

The Intentionality of Pleasures and other Feelings, a Brentanian Approach

Penultimate draft, to appear in Themes from Brentano, ed. D. Fiset and G. Fr chet, Rodopi, 2012.

This paper defends hedonic intentionalism, the view that all pleasures, including bodily pleasures, are directed towards objects distinct from themselves. Brentano is the leading proponent of this view. My goal here is to disentangle his significant proposals from the more disputable ones so as to arrive at a hopefully promising version of hedonic intentionalism. I shall mainly focus on bodily pleasures, which constitute the main troublemakers for hedonic intentionalism.

Section 1 introduces the problem raised by bodily pleasures for hedonic intentionalism and some of the main reactions to it. Sections 2 and 3 rebut two main approaches equating bodily pleasures with non-intentional episodes. More precisely, section 2 argues that bodily pleasures cannot be purely non-intentional self-conscious *feelings*, by relying on Brentano's objection to Hamilton's theory of pleasure. Section 3 argues that bodily pleasures cannot be non-intentional sensory *qualities* by relying on Brentano's objections to Stumpf's theory of pleasure. Section 4 develops a Brentanian view of the intentionality of bodily pleasures by claiming bodily pleasures are directed at a *sui generis* class of sensory qualities. Section 5 presents an objection to Brentano's later theory of pleasure according to which all sensory pleasures are directed at sensing acts.

1. Bodily pleasures and intentionality

Brentano famously claimed that mental episodes are by nature directed towards objects distinct from themselves. He also thinks that all pleasures are mental episodes. He consequently endorses hedonic intentionalism:

hedonic intentionalism: all pleasures are intentional episodes.

Bodily pleasures represent a potential threat for hedonic intentionalism. Bodily pleasures are typically contrasted with pleasures of the mind. Paradigmatic pleasures of the mind include the pleasure of reading a good novel, the pleasure of remembering a nice diner, the pleasure of solving a puzzle; prototypical pleasures of the body include the pleasure of entering a hot bath, the pleasure we get when we are massaged or the pleasure we get when we scratch an itch.

Although hedonic intentionalism is *prima facie* unproblematic for pleasures of the mind, it is far more controversial as far as pleasures of the body are concerned. There are two reasons for doubting the intentionality of bodily pleasures.

First it is not clear what the intentional objects of bodily pleasures are. When Mary enjoys reading a good novel or admires Paul's elegance, there is a reasonably clear distinction between, on the one hand, her enjoyment or admiration, and, on the other hand, what she enjoys (reading the novel) or admires (Paul's elegance). But when Mary enters her bath or has a pleasant frisson on her neck it is not as easy to distinguish her intentional acts from their intentional objects. Brentano formulates the worry as follows:

with respect to some kinds of sensory pleasure and pain feelings, someone may really be of the opinion that there are no presentations involved, even in our sense. At least we cannot deny that there is a certain temptation to do this. This is true, for example, with regard to the feelings present when one is cut or burned. When someone is cut he has no perception of touch, and someone who is burned has no feeling of warmth, but in both cases there is only the feeling of pain (Brentano, 1995, p. 82)

In the case of bodily pleasures, there is no salient distinction between intentional acts and the intentional objects they would be directed at.

The second reason for doubting the intentionality of bodily pleasures pertains to bodily ascription. Like bodily pains, bodily pleasures appear to have a bodily location: they seem entirely located in the body of the subject or in some part of it. Consider for instance the pleasant frisson that we feel on our face when the wind refreshes it on a hot day, the pleasant sensation that we feel on our head when the hairdresser washes our hair, the pleasure we get when we scratch an itch, the pleasure we get when we have an orgasm, the pleasure we get when we put our cold hands under hot water, the pleasures we get when we are slightly caressed, and other *Kitzelempfindungen* (pleasant sensations).

Such pleasures are naturally described as being located in parts of our body, or in it as a whole. This does not mean that this location is always precisely given: it might be more or less diffused; we might have difficulty in saying where exactly a pleasure is located in our body. But it remains located somewhere in a more or less vague area of it.

Intentional phenomena, however, typically lack such an apparent bodily location. Judgments, desires, thoughts, likings, appreciations, convictions, do not have felt bodily location. As a result, it hardly makes sense to ask “Where is it that you believe in God?”, “How far is your enjoyment of that discussion from your disliking of Brahms?”. True, on some materialist proposal such intentional episodes are indeed located in our body, namely, in our brain. But phenomenology is mute with respect to this location of intentional episodes. It is far more loquacious about the location of bodily pleasures. Apart from headaches, which are bodily displeasures, we do not feel anything inside our head.

These two considerations about bodily pleasures –lack of obvious intentional objects, and possession of a felt location– might lead to the rejection of hedonic intentionalism. However, given that pleasures of the mind do seem intentional, the natural way to go is to claim that while *some* pleasures –bodily pleasures – are not intentional, while some others –pleasures of the mind – are intentional. Since this view distinguishes two quite different kinds of pleasure, let us call it hedonic dualism:

hedonic dualism: some pleasures –e.g. pleasures of the mind – are intentional, while some others –e.g. pleasure of the body – are not intentional.

If pleasures of the body are not intentional episodes, what are they? Two main proposals come from two philosophers that Brentano considers as his main adversaries as far as pleasures are concerned: the Scottish philosopher Sir William Hamilton and Brentano’s pupil Carl Stumpf.

According to Hamilton, who takes this view from Reid, bodily pleasures are *mental but non-intentional episodes*. This amounts to a straightforward rejection of Brentano’s claim that intentionality is essential to mental phenomena. Upholders of such an alternative view have to give an account of what makes bodily pleasures *mental*, if it is

not intentionality. The strategy of Reid and Hamilton is to appeal to reflexive consciousness: (bodily) pleasures are mental in virtue of being *self-conscious*: pleasures are directed towards themselves *only*.¹ Let us call such a version of hedonic dualism *reflexive* hedonic dualism:

reflexive hedonic dualism: some pleasures – e.g. pleasures of the mind – are intentional, while some others – e.g. pleasure of the body – are non-intentional mental episodes that are mental in virtue of being self-conscious.

Stumpf embraces another alternative account to hedonic intentionalism with respect to bodily pleasures. According to him, bodily pleasures are *non-mental, non-intentional episodes*, akin to sensory qualities such as colours and sounds. Such sensory qualities are intentional *objects*, what Brentano calls physical phenomena. This amounts to the rejection of another claim of Brentano: that all pleasures are mental phenomena. Let us call Stumpf's view qualitative hedonic dualism:

qualitative hedonic dualism: some pleasures – e.g. pleasures of the mind – are intentional, while some others – e.g. pleasure of the body – are non-intentional and non-mental episodes, akin to sensory qualities such as colours, sounds, smells, tastes, pressures, etc.

One therefore faces three main options about the nature of bodily pleasures:

1. Bodily pleasures are intentional episodes (Brentano)
2. Bodily pleasures are non-intentional mental episodes: reflexive feelings (Hamilton)

¹I am here assuming that Hamilton intends to limit this approach to bodily pleasures only. Although he does not say explicitly that he intends to treat differently pleasures of the mind and pleasures of the body, he might have had this idea in mind. After having denied the intentionality of pleasures, Hamilton mentions favourably the theory according to which pleasures are perceptions of our perfections (see esp. Hamilton, 1882, vol. II, pp. 460 sqq.). As noted by Brentano (1995, p. 244), there is a tension between Hamilton's official view that pleasures are not intentional, and his declared sympathy for the view that pleasures are perceptions of some perfections. One way to reconcile these two views, for Hamilton, would be to claim that while pleasures of the mind are perceptions of some perfections, pleasures of the body are mere reflexive feelings.

3. Bodily pleasures are non-intentional, non-mental episodes:
sensory qualities (Stumpf)

These different approaches to the intentionality of pleasures are
recapped in fig. 1.

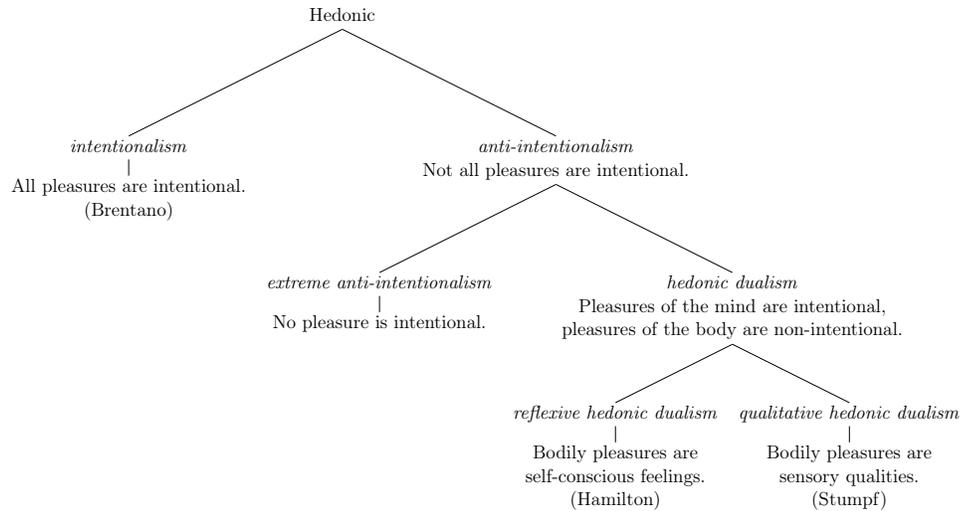


Figure 1: Some main approaches to the intentionality of pleasures

2. Bodily pleasures are not reflexive feelings:

Brentano vs. Hamilton

This section objects to reflexive hedonic dualism (Stumpf's qualitative hedonic dualism will be the target of section 3). Brentano argues against Hamilton that the view that some pleasures are self-conscious, non-intentional feelings is conceptually inconsistent. I agree with this, but his diagnosis concerning the inconsistency of self-conscious feelings seems a bit too hasty: the view is indeed incoherent, but not for the reason Brentano thought it was.

2.1 Inconsistency of reflexive feelings: first try

For Hamilton, pleasures are feelings, which are non-intentional mental phenomena:

In the phaenomena of Feeling, –the phaenomena of Pleasure and Pain, – on the contrary, consciousness does not place the mental modification or state before itself; it does not contemplate

it apart, –as separate from itself, but is, as it were, fused into one. The peculiarity of Feeling, therefore, is that there is nothing but what is subjectively subjective; there is no object different from self, –no objectification of any mode of self. (Hamilton, 1882, vol. 2, p. 432 ; see also Hamilton, 1882, vol. 2, p. 463).

Brentano contends that it is contradictory to claim that pleasures and pains are “subjectively subjective” for the concepts of subject and object are interdependent:

Hamilton is wrong when he says that with regard to feelings everything is “subjectively subjective” – an expression which is actually self-contradictory, for where you cannot speak of an object, you cannot speak of a subject either (Brentano, 1995, p. 91; see also Brentano, 1981, p. 59)

Brentano is certainly right in claiming that the concepts of subject and object are mutually dependent. But he might be putting too much weight on Hamilton’s expression “subjectively subjective”. The core of Hamilton’s view can be maintained without using this unfortunate wording. What Hamilton should have said is that pleasures are their only objects: they refer to themselves *only*, without referring to anything beyond themselves. It is not that pleasures are subjects without objects, it is rather that they are (constituents of the) subjects, which are their own objects.

Such a way of putting Hamilton’s view does not infringe on the grammar of the subject-object relation. Besides, although reflexivity might well raise logical worries on its own, this is not a card that Brentano could play against Hamilton for he himself relies heavily on reflexivity in his theory of secondary objects (see section 5 below). Of course, for Brentano, although intentional phenomena are not *only* reflexive, they are still *necessarily* reflexive. According to him, every intentional act has an object distinct from itself as its primary object, and also has itself as its own secondary object. Intentional reflexivity is therefore not inconsistent for Brentano.

2.2 Inconsistency of reflexive feelings: second try

Is there any other way to argue that Hamilton’s purely reflexive feelings are inconsistent? Instead of focussing on the subject-object relation, one might try to derive the intentionality of feelings from the grammar or the term of “feeling” itself. On the face of it, the non-intentional view about feelings of pleasures clashes with two linguistic observations that suggest that feelings are intentional:

1. We distinguish between various feelings by using apparently the same preposition “of” that we use to describe and distinguish intentional phenomena: “The perception of a dog” by contrast to the “The perception of a cat”/ “The feeling of a hot bath” by contrast to “The feeling of a cold blow”.
2. We distinguish between various feelings by using transitively the verb “to feel”: “To feel an itch” vs. “To feel a pain”.

However, these two other attempts to prove the inconsistency of non-intentional feelings with ordinary language fail as well. In order to accommodate the first point, anti-intentionalists about feelings might claim that with expressions such as “a feeling of fear”, “a feeling of pain”, “a feeling of pleasure”, the term “feeling” refers neither to an intentional act nor to an intentional object, but to a reflexive mental episode; and that the “of” is not intentional either, but *specificatory*: it gives us the kind of the feeling in question, not its object (such as in “a piece of cake” – see Searle, 1983, p. 39 n.1). Likewise, in “a feeling of pleasure”, there would be no question of distinguishing the pleasure from the feeling, because pleasure would *be* the feeling.

The second point deserves more detailed consideration. The noun “feeling” is deverbal, it comes from the transitive verb “to feel”. Such transitivity suggests that there is a difference between the act of feeling and its object: when we feel pleasure, the verb refers to the intentional act, and the pleasure to the intentional object. Anti-intentionalists about feelings might however accommodate this remark by claiming that in “Paul feels a pleasure”, “pleasure” is a *cognate accusative* of the verb “feels”, such as in “Paul is thinking a thought”. According to this hypothesis, in “Paul feels a pleasure”, “feels” and “pleasure” function appositively: they express the same thing. This strategy goes back to Reid at least, who strongly influenced Hamilton, his editor:

The same mode of expression is used to denote sensation and perception; and therefore we are apt to look upon them as things of the same nature. Thus, I feel a pain; I see a tree: the first denotes a sensation, the last a perception. The grammatical analysis of both expressions is the same: for both consist of an active verb and an object. But, if we attend to the things signified by these expressions, we shall find, that in the first, the distinction between the act and the object is not real but grammatical; in the second, the distinction is not only grammatical but real. The form of the expression, I feel pain, might seem to imply that the feeling is something distinct from the pain felt; yet, in reality, there

is no distinction. *As thinking a thought is an expression which could signify no more than thinking, so feeling a pain signifies no more than being pained.* (Reid, 2000, pp. 167-8, my italics)

Ryle himself, although deeply hostile to the view that pleasures are reflexive feelings, notes that in some of its uses, the verb “to feel” denotes non-intentional episodes, and explicitly introduces the idiom of “cognate accusative” to deal with the transitivity of “to feel”:

In ‘feel a tickle’ and ‘strike a blow’, ‘tickle’ and ‘blow’ are cognate accusatives to the verbs ‘feel’ and ‘strike’. The verb and its accusative are two expressions for the same thing, as are the verbs and their accusatives in ‘I dreamt a dream’ and ‘I asked a question’. (Ryle, 1990, p. 98)

It might not be that obvious, pace Reid and Ryle, that the dreaming and the dream, the asking and the question, the thinking and the thought stands for the same things in such expressions (see Twardowski, 1999 for a similar concern in the domain of action verbs and nouns). But let us grant, for the sake of argument, that such a “cognate accusative” strategy with respect to non-intentional feelings is sound. Thanks to the specificatory reading of the “of” in “feelings of pleasure”, and to the cognate accusative reading of “pleasure” in “to feel a pleasure”, the reflexive hedonic dualist can maintain that the expression “feelings of pleasure” denotes episodes which are both non-intentional and self-reflexive.

2.3 Inconsistency of reflexive feelings: last try

Was then Brentano too optimistic in suggesting that the reflexive approach to bodily pleasures as non-intentional self-conscious feeling is inconsistent? Maybe not. I shall now propose an argument to the effect that purely self-conscious feelings are inconsistent. This argument, although never explicitly formulated by Brentano, is arguably Brentanian in spirit. Non-intentional reflexive feelings, it claims, face the following dilemma:

- Either a feeling is nothing but a presentation of itself. But trying to make sense of that proposal soon gives vertigo: there would be nothing to be presented in a feeling but the fact that it presents itself to itself. Feelings would be empty loops. It is first very doubtful, to say the least, that feelings are felt like this. But even if they were, what on earth would distinguish a pleasure-feeling

from a pain-feeling or a tickle-feeling? How can empty loops be qualitatively distinct?

- Or a feeling is only *partly* a presentation of itself. There is a part of the feeling which is not dedicated to self-presentation. Thanks to such a part, feelings are no longer empty loops and acquire some material content that distinguishes feelings of different types from each other. But let us ask then what the relation is between the reflexive part of the feeling and its material part? We face here another embedded dilemma:
 - Either the reflexive part only reflects egocentrically onto itself, and the material part is only juxtaposed to it in the feeling. But in that case, we come back to the first horn of our general dilemma: the reflexive part becomes an empty loop, and the material part plays no role in the phenomenology of the feeling: it is there in the feeling, but is neither felt nor presented. If such were the case, the way pains feel would be the same as the way pleasures feel, and it is on the whole obscure why the material part should be considered as part of the feeling at all.
 - Or the reflexive part presents not only itself to itself, but also presents the material part of the feeling. But then we find inside the feeling the very Brentanian intentional schema which defenders of the view that feelings are not intentional were intending to rebut. What is called the “self-presentation of the feeling” boils down to the presentation of its material part (the primary object) together with the reflexive presentation of that presentation itself (the secondary object). Such a picture matches in every respect the Brentanian schema of intentionality: instead of eliminating the distinction between the feeling-act and the feeling-object, it vindicates it.

In sum, either non-intentional reflexive feelings are pure reflexions, but are then empty loops; or feelings have some kind of material, non-reflexive part, but then each feeling is composed of a feeling-act directed towards its material part (and towards itself) and has intentionality ingrained within itself. It follows that self-conscious non-intentional feelings are inconsistent. If there are reflexive feelings, they have to be intentional, i.e. to point towards something other than themselves. Brentano was right, if the above argument is correct, to

claim that the reflexive view of bodily pleasures was logically inconsistent.

Besides, if feelings are mental either in virtue of being intentional, or in virtue of being self-conscious (let us assume, therefore, than other criteria for defining the mental, such as the lack of extension, are deficient), it follows from the above argument that pleasures, if they are *mental*, have to be intentional. Such a conclusion is of some importance: an appeal to feelings construed in terms of non-intentional mental episodes pervades a significant part of the psychological and philosophical literature on emotions. According to the present argument, any theory appealing to feelings construed in this way is deeply flawed.

3. Bodily pleasures are not sensory qualities

Brentano vs. Stumpf

3.1 Qualitative hedonic dualism

Bodily pleasures, it appears, cannot be non-intentional mental feelings. Might they be non-intentional and *non-mental feelings*? According to one proposal of this type, while pleasures of the mind are clearly intentional acts, pleasures of the body are akin to sensory qualities, that is, to intentional *objects*. This view has been dubbed “qualitative hedonic dualism” in section 1. Its first explicit defenders were Stumpf and Husserl². Stumpf argues that bodily pleasures constitute a *sui generis* class of intentional objects, on a par with other sensory qualities such as colours and sounds. He calls this new class of sensory qualities *Gefühlsempfindungen*. Following Titchener (1908, p. 338), and as suggested by Stumpf (1928b, p. 68, n. 1) himself, I shall use the term ‘algedonic sensations’, rather than ‘feeling-sensations’, ‘affective sensations’ or ‘sensory pleasures’, to translate ‘*Gefühlsempfindungen*’. It should be stressed that by “feeling” or “sensation” one means here what is sensed or felt, by contrast to our feeling or sensing it. To equate bodily pleasures with non-mental feelings, or with algedonic sensations, amounts to equating them with some kind of intentional *objects*. It is in that sense that bodily pleasures, according to the qualitative hedonic dualist, are objective or non-mental: they are

²It is unclear whether Stumpf got this view from Husserl or the reverse. Fisette (forthcoming) argues that the first option is the right one.

physical phenomena in the sense of Brentano. They might be mental in a weaker sense: they might depend for their existence on mental acts directed towards them, in the same way as sense-data (according to the standard understanding of the term). This was indeed Stumpf's view about algedonic sensations. Stumpf also subscribed to the view that colours were mind-dependent (so did Brentano at the time of the *Psychology*). There is therefore nothing really special about pleasures as far as mind-dependence is concerned. Stumpf's qualitative hedonic dualism could as well have taken a more realist stance with respect to bodily pleasures: the main upshot of his approach, i.e. that bodily pleasures are intentional objects rather than intentional acts or self-conscious feelings, would have remained intact.

Stumpf (1928a, 1928b) 's views on pleasure were quite influential³. They were taken up (with some qualifications to be introduced below) by Husserl (Husserl, 1970, LI, §15, (b)), Scheler (1973a, pp. 256-8) and more recently by Mulligan (1988) (1998) (2008b) (2009)⁴. Moreover, Feldman (1997) (2002) (2004)'s influential theory of pleasure, without explicitly mentioning Stumpf, displays clear affinities with his views (but see note 5). All these authors agree that there are at least two kinds of pleasures: intentional pleasures of the mind and non-intentional pleasures of the body, and all of them identify pleasures of the body with what Brentano calls physical phenomena: i.e. kinds of intentional objects, on a par with other sensory qualities such as colours or smells, but in any events not intentional acts. Consequently, despite significant differences⁵, all insist that pleasures of the mind and

³Stumpf's works on pleasure have not been translated in English. One might find useful presentations of them, or hints at them in *Titchener (1908, chap. III)*, Titchener (1917), Allen (1930, p. 5), Katkov (1939), Chisholm (1987), Chisholm (1986, p. 24 sqq.), Reizenzein and Schönplflug (1992), Mulligan (1988) (2008b) (2008a), Fissette (forthcoming). The latter paper, moreover, presents in detail the confrontation between Brentano and Stumpf about pleasures.

⁴Classifying Scheler among hedonic dualists is an understatement. Scheler indeed recognises *four* basic forms of algedonic feelings (Scheler, 1973a, p. 332). See Mulligan (2008a) and Zaborowski (2011) for presentations of Scheler's conception of the stratification of emotional life.

⁵The main difference among qualitative hedonic dualists, as far as bodily pleasures are concerned is this: while Stumpf and Husserl take bodily pleasures to be *natural* (=non-axiological) sensory qualities, Scheler and Mulligan argue that bodily pleasures are to be construed in term of sensory *values*. Despite this difference, these four philosophers agree that bodily pleasures are sensory qualities (natural or axiological) that belong to a same kind, independently of our liking or disliking them. This is what distinguishes Feldman from other qualitative dualists: according to him, the only property shared by bodily pleasures is that they are the objects of attitudinal

pleasures of the body are so heterogeneous that they do not ultimately belong to the same natural kind. The first ones are positive attitudes, whereas the second ones are sensory qualities, intentional objects. Table 1 recaps the different terms used by qualitative hedonic dualists to mark this distinction.

Pleasures	of the Mind (intentional episodes)	of the Body (non-intentional sensations or feelings)
Stumpf (1928b)	Feeling-act (<i>Gefühlsakt</i>)/ emotion (<i>Gemütbewegung</i>)	Algedonic sensations (<i>Gefühlsempfindung</i>)
Husserl (1970)	Feeling-act (<i>Gefühlsakt</i>)	Feeling-sensation (<i>Gefühlsempfindung</i>)
Scheler (1973a)	Intentional feelings (<i>intentionalen Fühlen</i>)	Sensory feeling-states (<i>sinnliche Gefühlzustände</i>)
Mulligan (1998)	Emotions	Emotional sensations
Feldman (2004)	Attitudinal pleasures	Sensory pleasures

Table 1: Hedonic objective dualists

Qualitative hedonic dualists often appeal to the location of bodily pleasure to justify their view (see e.g. Stumpf, 1928b, p. 67, Scheler, 1973a, p. 333). As mentioned in the first section such a location represents a problem for hedonic intentionalist, while it is easily accounted for if bodily pleasures are regarded as sensory qualities: the location of bodily pleasures is, under the latter hypothesis, no more problematic than the location of colours or sounds. I shall present Brentano's answer to that problem in the next section. Let us for now focus on one of Brentano's main objections to qualitative hedonic dualism.

pleasures. Bodily pleasures are sensory qualities that have no property in common apart from the extrinsic property of being enjoyed. They are not intrinsically alike.

3.2 Against qualitative hedonic dualism

Brentano (1979, pp. 237-240) criticizes Stumpf's qualitative hedonic dualism in some detail. Some of his objections are not crucially dependent on his endorsement of hedonic intentionalism (as pointed out by Stumpf, 1928a in his answer to Brentano). But at least one of them is. From the hedonic intentionalist standpoint, hedonic dualism is gerrymandering a homogenous class of phenomena, that of pleasures, into two entirely heterogeneous classes: intentional acts and sensory qualities.

Für Stumpf zieht sich nichts Gemeinsames für sinnlich Lust und geistiges Wohlgefallen, sinnlichen Schmerz und geistiges Mißfallen. Für mich steht der gemeinsame Charakter außer Zweifel. (Brentano, 1979, p. 237)⁶ [According to Stumpf, sensory pleasure and pleasure of the mind, sensory pain and displeasure of the mind have nothing in common. According to me, their common character is beyond doubt].

To this objection, hedonic dualists typically answer that bodily pleasures and pleasures of the mind, although essentially distinct, are still closely linked to each other. Bodily pleasures, they say, are the intentional objects of the pleasures of the mind. This might be considered as a metaphysical necessity (Feldman), a psychological necessity (Stumpf), or some kind of normative necessity (it is appropriate to enjoy bodily pleasures because they are essentially good, as in Scheler's and Mulligan's versions of qualitative hedonic dualism, see again note 5). But, as an answer to Brentano's objection, such necessary connections miss the point. That bodily pleasures are objects of pleasures of the mind is of no help in understanding what all pleasures have in common⁷.

⁶Similar objections against Stumpf are raised by Titchener (1917, p. 265) and Duncker (1941, p. 408).

⁷Feldman (1997, chap. 5) restricts what he calls the "heterogeneity problem" (i.e. what is the essential property shared by all pleasures) to sensory pleasures only, and claims that the main issue encompassing both sensory and attitudinal pleasures is the "linkage problem": what is the metaphysical relation between sensory and attitudinal pleasures? Although the linkage problem is a perfectly legitimate question, it should not conceal the fact that the restriction of the heterogeneity problem to sensory pleasures looks like an *ad hoc* maneuver. If sensory and attitudinal pleasures are all *pleasures*, the first question to ask is not: "How are their related?", but: "What do they have in common?". Is there any natural/sparse property that sensory and

The only genuine option for the qualitative hedonic dualist is to bite the bullet and to grant that appearances notwithstanding, pleasures of the mind and pleasures of the body are not pleasures in the same sense. Contrary to our initial intuitions, bodily pleasures and pleasures of the mind do not belong to the same natural kind. This revisionary claim is not the only bullet that qualitative hedonic dualists have to bite. If hedonic dualism is true, then not only pleasures, but all things and theories defined on the basis of pleasures are splitted into scattered pieces⁸. Let us examine three examples:

1. Psychological hedonism is the view that only pleasures can be intrinsically desired. If hedonic dualism is true, psychological hedonism turns out to be the view that at least two heterogeneous kinds of things can be intrinsically desired: bodily pleasures, on the one hand; and intentional pleasures, on the other. Independently of its truth or falsity, this certainly undermines the appeal of this theory.
2. Axiological hedonism is the view that only pleasures have intrinsic value. If hedonic dualism is true, axiological hedonism turns out to be the view that only two kinds of things have intrinsic value. Axiological hedonism, whether true or false, then loses most of its initial appeal for it ceases to be a monistic view about intrinsic value.
3. The valence of emotions is often construed in hedonic terms: love, admiration, fear, anger are held to be positive or negative emotions in virtue of the pleasures or unpleasures that constitute them. If one scatters pleasures, one runs the risk of dismantling emotions as well. Positive emotions will not be positive in the same sense. Suppose that there are some bodily emotions, whose valence is accounted for in terms of bodily pleasures; and some non-bodily emotions, whose valence is accounted for in terms of non-bodily pleasures. Bodily emotions could include for instance delectation and disgust (the valence of such emotions consist in their containing some bodily pleasures/unpleasures). Non-bodily emotions could include, for instance pride and shame (the valence of such emotions consists in their containing some non-bodily pleasures/unpleasures). According to qualitative hedonic

attitudinal pleasures share in virtue of which both kinds of episodes are *pleasures*? Feldman's answer, despite his positive answer to the linkage question, is negative.

⁸See Goldstein (1985) for a similar objection to what he calls "hedonic pluralism", of which hedonic dualism is a version.

dualists, the pleasurable of delectation then has *nothing* to do with the pleasurable of pride. The pair (delectation, pride) is no more natural than the pair (delectation, shame), for such hedonic valences are essentially distinct and therefore incommensurable. Delectation and pride are positive in entirely different senses. This in turn entails some other oddities: how is it, for instance, that other things being equal, we prefer positive emotions to negative ones? Such regularity in our preferences turns out to be utterly ungrounded.

Hedonic dualism is therefore a revisionary view about pleasure. I shall now argue that there is an intentionalist way to stick to the commonsensical intuition of a unity of pleasures that keeps the main advantages of qualitative hedonic dualism while getting rid of its main drawback.

4. The intentionality of bodily pleasures

The two main anti-intentionalist accounts of bodily pleasures envisaged so far are defective: it is inconsistent to equate bodily pleasures with non-intentional self-conscious feelings, and equating bodily pleasures with sensory qualities leads to a rejection of the unity of pleasures. In order to defend hedonic intentionalism, however, one needs more than a rebuttal of some of its rivals: one has to state what the elusive intentional objects of bodily pleasures are. As mentioned in the first section, bodily pleasures are not *prima facie* intentional: it is easy to say what our visual acts are directed at, but it is more difficult to determine the objects of bodily pleasures. This apparent lack of intentionality of bodily pleasures is the main motivation behind both versions of hedonic dualism. The main question raised by bodily pleasures, for Brentano, and more generally for any hedonic intentionalist, is therefore this: *what are the intentional objects of bodily pleasures?*

4.1 The objects of bodily pleasures

One standard way to defend the intentionality of pain or displeasure is to claim that pains are perceptions of *bodily damages* (see esp. Armstrong, 1962; Pitcher, 1970; Dretske, 1995; Tye, 2000, 2006, 2008). But what corresponds to bodily damages in the case of pleasures? “Bodily repairs” does not seem to be a very promising answer: in spite of a long tradition that explains pleasures in terms of

the restoration of a lack or relief from pain (see e.g. Plato, 1993, Verri, 1781, Kant, 2006, Bk II, pp. 125 sqq, for bodily pleasures), such approaches face the recurrent objection that there are pure pleasures, i.e. pleasures that are not preceded by any lack or displeasures. The intentionality of bodily pleasures, therefore, seems even more problematic than the intentionality of bodily displeasures.

Somewhat ironically, qualitative hedonic dualism lays the ground for a straightforward answer to this problem. Stumpf insisted that there is a class of forgotten sensory qualities besides the standard ones (sounds, colours, tastes, smells, pressures, hot and cold), *and* he equated bodily pleasures with these algedonic sensations. These are two independent claims. The hedonic intentionalist, I submit, should accept the former and reject the latter. There is indeed a class of sensations (in the sense of possibly sensed objects), typically located in the body, that the classical distinction between the proper objects of the five senses fails to capture. Such algedonic sensations include for instance orgasms, itches, shivers, prickles, irritations, thrills, tingles, shivers, thorns, burning sensations, hunger sensations, thirst sensations, sensations one gets when one stretches one's muscle, pins and needles, etc. Stumpf was right to claim that such sensations are on a par with other sensory qualities such as sounds, colours, pressures or smells: they are *sui generis* intentional objects. But he was wrong to equate such algedonic sensations with pleasures. These sensations, on the present proposal, are the *objects* of our bodily pleasures and unpleasures. Bodily pleasures, according to the version of hedonic intentionalism defended here, are precisely the pleasures that are directed at algedonic sensations. The objects of bodily pleasures are the algedonic sensations that qualitative hedonic dualists wrongly equate with the bodily pleasures themselves. Qualitative hedonic dualism furnishes the hedonic intentionalist with the intentional objects he was looking for.

This view was indeed put forward by Brentano even before Stumpf introduced his own view according to which bodily pleasures are algedonic sensations. After having conceded that bodily pleasures constitute a *prima facie* problem for his intentionalism (see first section), Brentano maintains:

Nevertheless there is no doubt that even there the feeling is based upon a presentation. In cases such as this we always have a presentation of a definite spatial location which we usually characterize in relation to some visible and touchable part of our body. We say that our foot or our hand hurts, that

this or that part of the body is in pain. [...] there is in us not only the idea of a definite spatial location but also that of a particular sensory quality analogous to color, sound and other so-called sensory qualities, which is a physical phenomenon and which must be clearly distinguished from the accompanying feeling. (Brentano, 1995, pp. 82-3)

Brentano claims here that bodily pleasures are directed towards sensory qualities of a *sui generis* class, akin to colours, sounds, smells, tastes, pressures or temperatures, although distinct from them, and which are necessarily located in the body. There are some kinds of pleasure-qualities, and some kind of pain-qualities, that affect parts of our body and which are, so to speak, the proper objects of bodily pleasures and pains. The pleasure-qualities and the pain-qualities are not themselves pleasures and pains, but are the intentional objects of pleasures and pains. Such qualities are called by Brentano *Gefühlsempfindungen* (Brentano, 1973, p. 118). Brentano and Stumpf, at this point, appear to agree on the existence of such a *sui generis* class of sensory qualities. Their only disagreement concerns the relation between bodily pleasures and *Gefühlsempfindungen*: identity for Stumpf, intentionality for Brentano. Brentano's hedonic intentionalism has however one crucial advantage over Stumpf's hedonic dualism: it does not split pleasures into two heterogeneous kinds. What all pleasures have in common, according to his proposal, is that they are hedonic attitudes directed towards intentional objects. What distinguishes pleasures of the mind from bodily pleasures is their object: contrary to pleasures of the mind, bodily pleasures are directed towards sensory quality of a *sui generis* kind: algedonic sensations. Brentano expresses this simple and powerful intentionalist theory of pleasure as follows:

To feel pleasure or delight is an emotional act, a taking pleasure or a loving; it always has an object, is necessarily a pleasure in something which we perceive or imagine, have an idea of. For example, sensual pleasure has a certain localised sense quality as its object. (Brentano, 2009, p. 113)

4.2 Why bodily pleasures *seem* non-intentional

How is it, then, that bodily pleasures do not strike us as being intentional, in contrast to pleasures of the mind? If they do have algedonic sensations as objects, how is it that, while we naturally distinguish between the hearing of the sounds and the sounds, we do

not so spontaneously distinguish between a thrill and the pleasure we take in it?

Brentano's overall answer to this question is that in the case of bodily pleasures, we tend to *conflate* the intentional pleasure-acts with their intentional objects. This strategy not only helps the hedonic intentionalist to explain the elusiveness of the intentional object of bodily pleasures, it also puts him in a position to explain the apparent *location* of bodily pleasures. According to this intentionalist proposal, bodily pleasures are not themselves located in the body, but rather their objects, with which they are often conflated.

Although I agree with Brentano's general claim that bodily pleasures tend to be conflated with their objects, the two reasons he advances in order to explain this common conflation seems to me less convincing. Brentano first notices that we have only one name for designating the act directed toward a pain-quality and the pain quality itself.

A [...] basis for this illusion is the fact that the quality which precedes the feeling and the feeling itself do not have two distinct names. The physical phenomenon which appears along with the feeling of pain is also called pain. (Brentano, 1995, p. 84)

Such an observation, if true, hardly explains why we confuse the intentional displeasure with the pain-quality it is directed at. First because we are usually able to distinguish different things called by the same name. Indeed, in the language of affects, it quite often happens that the emotion's objects are named after the emotions that are directed at them: "His daughter was an amusement to him", "This dinner was a pleasure", "That defeat was a shame", "His trophy is his pride", "Meeting him was a great excitement", etc. But such expressions rarely, if ever, prompt connotations between the emotion and its object (e.g. between the pleasure we take in a dinner and the dinner itself, or between one's shame and the shameful event it is directed at). Second, the fact that we have only one name for the intentional act and the intentional object of pain is hardly an explanation for our tendency to conflate them: it is rather a symptom of it. We have only one term, intuitively, because we tend to confuse the two, not the reverse.

Brentano's other explanation of the conflation between bodily pleasures and their objects is more elaborate. It appeals to our tendency to conflate certain sensory qualities when they are presented at the same time. But how exactly Brentano intends to pass from such a

conflation between intentional objects to a conflation between intentional pleasure-acts and their intentional objects is not entirely clear:

[1] If we now look at the sensations of feeling [*Gefühlsempfindungen*] we find, on the contrary, that their phenomena are usually linked with another sort of sensation, and when the excitation is very strong these other sensations sink into insignificance beside them. Thus the fact that a given individual has been mistaken about the appearance of a particular class of sensory qualities and has believed that he has had one single sensation instead of two is very easily explained. [2] Since the intervening idea was accompanied by a relatively very strong feeling, incomparably stronger than that which followed upon the first kind of quality, the person considers this mental phenomenon as the only new thing he has experienced. [3] In addition, if the first kind of quality disappeared completely, then he would believe that he possessed only a feeling without any underlying presentation of a physical phenomenon. (Brentano, 1995, p. 84)

This is a pretty dense passage, which I have divided into three steps for explanatory purpose. Step [1] explains why algedonic qualities are often conflated with non-algedonic ones (such as colours, sounds, pressures, etc.). In order to explain this conflation, Brentano appeals to the fact that algedonic qualities are usually presented together with non-algedonic ones, and that qualities that are presented together are often conflated.

In step [2], Brentano speaks no more of intentional objects (sensory qualities) but of intentional acts. The presentation of the non-algedonic sensory quality, he says, is neither strongly pleasant nor unpleasant. Only the presentation of the algedonic quality is. As a consequence, the person only pays attention to the strong feeling he has towards the algedonic quality, to the detriment of the weak feeling he has towards the non-algedonic quality. While the first step explains the conflation between sensory and algedonic qualities, the second step explains why the strong feeling directed at the algedonic quality overshadows the weak feeling directed at the non-algedonic quality. The result of the two first steps is that we appear to have only one strong feeling directed at only one algedonic quality (with which the non-algedonic quality has been conflated in step 1).

Step [3] the crucial one, the one that allows for an explanation of why bodily pleasures often *seem* to be non-intentional. But it is also the more elusive. It says that if the non-algedonic quality disappears altogether, we are led to believe that we have a feeling without object. But why should it be so? Why should the disappearance of the non-algedonic quality lead us to believe that we have an objectless feeling rather than a feeling directed towards the algedonic quality that now appears on its own, without any risk of being conflated with any non-algedonic sensory quality? Suppose one feels a light pressure on one's skin and enjoys some concomitant algedonic sensory quality. The first step shows that when the two qualities are presented at once, they tend to be conflated. But if the pressure disappears, the algedonic quality remains alone on the intentional scene. Rather than being oblivious to it, we should be struck by its new self-standing appearance. In other words, what should happen when the non-algedonic quality disappears is that we cease to misleadingly equate the object of our pleasure with this non-algedonic sensory quality (such as a pressure), and we come to identify it with what it really is, namely a genuine algedonic quality.

If true, Brentano fails to give a convincing account of the reason why bodily pleasures and their objects are often conflated: neither his linguistic argument, nor his conflation-based explanation sound convincing. Hedonic intentionalism is still in need of an explanation regarding the elusiveness of the intentional objects of bodily pleasures. Here is an alternative proposal.

The reason why algedonic sensations are not spontaneously recognized as the objects of our bodily pleasures might be rather due to the epistemology of (sensory) intentionality. Traditionally, intentionality in the sensory realm has been thought of on the basis of visual perception, and visual intentionality has often been in turn understood on the basis of the visual *distance* or *depth* between the subject and the object (Smith, 2000). Intentionality, strictly speaking, is of course not a spatial relation, but a reference relation between a subject and an object. However, the presence of a seen (or co-seen, see Husserl, 1989, p. 308) distance between the subject and the object certainly helps to *diagnose* intentionality. The distinction between the subject and the object is in such cases plain to see. When there is a lack of spatial distance between the subject and the object however, one is sometimes led to overlook the distinction between the subject and the object, and relatedly, to overlook the intentionality of the phenomena under consideration. Thus, tactile perception, bringing us most often in contact with its objects, has sometimes been claimed to be non-

intentional (see e.g. Warnock, 1953, p. 47). The distinction, for instance, between our feeling a pressure on our skin, on the one hand, and the felt pressure, on the other, is less salient than the distinction between our seeing the colour of the moon and the colour of the moon. In the same way that tactile sensations, algedonic sensations are not presented as being distant from the subject. There is no presented distance between our thrill and our enjoyment of it. This might be the main reason why bodily pleasures and their objects have not always been sharply distinguished: the objects of our bodily pleasures, presented as located in our body, are not presented as being distant from us.

Although Brentano's explanation of our tendency to conflate bodily pleasures with their objects is questionable, his main thesis, that bodily pleasures are directed at algedonic qualities, provide a simple and very plausible answer to the problem of the intentionality of bodily pleasure. Hedonic intentionalists, I submit, should stick to Brentano's proposal.

4.3 Are pleasures and pains contraries?

Before ending this section, let us consider a possible reply on behalf of qualitative hedonic dualism. As we have seen, one main difficulty for hedonic dualism is that it leads to the revision of the intuition that all pleasures have something in common. But hedonic intentionalism, one might reply, is as well rejecting a widespread belief: namely that pleasures and pains are indeed located in the body. According to hedonic intentionalism they are not, since the alleged location of bodily pleasures indeed stems from the conflation between pleasures and their objects. With one revision on both sides, hedonic intentionalism loses its comparative advantage.

As a reply, note first that while common-sense, no doubt, takes bodily *pains* to be located in our body, it is less clear that bodily *pleasures* are naturally ascribed to such a location. We naturally say that we have a pain in the foot, but it does sound a bit odd to say that we have pleasure in the foot. Sure, we do say that we have a pleasant sensation located in the body, but "pleasant", in its ordinary sense, means the property of what gives pleasures (by contrast to a widespread philosophical use according to which pleasantness is the essential property of pleasures themselves).

But what about bodily pains then? Isn't hedonic intentionalism still committed to the denial that *they* have a bodily location? Not necessarily. Brentano takes pleasures (*Lust*) and pain (*Schmerz*) to be

contraries, but this might be a mistake. On the present proposal, which departs from Brentano, the true opposite of pleasure is displeasure (or better: *unpleasure*⁹) and pain is *not* the opposite of pleasure. Pain is rather one algedonic quality (this view is defended by Wohlgemuth, 1917, p. 437, 450, Russell, 1995, p. 70, Von Wright, 1963, p. 70). Pleasures and unpleasures are intentional phenomena, but we do not ascribe bodily location to them. Pain is a kind of algedonic quality that is typically the object of some unpleasures. Pains are not intentional, and are indeed located in the body. As long as pains are not contraries of pleasures, such a claim is fully compatible with hedonic intentionalism.

To recap: the opposites of pleasures are unpleasures. Both pleasures and unpleasures are intentional phenomena whose objects are algedonic qualities. Pain is not an opposite of pleasure, but one of the algedonic qualities which is typically the intentional object of some unpleasure.

5. Taking pleasure in sensory acts

According to the Brentanian view just defended, bodily pleasures are pleasures directed at sensory qualities of a *sui generis* kind. This view is however not exactly that of Brentano. According to him, in 1874, only *some* sensory pleasures are directed at sensory qualities (in particular algedonic qualities); some others, however, are directed at sensory acts. More precisely, many sensory pleasures are not directed at sensory qualities, but rather towards the sensory acts of sensing these qualities:

One thing certainly has to be admitted; the object to which a feeling refers is not always an external object. Even in cases where I feel a harmonious sound, the pleasure which I feel is not actually pleasure in the sound but pleasure in the hearing. (Brentano, 1995, p. 90)¹⁰

⁹That “unpleasure” is the antonym of “pleasure” is a view endorsed by Mezes (1895), Wohlgemuth (1917, p. 437), Russell (1958), Findlay (1961), Rachels (2004), Mulligan (2009).

¹⁰See also:

often the act of hearing a sound is obviously accompanied not only by a presentation and a cognition of this act of hearing, but by an emotion as well. It may be either pleasure, as when we hear a soft, pure young voice, or

In this last section, I shall argue that Brentano, because of his views about internal perception, cannot allow for such pleasures taken in sensory acts. Although the objection I am going to raise already affects the theory of pleasure defended by Brentano in the *Psychology*, it is even more problematic for Brentano's second theory of pleasures. According to this later theory, *all* sensory pleasures, including bodily ones, are directed towards sensing acts (no pleasure is directed towards sensory qualities anymore). I will first present this second theory and then introduce the problem that pleasures in sensory acts raise in the context of Brentano's general theory of intentionality.

5.1 Brentano's second theory of pleasures

Brentano's new theory of pleasure appears in his *Untersuchungen zur Sinnespsychologie* (1907), and is reaffirmed as a complement to his first version (see the supplementary remarks added to the 1911 edition of the *Psychology*, esp. Brentano, 1995, p. 276) and in the posthumous collections of essays *Sensory and Noetic Consciousness* (Brentano, 1981; see Mulligan, 2004, p. 84 for a comparison between Brentano's two theories).

Brentano's new theory of pleasures still intends to be a version of hedonic intentionalism. Brentano introduces three main modifications to his former theory.

The first modification concerns the nature of *Gefühlsempfindungen*. In the first version of the *Psychology*, Brentano uses this term only once without defining it in detail: he merely hints at the idea that bodily pleasures and pains have some *sui generis* kind of sensory quality as their object, without saying more. In his second theory Brentano says a bit more. He now includes the *Gefühlsempfindungen* among the *Spüremfindungen*, i.e. sensations of the *Spürsinn*. Brentano argues that there are only three senses: vision (whose proper objects are colours), hearing (whose proper objects are sounds) and the *Spürsinn* (whose proper objects are the *Spüremfindungen*). The *Spürsinn*

displeasure, as when we hear the scratching of a violin badly played. On the basis of our previous discussions, this feeling, too, has an object to which it refers. [This object is not the physical phenomenon of sound, but the mental phenomenon of hearing, for obviously it is not really the sound which is agreeable and pleasant or which torments us, but the hearing of the sound.](Brentano, 1995, pp. 143-4 – the editor reports that the sentence in brackets had been later modified by Brentano.)

includes all the sensory acts directed at temperatures, pressures, tastes, smells and algedonic qualities (such as “the quality of the sensation of being stuck with a needle”, Brentano, 1981, p. 46). The reason why all these usually distinguished sensory modalities are fused into one is that, according to Brentano, their objects can all be said to be light and dark in the same sense (a sense distinct from the one in which colours and sounds can be said to be light and dark). Brentano’s proposal sounds quite metaphorical and hardly convincing. One possibly better way to unify the different *Spüremmpfindungen* was hinted at in the previous section: while in the cases of colours and sounds it makes sense to speak of a perceived distance between the subject and the perceived sensory quality, such distance is not presented when we perceive some pressure, some taste, some temperature or some itches. This lack of felt distance or externality might be the common feature of all *Spüremmpfindungen*. Be it as it may, Brentano’s theory of the *Spürsinn*, although it happens to be associated with his new theory of pleasures, is not a crucial part of it. The two other changes he introduces are more decisive.

The second change is that sensory pleasures now consist only in pleasures of the *Spürsinn*. Brentano’s first theory maintained that bodily pleasures are only “some kinds of sensory pleasure and pain feelings” (Brentano, 1995, p. 82, see full quote in section 1). In the first theory (although Brentano expresses some reservations regarding sounds) sensory pleasures can in principle be directed at any sensory quality: colours, sounds, tastes, pressures, algedonic qualities, etc. Bodily pleasures constitute the sub-kind of sensory pleasures that are directed at algedonic qualities. Brentano’s second theory, however, asserts that the only sensory pleasures are pleasures related to *Spüremmpfindungen*:

just as every mental activity is the object of a presentation included within it and of a judgement included within it, it is also the object of an emotional reference included within it. I myself adopted this view in *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint*. Since then, however, I have abandoned it and I now believe that even among sensations there are many cases in which there is no emotional reference, and so no pleasures or displeasures, contained within it. Indeed, I believe the entire broad classes of visual and aural sensation to be completely free of affective character. This does not rule out the fact that very lively affects of pleasure and pain ordinarily accompany them in

various ways determined by laws. (Brentano, 1995, Supplementary Remarks, p. 276)

Brentano's new position is not only that visual and aural acts are never intrinsically pleasures, it is also that sensing acts of the *Spürsinn* are always necessarily pleasures. We cannot be presented with a sensory quality of the *Spürsinn* without having a feeling of pleasure or pain. This was the case for every sensory quality in Brentano's first theory of pleasure, this is now only the case for the quality of the *Spürsinn*.

This is still too much, however. By denying that one can be presented with an algedonic quality without enjoying or suffering it, Brentano needlessly rigidifies his hedonic intentionalism (note that the present worry applies equally to Brentano's first theory of pleasure). For Stumpf (1928b, p. 68), having a pain without suffering it is at least a conceptual possibility, and later empirical investigations will show that in certain pathological cases, it is as well a psychological reality: in the case of *pain asymbolia*, subjects feel pain but do not suffer it; while in cases of *anesthesia*, subjects feel their orgasm, yet they do not enjoy it (see in particular Grahek, 2007; that pains are not essentially suffered is also argued by Von Wright, 1963, pp. 57, Hall, 1989, Johansson, 2001, Tye, 2008 and Mulligan, 2008b). A hedonic intentionalist that welcomes algedonic qualities can easily countenance such cases: the subjects feel some algedonic quality in their body, but that feeling is just a neutral or indifferent presentation, deprived of any hedonic feature. But both of Brentano's theories of pleasures, although they grant algedonic qualities, cannot account for pain *asymbolia* nor for *anhedonia* because they assume that such qualities can never be presented independently of any act of love or hate.

The third and main change introduced in Brentano's second theory of pleasure is that he now thinks that we never take pleasure in the sensory qualities themselves, but always in the acts of sensing these sensory qualities:

sensory pleasure is an agreeing, sensory pain a disagreeing, which are directed towards a sensory act to which they themselves belong. (Brentano, 1979, p. 237, translated by Mulligan, 2004, p. 84)

It is not clear why exactly Brentano is reluctant to admit that we can take pleasure in physical objects, i.e. sensory qualities. This is one of the criticisms that Stumpf addresses to him. Stumpf claims that one can take pleasure not only in seeing, but also in colours, not only in

hearing, but also in sounds, not only in tasting, but also in tastes, etc., and that Brentano's restriction is consequently illegitimate (Stumpf, 1928a, p. 110). Mulligan (2004, p. 84) suggests one plausible explanation of Brentano's reluctance to allow for pleasures that are taken in sensory qualities. Brentano might be driven here by the intuition that most sensory pleasures appear to be directed at sensory *activities*: we enjoy *listening* to Purcell, *reading* a book, *looking* at the Alps from the Jura, etc. This might encourage the view that the primary objects of our sensory pleasures are sensory acts.

5.2 Can Brentano allow for pleasures in sensory acts?

Regardless of where Brentano's reluctance to admit sensory pleasures directed at physical objects stems from, his very insistence that pleasures are directed at mental acts raises an important problem in the context of his own theory of intentionality. The most straightforward way of dealing with pleasures taken in sensing, for the hedonic intentionalist, would be to "go second-order": to enjoy hearing a sound is to have a second-order mental act of love directed at the first-order act of hearing. But Brentano rejects second-order mental acts: only physical objects can be apprehended externally. Mental acts can never be directly and instantaneously introspected or observed. How are they to be known then? The answer lies in Brentano's distinction between primary and secondary intentional objects of mental acts. A mental act not only refers to a primary object distinct from itself, but also refers to itself as its own secondary object (Brentano, 1995, chap. II). In every mental act is ingrained reflexivity: this reflexivity does not exhaust the nature of the mental act which also refers to a physical object (*contra* Hamilton, see section 2.), but it is still an essential feature of it¹¹. This Cartesian aspect of Brentano's intentionalism explains that, according to him, mental acts are always conscious, and that internal perception (our knowledge of secondary object–mental acts) is infallible, contrary to external perception, which is directed at primary, physical objects. Mental acts, according to this picture, can never be primary objects, i.e. they can never be the objects of simultaneous mental acts distinct from themselves (Brentano, 1995, pp. 128-9). When we take pleasure in hearing a sound, according to Brentano's theory, it cannot be the case

¹¹ See however Textor (2006) for a non-standard interpretation of Brentano's theory of inner consciousness.

that we have a second-order mental act of love directed at our first-order hearing (Brentano, 1995, p. 144).

So how are we to enjoy hearing rather than the sounds according to Brentano? To answer this question, Brentano relies on his theory of secondary objects and on a second feature of his theory of intentionality. Brentano distinguishes between three modes of intentional reference: presentation, judgement, and love/hate. These modes depend on each other in (at least) the following way: every object of love is also judged, every object of judgement is also presented.

Thanks to his distinction between primary and secondary intentional objects, and to his distinction between three modes of intentional reference, Brentano's proposal is to treat pleasures taken in sensory acts in the following manner. When we enjoy the act of hearing, we do not have a second-order mental act of love directed at our hearing, rather the act of hearing is not only presented as its own secondary object but it also loved as its own secondary object. The act of hearing, so to speak, loves itself: love is not a new mental act directed at the act of hearing, but just a way the act of hearing refers to itself.

Experience shows that there exist in us not only a presentation and a judgment, but frequently a third kind of consciousness of the mental act, namely a feeling which refers to this act, pleasure or displeasure which we feel toward this act. (Brentano, 1995, p. 143)

Now comes the problem. If pleasure is a kind of love, as Brentano maintains, it should be directed not only towards itself, but also towards some primary object. There can be no secondary object without a primary object. Brentano saves the appearance of intentionality in the case of sensory pleasures by claiming that, by being grounded on presentation, pleasure always accompanies some presented object. But this begs the question: what is required by his theory is not (only) a *presented* primary object that is necessarily tied to a feeling of pleasure. It is also a primary object that is *loved*, an object towards which the act of love – not the act of presentation on which it is grounded – is directed. Pleasures appear to lack any primary objects.

To repeat: in his treatment of pleasures taken in sensory acts, Brentano seems to suggest that the act of love has only a secondary object, but not primary object. But this is explicitly precluded by his

theory of intentionality. The distinction between primary and secondary objects is supposed to apply respectively to each of his three modes of intentional reference: that is, the presenting has both a secondary and a primary object, the judging has both a secondary and a primary object, and the loving has both a secondary and a primary object (see e.g. Brentano, 1995, p. 266). It is not enough to say that the act of love is its own secondary object and that it is grounded on a presentation which has a physical object as its primary object. Brentano's theory requires that the act of love has itself a primary object, that is, it requires that the act of love relates, by itself, to a physical object. That the dependency of pleasures on an act of presentation is not enough to insure the intentionality of pleasure is clearly expressed by Husserl:

But we do not merely have a presentation, with an added feeling *associatively* tacked on to it, and not intrinsically related to it, but pleasure or distaste direct themselves to the presented object, and could not exist without such a direction. [...]

[Intentional pleasure, conviction, desire] are all intentions, genuine acts in our sense. They all 'owe' their intentional relation to certain underlying presentations. But it is part of what we mean by such 'owing' that they themselves really now *have* what they owe to something else. (Husserl, 1970, V, §15, vol. 2, p. 108)

Brentano's theory regarding pleasures taken in intentional acts deprives these pleasures of any intrinsic intentionality. Pleasures taken in sensory acts, although they depend on sensory presentations, are not *by themselves* directed towards any object distinct from themselves. They become non-intentional phenomena "added on to" presentations.

Indeed, Brentano's reluctance to admit primary objects for pleasures in sensory acts is apparent not only in the way he speaks of sensory pleasures as being directed only towards sensory acts, but also in his way of equating pleasures with *accompanying feelings* of mental acts (see e.g. Brentano, 1995, p. 83). This way of speaking is quite close to the way hedonic tone theorists express themselves: as it appears such feelings-tones "colour" the presentation they depend on, but they are not themselves intentional. If so, taking pleasure in or feeling something is not a mode of intentional reference, as Brentano officially argues, but a *quale*, as he strongly suggests, *volens nolens* (see Hossack, 2006, p. 49 for a similar claim about Brentano's

commitment to hedonic *qualia*¹²). Worse, to the extent that pleasures in sensory acts are directed towards themselves without being *intrinsically* directed towards sensory qualities, they look very much like Hamilton's purely reflexive feelings, which Brentano rightly diagnosed as being inconsistent (see section 2). There is no room for such hedonic tones or reflexive feelings in Brentano's official ontology of the mind.

As pointed out by Husserl, there is an important difference between the view that pleasures are intentional mental acts that depend on presentations, and the view that pleasures are hedonic tones or purely reflexive feelings that depend on presentations. Brentano's official position is (or should be) the first one, but when considering pleasures as directed towards sensory acts, he tends towards the second one. On the whole, Brentano's theory of pleasure appears committed to the following inconsistent triad:

1. Every mental act has a primary object distinct from itself.
2. No mental act is a primary object.
3. Some pleasures are directed at mental acts only.

It seems to me that the faulty claim is the second one, which is closely related to Brentano's view that mental acts are essentially reflexive. It is not the place here to criticize this view (see e.g. Scheler, 1973b for such detailed criticism), but the hedonic intentionalist is in any event not committed to it. The concept of intentional act requires the concept of primary object, but it can still be maintained without such reference to secondary objects. The hedonic intentionalist should then, I suggest, reject Brentano's views on internal perception. He should also reject his later view that all sensory pleasures are directed towards sensory acts. But he should keep the following invaluable views: (i) purely reflexive feelings are inconsistent; (ii) pleasures of the mind and pleasures of the body do share some natural and essential property; and (iii) pleasures of the body are directed towards algedonic qualities.¹³

¹²Indeed, the various writers that Brentano mentions in favour of the idea that pleasure is dependent on presentation are most often hedonic tone theorists and Brentano does not distance himself from them on this particular point.

¹³ I am grateful to Otto Bruun, Laurent Cesalli, Julien Deonna, Denis Fiset, Guillaume Fréchette, Marion Hämmerli, Anne Meylan, Kevin Mulligan, Mark Textor and Fabrice Teroni for their invaluable comments on this paper.

References

- Allen, A.H. 1930. *Pleasure and Instinct, A study in the Psychology of Human Action*. London: Kegan Paul.
- Armstrong, D.M. 1962. *Bodily sensations*, London New York: Routledge & Paul Humanities Press.
- Brentano, F. 2009. *The Foundation and Construction of Ethics (Routledge Revivals)*. London: Routledge.
- . 1973. *Psychologie vom empirischen Standpunkt. Bd 1*, O. Kraus, ed. Hamburg: Felix Meiner.
- . 1995. *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint*, L. McAlister, ed., trad. A. C. Rancurello, D. B. Terrell, L. L. McAlister, London: Routledge.
- . 1981. *Sensory and noetic consciousness: psychology from an empirical standpoint III*, O. Kraus and L. McAlister, eds. London: Routledge.
- . 1979. *Untersuchungen zur Sinnespsychologie*. Meiner Verlag.
- Chisholm, R. 1986. *Brentano and Intrinsic Value*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 1987. "Brentano's Theory of Pleasure and Pain." *Topoi* 6, pp. 59–64.
- Dretske, F. 1995. *Naturalizing the Mind*. MIT Press.
- Duncker, K. 1941. "On Pleasure, Emotion, and Striving." *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 1, pp. 391–430.
- Feldman, F. 2002. "The Good Life: A Defense of Attitudinal Hedonism." *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 65, pp. 604–628.
- . 2004. *Pleasure and the Good Life: Concerning the Nature, Varieties, and Plausibility of Hedonism*. Oxford University Press.
- . 1997. *Utilitarianism, Hedonism, and Desert: Essays in Moral Philosophy*. Cambridge University Press.
- Findlay, J. 1961. *Values and Intentions*. London: Allen & Unwin.
- Fisette, D. forthcoming. "Mixed Feelings. Carl Stumpf's Criticism of James and Brentano on Emotions." In D. Fisette and R. Martinelli, eds. *Philosophy from an empirical standpoint Carl Stumpf as a philosopher*. Amsterdam: Rodopi.

- Goldstein, I. 1985. "Hedonic Pluralism." *Philosophical Studies. An International Journal for Philosophy in the Analytic Tradition Tucson, Ariz.* 48, pp. 49–55.
- Grahek, N. 2007. *Feeling Pain and being in Pain*. The MIT Press.
- Hall, R. 1989. "Are Pains Necessarily Unpleasant?" *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 49, pp. 643–659.
- Hamilton, W. 1882. *Lectures on Metaphysics and Logic*, H. L. Mansel and J. Veitch, eds., vol. 1-4. Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons.
- Hossack, K. 2006. "Reid and Brentano on Consciousness." In M. Textor, ed. *The Austrian contribution to analytic philosophy*. Taylor & Francis, pp. 36–63.
- Husserl, E. 1989. *Chose et Espace, Leçon de 1907*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, trad. J.-F. Lavigne.
- . 1970. *Logical Investigations*. London: Routledge, trad. J.N. Findlay.
- Johansson, I. 2001. "Species and Dimensions of Pleasure." *Metaphysica* 2, pp. 39–71.
- Kant, I. 2006. *Anthropology from a pragmatic Point of View*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Katkov, G. 1939. "The Pleasant and the Beautiful." *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 40, pp. 177–206.
- Mezes, S. 1895. "Pleasure and Pain Defined." *The Philosophical Review* 4, pp. 22–46.
- Mulligan, K. 2004. "Brentano on the Mind." *The Cambridge Companion to Brentano*, pp. 66–97.
- . 2009. "Emotion and value." Oxford University Press.
- . 2008a. "Max Scheler. Die Anatomie des Herzens oder was man alles fühlen kann." In H. Landweer and U. Renz, eds. *Klassische Emotionstheorien von Platon bis Wittgenstein*. Berlin: de Gruyter.
- . 2008b. "On Being Blinded by Value, Feeling Feelings and their Valence", manuscript.
- . 1988. "On Structure: Bühler's linguistic and psychological Examples." In A. Eschbach, ed. *Karl Bühler's theory of language*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Co.

- . 1998. "The Spectre of Inverted Emotions and the Space of Emotions." *Acta Analytica* 18, pp. 89–105.
- Pitcher, G. 1970. "Pain Perception." *Philosophical Review* 79, pp. 368–393.
- Plato. 1993. *Philebus*. Hackett Publishing Co, Inc.
- Rachels, S. 2004. "Six Theses About Pleasure." *Philosophical Perspectives* 18, pp. 247–267.
- Reid, T. 2000. *An Inquiry into the Human Mind on the Principles of Common Sense*, D. R. Brookes, ed. Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Reisenzein, R., and W. Schönplflug. 1992. "Stumpf's cognitive-evaluative theory of emotion." *American Psychologist* 47, pp. 34–45.
- Russell, B. 1995. *The Analysis of Mind*. London: Routledge.
- . 1958. "What is Mind?" *The Journal of Philosophy* 55, pp. 5–12.
- Ryle, G. 1990. *The Concept of Mind*. Penguin Books Ltd.
- Scheler, M. 1973a. *Formalism in Ethics and Non-Formal Ethics of Value*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, trad. M. Frings, R.L. Funk.
- . 1973b. "The Idols of Self-Knowledge." In *Selected Philosophical Essays*. Northwestern University Press, pp. 3–97, trad. D. R. Lachterman.
- Searle, J. 1983. *Intentionality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Smith, A. 2000. "Space and Sight." *Mind*, 109(435), pp. 481–518.
- Stumpf, C. 1928a. "Apologie der Gefühlsempfindungen." In *Gefühl und Gefühlsempfindung*. Leipzig: Verlag von Johann Ambrosius Barth, pp. 103–140.
- . 1928b. *Gefühl und Gefühlsempfindung*. Leipzig: Verlag von Johann Ambrosius Barth.
- Textor, M. 2006. Brentano (and Some Neo-Brentanians) on Inner Consciousness. *Dialectica*, 60(4), pp. 411–432.
- Titchener, E. 1908. *Lectures on the elementary Psychology of Feeling and Attention*. New York: The Macmillan Company.
- . 1917. "Professor Stumpf's affective Psychology." *The American Journal of Psychology*, pp. 263–277.

- Twardowski, K. 1999. *On Actions, Products and other Topics in Philosophy*, J. Brandl, J. Wolenski, and A. Szylewicz, eds. Rodopi.
- Tye, M. 2006. "Another Look at Representationalism about Pain." In M. Aydede, ed. *Pain: New Essays on Its Nature and the Methodology of Its Study (Bradford Books)*. The MIT Press, pp. 99–120.
- . 2000. *Consciousness, Color, and Content*. MIT Press.
- . 2008. "The Experience of Emotion: an Intentionalist Theory." *Revue internationale de Philosophie* 62, pp. 25–50.
- Verri, P. 1781. *Discorsi sull'indole del piacere e del dolore, sulla felicitae sulla economia politic*. Milan: Giuseppe Marelli.
- Von Wright, G. 1963. *The Varieties of Goodness*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Warnock, G. 1953. *Berkeley*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.
- Wohlgemuth, A. 1917. "On the Feelings and their Neural Correlates, with an Examination of the Nature of Pain" *British Journal of Psychology*, pp. 423-476.
- Zaborowski, R. 2011. "Max Scheler's model of stratified Affectivity and its Relevance for Research on Emotion." *Appraisal* 8, pp. 24–34.