

Tamar Schapiro, *Feeling Like It: A Theory of Inclination and Will*.
Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021. viii + 173 pp.

I may feel like doing something and decide not to do it; I may do something without feeling like it. How does what I want bear on what I decide to do? Tamar Schapiro pursues this question in her extremely engaging and creative new book *Feeling Like It*. Schapiro's primary explanandum is not inclination per se but the agent's relation to her own inclination in what Schapiro calls "the moment of drama," when an agent is *inclined* to or *feels like* ϕ -ing but has not yet determined what she will do. What Schapiro finds philosophically puzzling is the complex relation we agents occupy with respect to our inclinations. On one hand, we are in some sense *passive* with respect to our inclinations; on the other hand, to act from inclination not to be simply moved but is to move oneself, to be *active*. Developing arguments and positions from earlier papers, Schapiro offers a Kant-inspired, first-person-perspective moral psychology meant to capture and explain this complex two-in-one human condition of activity and passivity, arguing for a "reasonably dualistic" conception of human agency that she calls "the inner animal view." And while Schapiro leaves unresolved some problems that arise for any kind of moral psychological dualism, she makes a compelling case for why a suitably complex moral psychology must be to some extent a dualism.

Schapiro motivates her "inner animal" view by carving out a dialectic between two prominent philosophical positions, the "brute force" view (which, as she points out, no one really holds but everyone fights against) and the "practical thinking" view (currently enjoying prominence), and demonstrates convincingly that neither account for the three criteria that Schapiro puts forth:

- (1) inclinations exert *asymmetric volitional pressure*;
- (2) inclinations are *nonvoluntary*;
- (3) inclinations play a *deliberative* role, figuring in our practical thinking.

The brute force view fails insofar as it pictures inclinations in terms of brute rather than volitional pressure and cannot accommodate their deliberative role. The practical thinking view tries to steer clear of the problems of the brute force view, but Schapiro argues that in the effort to avoid brute forces, the practical thinking view too completely assimilates desiring to reasoning, evaluating, or acting, and thereby loses the passive dimension of inclination (criteria (1) and (2)). While inclinations aren't alien forces, they are also not attributable to me in the same way as my judgments and actions are. Inclinations must be in a way *me* but not exactly the *me* of practical rationality. Doing

justice to this complexity requires that we reject the “motivational monism” of the practical thinking view in favor of a reasonably dualistic position.

In introducing her positive view, the “inner animal view,” Schapiro presents a series of dualisms that tend to structure and restrict our thinking about moral psychology: inside/outside; unthinking force/practical thinking; suffering/acting.¹ Schapiro’s stated aim is to find conceptual space between these alternatives. This seems right and exciting, and yet as we shall see, in some respects her inner animal view reentrenches them.

According to the inner animal view, when *you* are inclined to ϕ , you are actually registering the activity of a subpersonal, instinctual agent called “your inner animal.” The inner animal is “wholly instinctive” (102), operating according to a distinctive “form of activity” (122), moving and perceiving the world in terms of instincts and opportunities for gratification. So when you feel inclined, your inner animal is already active, pursuing its goals in its characteristically instinctual way without consideration of reasons, values, or justifications. Here Schapiro takes inspiration from Kant, arguing that while rational animals are *affected* by their inclinations they are not *necessitated*; to act, the incentive must be incorporated into a maxim, taken as a reason. Your “deciding mind” must *transform* and thereby *humanize* your animal’s mere “impulse” into a decision (101). This is what Schapiro calls taking the “high road.” When you fail to do so and act from impulse, you take the “low road,” abdicating responsibility and “sinking” (148) as much as is humanly possible to the level of a mere animal.

As the story of the inner animal develops, it becomes difficult to keep track of exactly how Schapiro wants to understand the relationship between the agent (or the agent insofar as she occupies the perspective of her “deciding mind”) and her inner animal. Specifically, how do these very different kinds of mind interact? How does what I (or my inner animal) *want* bear on what I (or my deciding mind) decide to *do*? Recall the first and third modified criteria: first, inclinations exert not asymmetric *brute* pressure but asymmetric *volitional* pressure; they pressure the will. My inclination or desire to ϕ inclines me not just in a certain direction but to make a certain decision. The third criterion specifies that inclinations play a *deliberative* role, offering directives or proposals or suggestions that motivate particular actions (48). Does Schapiro’s view meet these criteria?

One difficulty is that it is not always clear if the inner animal issues *contentful* volitional directives, where *what* my inner animal wants matters for what I decide to do. Surprisingly, some passages suggest that the inner animal presents more in the mode of a brute force, or is experienced as such from

1. Schapiro presents a fourth dualism: inclinations as objects of attention/inclinations as lenses of attention operating in the background. But this is not pertinent to what I will discuss.

the perspective of the agent. Schapiro argues that the inner animal operates in accordance with a different form of thinking and activity, an instinctual form that we cannot occupy in our role as decider. While you cannot occupy the perspective of your inner animal,

it is possible to take what your inner animal is doing as *raw motivational material* out of which to try to construct something you can decide to do. . . . You are taking a stretch of your own instinctive self-movement—something Hobbes might have called your ‘*vital motion*’—and incorporating its purposive *energy* into your own deliberative self-movement. You are taking your inclination as a source of your own *vitality*, and making something out of it that you can find worth doing. (129; my emphases)

Note Schapiro’s language of energies. The suggestion is that, from the perspective of agency or in my role as decider, the inner animal provides not contentful volitional directives but *energy* or *vitality* that I must “humanize” in order to act. So this is not a *simple* brute force view since the instinctual energy cannot straightaway determine action, but it is a *kind* of brute force view insofar as the inner animal provides the “raw motivational material” rather than a formed inclination to do something in particular. In the next chapter, Schapiro asserts that while you do “characteristically experience various forms of physiological and conscious pressure” (146) when your inner animal is active, “this form of pressure does not amount to *volitional* pressure in the relevant sense” (146; my emphasis), and again “this incentive, in its *raw* form, prior to any further act of incorporation, cannot put *deliberative* pressure on you, as a decider” (147; my emphasis). Again this is surprising, since these passages suggest that the inner animal provides nothing but raw energy that makes no meaningful contact with the will except in the form of physiological and conscious pressure. If that is so, then it looks like the inner animal makes no *contentful*, genuinely *directive* contribution to human action.

In other passages, Schapiro suggests that the inner animal does issue *contentful* directives, as when it is described as wanting, for instance, cake or revenge. The problem is that even here the animal’s directive does not seem to bear in any serious way on what one decides to do. As Schapiro puts it (and again I was surprised to read this), “Strictly speaking, our inclinations do not pressure us to do anything” (147). So while my inner animal might be pressing for sugar or violence, it remains entirely open what I shall choose to do. Schapiro even proposes a sublimation-type dynamic between the inner animal and the deciding mind: “Given any inclination, it is an open question what you can make of it. Perhaps [for example] you transform your murderous thirst form revenge into a heart-rending ballad” (133). In this case, you (or your deciding mind) are aware of an inclination for revenge in particular, but choose instead to write a song. But if the inclination for revenge can be satisfied

by any action, even songwriting, this again looks like a quasi-hydraulic picture of energy rerouting rather than a theory of inclination that meets the asymmetrical volitional pressure and directive criteria. (Importantly, in Nietzsche's and Freud's accounts of sublimation, this activity is *not* a matter of conscious deliberation and choice, and arguably a theory of sublimation is only plausible if it is unconscious; otherwise it seems we can simply elect to write a song rather than act out aggressively, as though one were choosing from a range of available products. Schapiro's account edges in this direction).

So it seems that either your animal does not incline you to do anything in particular (you simply feel physiological and conscious pressure) *or* your animal is inclined to do something in particular but it makes no real deliberative difference, since your deciding mind is fully unconstrained by whatever your inclinations happen to be or to want. While Schapiro is absolutely successful in motivating the idea that a reasonable dualism might be what we need, it remains somewhat unclear how what I (or, my inner animal) want really bears on what I (or my deciding mind) decides to do.

These difficulties are partly an effect of the fact that Schapiro puts several terms in play but does not clearly differentiate them: *inclination, desire, want, incentive, impulse, instinct*. As I see it, the principle for differentiation is: Which of these is a motivational state of the animal mind, and which is a state of the deciding mind? (This raises the question: What is the unity that holds these minds together?) So, for instance, does the inner animal have inclinations, or is the inner animal's instinct what I directly feel *as* inclination? Or must the instinct be "transformed" and "humanized" in order to even be felt *as* a particular inclination? (This would mean the work of "transformation" comes earlier than the moment of deliberation about what to do.) How "optional" are the animal's "instincts"? Can they always be sublimated?

Relatedly, it would have been illuminating had Schapiro positioned herself vis-à-vis other contemporary Kantians who read Kant in light of so-called transformative conceptions of rationality (see Matthew Boyle, Janelle DeWitt, Allen Wood). For these Kantians, it is the presence of the *capacity* for rationality that transforms the very nature of the human animal's animal capacities. Whereas for Schapiro, transformation and humanization is achieved (or not) in dramatic moments of conscious, individual deliberation and decision (Schapiro's Korsgaardian, descriptive-cum-directive rhetoric reflects this focus on conscious choice: the book is addressed to *you*, telling you what you must do in the moment of drama). But, as the foregoing discussion indicates, one now needs a story about how communication is possible between the untransformed animal mind and the deciding mind.

In *Feeling Like It* Schapiro undertakes the much-needed task of providing an account of mind that does not resolve but rather does justice to the mind's genuine complexity, a complexity that we ourselves register in moments of drama. This is Schapiro's aim, but by the end I worried that her view ended

up back in a familiar dualism, with our rationality functioning as gatekeeper of our animality. But Schapiro is absolutely convincing in her presentation of the problem of inclination, the sets of questions philosophers need to ask, and the different possible routes for answering them. Her defense of dualism is refreshing in a philosophical climate that sometimes construes dualism as a position to be avoided at all costs. It is a testament to the creativity and ambition of this book that it raises the genuinely challenging questions that get to the heart of our philosophies of agency and moral psychology—which is to say, to the heart of our conception of who and what we are, as rational animals.

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David Papineau, *The Metaphysics of Sensory Experience*.
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What is the nature of conscious sensory experience? In *The Metaphysics of Sensory Experience* David Papineau sets out to answer this question. He argues for the *qualitative view*: conscious sensory experiences are “intrinsic qualitative properties of people that are only contingently representational” (6).

This book is instructive, engaging, original, full of argument, straight-talking, and it defends an interesting view! I enthusiastically recommend it to philosophers of mind and perception.

Papineau’s central argument is a *last view standing argument*: wading through the detritus left after his assault on competitor views—naïve realism and representationalism—one finds the qualitative view, standing strong. It is “the only option that makes good metaphysical sense” (8). Given this, I focus my critical attention in what follows on Papineau’s main negative arguments. First, a brief overview.

The book has an introduction and four chapters. In chapter 1, Papineau argues against naïve realism and begins a detailed critical investigation of representationalism. Papineau’s discussion of contingent and essential representationalism is particularly important, for it helps him to clarify his own disagreement with representationalism (30–32). Papineau thinks that conscious sensory properties *can* represent, but they need not. He accepts contingent representationalism but rejects essential representationalism—the mainstream position in the philosophy of perception. Consider words written on a page.