deny the existence of sentences of the form "X is considerate." (But can one really "use" what is always expressed by a sentence for various purposes?)

In any case, a proponent of the fact-value dichotomy would certainly not want to classify *sentences* as factual or evaluative. It is natural to say that a sentence like "John is considerate" could be used for different purposes on different occasions. But it is equally natural to say that it could be used to make different statements on different occasions, and that, accordingly, it may have different meanings and be interpreted in different ways on different occasions. As I noted in section 2, a proponent of the fact-value dichotomy would suggest that such a sentence expresses purely factual statements on some occasions and evaluative statements on other occasions. When "John is considerate" expresses an evaluative statement, this statement also has a factual content. Putnam may be right that this factual content cannot be expressed in "the language of physical theory."¹² But this fact—if it is a fact—does not seem to pose a threat to the fact-value dichotomy.

Nevertheless, one may wonder whether the factual content of "John is considerate" (when this sentence is used to make an evaluative statement) can be stated in a clearly non-evaluative way, i.e. in language which cannot be interpreted as the expression of an evaluative statement. I think this is possible. One might say, for instance, "Whether or not this is a good thing, John can be truthfully and neutrally described as being considerate." As far as I can tell, this can be plausibly taken to convey the factual content of "John is considerate." The statement's evalu-

¹¹ *Op. cit.*, 205.

¹² *Ibid.*

ative content—if there is one—might be expressed by something like, “If John is considerate, then this is a good moral quality of his.” On a given occasion, the statement “John is considerate” may have both a factual and an evaluative content. The criticism Putnam raises against the two-components theory does not seem to rule this out.

My conclusion thus far is the following. The objections Putnam might be taken to raise against (1) and (2) do not really weaken these theses—so long as they are interpreted in the way I indicate in sections 1 and 2.

4. *Can evaluative statements be true?*

In my view, the fact-value dichotomy consists of theses (1) and (2), and need not include theses (3) through (5). But Putnam might include some of the latter theses in the fact-value dichotomy, at least as he understands it. In any case, it seems that he wants to reject one or more of them. For example, I believe he wants to reject (5). Given Putnam’s view of truth, one may expect him to say that at least some evaluative statements (or beliefs) can be true. However things may stand, if evaluative statements cannot be true, they would seem to differ sharply, in precisely this manner, from factual statements.

Truth, for Putnam, is the same as acceptability or justifiability under ideal conditions. (He has changed his view, however, in recent years. In 1994 he stated: “I no longer defend that theory of truth at all.”¹³ Still, the Putnam with whom I am concerned here is the Putnam who attacked the fact-value dichotomy in *Reason, Truth and History* and certain other writings.) On this point, Putnam notes that

truth is an *idealization* of rational acceptability. We speak as if there were such things as epistemically ideal conditions, and we call a statement “true” if it would be justified under such conditions. “Epistemically ideal conditions”, of course, are like “frictionless planes”: we cannot really attain epistemically ideal conditions, or even be absolutely certain that we have come sufficiently close to them.¹⁴

Rational acceptability is, in turn, a matter of satisfying certain epistemic values, and especially coherence.

What makes a statement, or a whole system of statements [...] rationally acceptable is, in large part, its coherence and fit; coherence of “theoretical” or less experiential beliefs with one another and with more experiential beliefs, and also coherence of experiential beliefs with theoretical beliefs.¹⁵

This means that “rational acceptability is both tensed and relative to a person,”¹⁶ for different people have different systems of beliefs at different times. But rational acceptability under ideal conditions, i.e. *truth*, is

¹³ *Words and Life* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1994). The quotation is from the Preface.

¹⁴ *Reason, Truth and History*, 55.

¹⁵ *Op. cit.*, 54-5.

¹⁶ *Op. cit.*, 55.

neither tensed nor relative to any person. According to the idealization theory of truth,

truth is expected to be stable or “convergent”; if both a statement and its negation could be “justified”, even if conditions were as ideal as one could hope to make them, there is no sense in thinking of the statement as having a truth-value.¹⁷

In other words, Putnam seems to hold that a statement is true if and only if it—but not its negation—would (or could?) be justified under epistemically ideal conditions.

Now, it seems plausible to assume that evaluative statements can cohere, or fail to cohere, with other evaluative and/or factual statements (or beliefs). Therefore, we may suppose that an evaluative statement can be rationally acceptable or justified for a given person at a given time. But can it also be *true* (in the sense suggested by Putnam)? This depends upon whether rational acceptability under ideal condition is also “convergent” in the case of evaluative statements. Someone who accepts (4) may very well doubt this. And, as far as I can tell, Putnam has not really shown that (4) is false, nor has he really shown that some evaluative statements satisfy the convergence condition.

5. *Putnam’s truth*

It still seems possible to construct an argument against (1) from Putnam’s theory of truth. We have seen that, according to Putnam, truth is the same as “convergent” rational acceptability or justifiability under ideal conditions. We may spell this out as follows:

A statement S is *true* if and only if, for any person P at any time *t*, if P’s conditions at *t* are ideal (with respect to S), S would be rationally acceptable (completely justified) for P at *t*, and the negation of S would not be rationally acceptable for P at *t*.

Acceptability or justifiability depends upon epistemic values such as coherence and simplicity. Putnam writes, for instance, that

to describe a theory as “coherent, simple, explanatory” is, in the right setting, to say that acceptance of the theory is *justified*; and to say that the acceptance of a statement is (completely) justified is to say that one ought to accept the statement or theory.¹⁸

Consequently, Putnam’s position may also be put as follows:

A statement S is *true* if and only if, for any person P at any time *t*, if P’s conditions are ideal (with respect to S) at *t*, P ought to accept S at *t*, and P ought not to accept the negation of S at *t*.

In other words, it seems that, for Putnam, a statement to the effect that a given statement is true is equivalent to an evaluative statement. More-

¹⁷ *Op. cit.*, 56.

¹⁸ *Realism with a Human Face*, 138.

over, we may note that Putnam accepts the “equivalence principle” that any statement is equivalent to the statement that it is true. Indeed, he says that

the equivalence principle is philosophically neutral [...]. On *any* theory of truth, “Snow is white” is equivalent to “‘Snow is white’ is true”.¹⁹

From this it seems to follow that, in conjunction with the claim that ascriptions of truth are equivalent to evaluative statements, *every* statement is equivalent to an evaluative statement. And from this we can conclude that every statement entails an evaluative statement. If this is combined with the “dominance” principle mentioned in section 1, then it follows that every statement *is* an evaluative statement. This is a pretty remarkable result. (Presumably, a proponent of the fact-value dichotomy would try to block this view by denying that the equivalence principle holds for theories of truth which make truth ascriptions evaluative. In any case, this is the move I myself would recommend.)

To a certain extent, the thesis that every statement is evaluative does indeed go rather well with a rejection of the fact-value dichotomy. If every factual statement is evaluative, it does not seem very sensible to try to uphold a distinction between factual and evaluative statements. However, a version of the old dichotomy can perhaps still be retained. Still open to debate is the question as to whether (all) evaluative statements are true or false in Putnam’s sense. Presumably, a statement is false if its negation is true. This means that Putnam can be expected to accept the following definition:

A statement *S* is *false* if and only if, for any person *P* at any time *t*, if *P*’s conditions at *t* are ideal (with respect to *S*), the negation of *S* would be rationally acceptable (completely justified) for *P* at *t*, and *S* would not be rationally acceptable for *P* at *t*.

This opens up a gap between truth and falsity for statements which do not satisfy the “convergence” condition. In particular, some statements may be such that they are rationally acceptable for *some* people under ideal conditions, but are not rationally acceptable for *other* people under ideal conditions. Such statements are neither true nor false (in Putnam’s sense).

If this is right, then the old fact-value dichotomy might be re-interpreted as the distinction between statements which are true or false—these can be called “factual”—and statements which are neither true nor false. The latter class of statements might include many statements which would traditionally be classified as evaluative, as well as some statements which would traditionally be thought of as factual.²⁰ However, we should also recognize the possibility that some statements which

¹⁹ Op. cit., 129.

²⁰ In *Reason, Truth and History*, 148, Putnam says the following: “Some scientific questions may have *objectively indeterminate* answers, i.e. there may be no convergence with respect to an answer to them even in the ideal limit of scientific inquiry.”

would traditionally be classified as evaluative are true or false in Putnam’s sense. In particular, if truth-ascriptions are evaluative, then we need to assume that at least some of these are true or false—otherwise the dichotomy collapses again.

6. *Values as facts*

The argument we have just considered involves the idea that all statements are evaluative. I am not sure that Putnam would accept this. On the other hand, he would probably say that at least some evaluative statements are factual, in the sense that they are either true or false. This is evident from his claim that “at least some value terms stand for properties of the things they are applied to.”²¹ Moreover, we have already seen that Putnam’s theory of truth seems to make it possible for evaluative statements to be true or false—to the extent that they satisfy the convergence condition. So Putnam may reject (5).

But many proponents of the fact-value dichotomy may also reject (5). Let us consider, for example, the only proponent of the dichotomy who is explicitly mentioned by Putnam, namely, Charles Stevenson. Putnam claims that Stevenson has given a “paradigmatic explanation and defense” of the fact-value dichotomy, and that he has “attacked Stevenson’s position at length”²² in *Reason, Truth and History*. In view of this, it may be of some interest to notice that Stevenson’s position involves the rejection of (5). In his first book,²³ this is perhaps not yet quite clear; but in his second book,²⁴ he explicitly rejects the view that “ethical judgments” or “evaluative sentences” are neither true nor false. He writes, for instance:

Now an attention to our ethical discourse—and indeed, to any sort of evaluative discourse, no matter whether it is concerned with morality or beauty or (even) the “good manners” of etiquette—shows that it allows us to introduce “true” and “false” with full linguistic propriety and without any trace, in practice, of making our judgments obscure. [...] So let us agree, in deference to our language, to say that ethical judgements are either true or false.²⁵

As to the *sense* in which evaluative statements are true or false, Stevenson refers his readers to “the various articles developing Ramsey-like theo-

²¹ Op. cit., 135.

²² *Realism with a Human Face*, 165. It should be noted that Stevenson’s name occurs only once in *Reason, Truth and History*.

²³ C. L. Stevenson, *Ethics and Language* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1944).

²⁴ C. L. Stevenson, *Facts and Values* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963).

²⁵ *Facts and Values*, 215-6.

²⁶ Op. cit., 219.

²⁷ “Ethical Fallibility,” in R. T. DeGeorge (ed.), *Ethics and Society* (London: Macmillan, 1968), 197-217.

ries of truth that have appeared in the past several decades.”²⁶ In a different context,²⁷ Stevenson rejects the idea that truth consists in there being something “out there” for our statements to copy; and like Putnam, he stresses the role of coherence instead.²⁸ One almost gets the impression that he advocates some kind of “internal realism” rather than “metaphysical realism” (to use Putnam’s terms). But in view of his reference to Ramsey-like theories of truth—which, instead of being epistemic, are deflationary or minimalist—he should probably be taken to mean that coherence has a purely epistemic role. In any case, he does not accept (5).

Similarly, it would appear that many so-called moral realists would be willing to accept a dichotomy between evaluative and factual statements. Their claim that both kinds of statements have truth-values does not seem to imply that there is no distinction between them. Again, the dichotomy seems to be accepted by G.E. Moore. Putnam says that it was “reinforced” by Moore, “contrary to his own intentions.”²⁹ But maybe Putnam identifies the dichotomy with (5). Moore did not accept (5).

By saying that Moore reinforced the dichotomy, Putnam means that Moore’s argument that goodness is not a natural property tended to prompt later philosophers with naturalistic inclinations to conclude that goodness is not a property at all. Putnam objects that Moore’s argument is incorrect, since it “conflated properties and concepts,”³⁰ but believes that Moore’s conclusion was correct. In particular, he agrees that goodness is not a natural (or “physicalistic”) property, but seems to hold that it is a property nonetheless. He writes:

I think Moore was right (even if his arguments are not acceptable) in holding that “good”, “right” (and also “justified belief”, “refers”, and “true”) are not identical with physicalistic properties and relations. What *this* shows is not that goodness, rightness, epistemic justification, reference, and truth do not exist, but that monistic naturalism (or “physicalism”) is an inadequate philosophy.³¹

Well, Putnam does not say that goodness is a property. Perhaps his point is only that it *may* be a property. In my view, to say that goodness is a property is much the same as to say that some evaluative statements of the form “*X* is good” are true. In other words, it involves the rejection of (5).

Many moral philosophers would reject (5). But as far as I can see, Putnam has not really shown that (5) is false. He has not even shown

²⁸ See op. cit., 211-217.

²⁹ *Reason, Truth and History*, 205.

³⁰ Op. cit., 207.

³¹ Op. cit., 211.

³² *Reason, Truth and History*, 128.

this for his own, internal realist, notion of truth. The question remains as to whether the convergence condition is satisfied.

7. *Do facts presuppose values?*

So far, my discussion has touched on theses (1), (2), (4) and (5). Let us now consider (3). In fact, Putnam’s *main* argument against the fact-value dichotomy seems to be directed against (3). Notice, for example, the following remark:

The strategy of my argument is not going to be a new one. I am going to rehabilitate a somewhat discredited move in the debate about fact and value, namely the move that consists in arguing that the distinction is at the very least hopelessly fuzzy because factual statements themselves, and the practices of scientific inquiry upon which we rely to decide what is and what is not a fact, presuppose values.³²

Similarly, Putnam says that “the empirical world [...] depends upon our criteria of rational acceptability,” and that “we must have criteria of rational acceptability to even have an empirical world.”³³ To this he adds that “without the cognitive values of coherence, simplicity, and instrumental efficacy we have no world and no facts.”³⁴

Putnam’s claim that the practices of scientific inquiry “presuppose values” can perhaps be explained as follows. When scientists choose among conflicting theories, their choices are often guided by values. Again, when they decide whether a given theory is rationally acceptable, their decisions may be guided by values and/or may be taken to express or correspond to (epistemic) evaluations. The values in question may be empirical adequacy, simplicity, comprehensiveness, coherence, and so on. If you are a trained scientist, then you have been conditioned to believe that such features as these are desirable in scientific theories; you accept the corresponding value judgments and you are influenced, to some extent, by such value judgments in your scientific work.

(It is an open question as to how often scientific choices are influenced by such values rather than by psychological and sociological factors of other kinds. Similarly, it is an open question as to how often scientists actually make epistemic decisions. Perhaps, in many cases, they just “see” that something is the case. And sometimes when they say that a theory is “justified” or “better than” another theory, they may be using these value terms in an inverted commas sense; see section 1 above.)

For the sake of argument, let us agree that the practices of scientific inquiry “presuppose values” in the ways indicated here. Does it follow from this that facts presuppose values in such a way that the fact-value dichotomy breaks down? I don’t think so. Three points need to be made.

³³ Op. cit., 134.

³⁴ *Realism with a Human Face*, 139.

First, it should be noticed that many factual statements are quite independent of the practices of scientific inquiry. In particular, this is so for most everyday observational statements, such as “It’s raining,” “That’s a dog,” “This is red,” and so on. A child can learn to make true statements of this kind without any knowledge of the “practices of scientific inquiry”. Surely, the child “has an empirical world” throughout. Similarly, such statements can be made in cultures in which there is nothing resembling our scientific practices.

Secondly, the fact that scientific inquiry involves evaluations does not mean that the distinction between facts and values becomes “hopelessly fuzzy”, as Putnam puts it. I think the distinction can still be upheld (even if the boundary is perhaps not absolutely sharp in practice.) For example, consider the following two statements:

- (F) Smoking causes cancer.
- (E) Smoking ought to be made a criminal offence.

I would say that F is a factual statement, and that E is an evaluative statement—at least in normal cases. (But I would not pretend to be able to give clear definitions of “factual statement” and “evaluative statement”, by means of which I can demonstrate this to everyone’s—or even my own—satisfaction. I use a lot of words for which I cannot provide clear definitions.) The general point is that we can distinguish between facts and values even if scientists make value judgments. In the words of Allan Gibbard: “The justification of factual beliefs is a normative matter, but that does not turn factual beliefs into normative judgments.”³⁵

Thirdly, we should notice that there is a certain ambiguity in Putnam’s claim that “without cognitive values we have no world and no facts.” To “have a world” could mean either “to have *beliefs* about a world” (i.e. to have factual beliefs) or “to *inhabit* a world.” Since scientific inquiry involves evaluations, and causes us to have certain beliefs about the world, we may agree that these beliefs about the world “presuppose” values or evaluative beliefs. But it does not follow from this that the world itself, or the facts that constitute it, presuppose values. The plausible claim that our scientific *beliefs* about the world depend upon our criteria of rational acceptability does not support Putnam’s claim that the empirical *world* depends upon those criteria. The latter claim, therefore, is not very plausible.

Perhaps the point can be put as follows. Let V be the epistemic norms or value judgments which are presupposed when we accept F. (Presumably, V need not be *directly* accepted by everyone who accepts F; some of us may accept F simply on the authority of scientists, without explicitly accepting or caring about their value judgments.) Now, it seems that Putnam’s claim would be that F “presupposes” V. But this claim can be taken in (at least) either of the following ways:

- (A) The acceptance of F by scientists is causally influenced by their acceptance of V (or by other scientists’s acceptance of V).
- (B) The truth of F is logically dependent upon the truth of V.

In the case of (B)—which can be taken to mean that F cannot be true unless V is true—we could also say that F entails V. If evaluative content is dominant in the sense explained in section 1, then this would mean that F is evaluative. Consequently, the fact-value dichotomy would collapse if (B) were the case. But (B) does not follow from (A), and (A) is really all that can be inferred from the theory that the decisions of scientists, concerning rational acceptability, are guided by values.

In particular, it is *not* the case that V is included among the evidence which scientists can refer to in support of F. We can now compare (A) and (B) with the thesis:

- (C) The truth of F is inductively supported by the truth of V.

Again, if (C) were the case, it would perhaps tend to weaken the fact-value dichotomy. Even if (C) does not by itself entail (B), it might still be taken to go some way in that direction. If so, one might also want to say that the content of F is to some extent evaluative. But it seems to me that (C) should be rejected. (C) does not follow from (A), and medical scientists, for example, cannot be expected to refer to the value of coherence or simplicity when they argue that smoking causes cancer. I believe that most experts would say that smoking causes cancer *irrespective of whether or not* coherence is a value. The truth of F does not depend upon the value of coherence. If smoking causes cancer, then it causes cancer because of the way our bodies are built, and not because we ought to reason in certain ways.

Even for someone like Putnam, who defines (or used to define) truth in terms of coherence, there is surely a difference between the claim that F is true and the claim that we have good reasons to believe that F is true. The second claim—which is an evaluative claim—may presuppose that coherence is valuable. But the first claim does not presuppose this.

³⁵ Allan Gibbard, *Wise Choices, Apt Feelings: A Theory of Normative Judgment* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 34.