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## Attitudinal Pleasure in Plato's *Philebus*

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### Abstract

This paper addresses two interpretive puzzles in Plato's *Philebus*. The first concerns the claim, endorsed by both interlocutors, that the most godlike of lives is a pleasureless life of pure thinking. This appears to run afoul of the verdict of the earlier so-called 'Choice of Lives' argument that a mixed life is superior to either of its 'pure' rivals. A second concerns Socrates' discussion of false pleasure, in which he appears to be guilty of rank equivocation. I argue that we can solve both puzzles by attributing to Plato an account of pleasure as a species of intentional attitude.

### Keywords

Plato – pleasure – hedonism – intentionality

### 1 Introduction

The *Philebus* represents Plato's most mature and considered thinking about the nature of pleasure. Given his apparent commitment to the Socratic principle that before one may confidently reach any conclusions about *x* one must first give an account of *x* itself, we ought to expect to find early on in the *Philebus* a clear, unified account of pleasure. Surprisingly, though, the text is remarkably less clear on this point than one would expect, as Plato has the dialogue's two main interlocutors leap to questions about pleasure's value without much of an attempt to define it. A result of this editorial decision is that if the *Philebus* does indeed develop a unified account of pleasure, it presumably arises after, and in dialectical connection with, commitments about pleasure's contribution to happiness. So it seems that any interpretive search for such an account

necessarily involves a kind of speculative ‘reverse engineering’ on the part of the interpreter: she has no choice but to survey the text and to ask, ‘Given the positions about pleasure’s value left standing at the dialogue’s end, what might Plato take pleasure to be?’ And while some commentators purport to have found the unified account they are looking for, there remain enough textual ambiguities to call any such reading into question.<sup>1</sup>

My aim in this paper is to engage in precisely this sort of reverse engineering. Focusing on two of the dialogue’s most challenging interpretive puzzles, I will construct a unified account of pleasure that is not only consistent with the letter of the text, but which also renders coherent Plato’s odd and (by all appearances) inconsistent reasoning in the relevant passages. In short, the first puzzle concerns the agreement between Socrates and Protarchus at 33b6-7 that the ‘most godlike’ (θειότατος) of lives is free from pleasure and pain, which seems clearly to be inconsistent with their joint verdict earlier in the so-called ‘Choice of Lives’ argument. The second puzzle concerns Socrates’ notorious discussion of false pleasures, in which he seems to use the term ‘false’ in (at least) two incompatible senses. I will argue that if we take Plato to be committed to an account of pleasure as a species of intentional attitude—an account I will call AP, for ‘Attitudinal Pleasure’—then the bizarre reasoning at work in both puzzles begins to make more sense. In constructing AP, I will draw from the work of Fred Feldman, a contemporary hedonist. While the account I develop here differs significantly from Feldman’s own, my view is that his account develops in response to dialectical pressures much like the ones Plato applies to Protarchus’ position in the *Philebus*.

Section 2 will develop AP as a unified account of pleasure, and will argue that it is plausible that Protarchus begins to see the appeal of an account such as AP in response to the ‘Choice of Lives’ argument. Section 3 then turns to the first puzzle. I will argue that if we take AP to be Plato’s working conception of pleasure, then this furnishes a resolution to the apparent inconsistency. Then in Section 4 I turn to the second textual puzzle, explaining two distinct senses of ‘falsity’ at work in Plato’s discussion of false pleasures and their apparent incompatibility. Finally, Section 5 will argue that if we take Plato to be committed to AP, then we are in a position to see why and how he takes certain pleasures to be false in both senses.

<sup>1</sup> Dorothea Frede develops an influential reading on which Plato’s view in the *Philebus* is that all pleasure is restorative (Dorothea Frede, *Plato: Philebus*, Indianapolis, 1993). On the other hand, on the interpretation of Gosling and Taylor, it ‘seems clear that in the *Philebus* Plato had no general formula to encapsulate the nature of pleasure’ (J. C. B. Gosling and C. C. W. Taylor, *The Greeks on Pleasure*, Oxford, 1982, p. 140). My disagreements with each of these views will become clearer in due course.

## 2 Attitudinal Pleasure

My aim in this section is to develop an account of pleasure available to Plato. To prepare the ground for this account, let me first explain what I take the task of developing a unified account to involve. Since this task raises questions as to the ontological status of pleasure itself, it is best to formulate it in a way that remains neutral on this question. So rather than formulating it as an attempt to define pleasure itself, it is better conceived as a project of identifying the necessary and sufficient conditions for there to be a state of affairs in which someone is pleased. Call whatever meets this set of conditions the *basic hedonic phenomenon*. Among the implications of this framework for hedonists and anti-hedonists alike is the following: assuming that a certain account of the basic hedonic phenomenon is established, the hedonist's thesis may be formulated as the claim that all and only instances of that basic hedonic phenomenon have intrinsic value. Conversely, the anti-hedonist's thesis may be formulated as the denial of precisely this claim. This is a broadly atomistic approach to the question of the nature of pleasure. The basic hedonic phenomenon is 'indivisible' in the sense that nothing satisfying less than the complete set of necessary and sufficient conditions may count as a genuine case of someone being pleased.

On this picture, Protarchus' commitment to defend hedonism at the dialogue's opening generates the following two tasks: he must (1) provide an account of the basic hedonic phenomenon, and (2) prove that *only* this basic hedonic phenomenon satisfies Socrates' criteria for the good as something both perfect (τέλειον) and sufficient (ἰκανόν), along with his characterization of it as a singular object of relentless pursuit for any creature capable of apprehending it (a criterion glossed later on in the dialogue as the quality of being 'choiceworthy' (αἰρετόν) (611a). In other words, in the *Philebus* the question of whether pleasure is *the* good is essentially the question of whether what Protarchus takes to be the basic hedonic phenomenon satisfies these criteria for the good. As far as (1) is concerned, the position Protarchus inherits from Philebus is under-defined. Protarchus' intellectual development over the course of the dialogue lies in his thinking through with Socrates a unified account of pleasure that aligns most closely with their agreed-upon criteria for the good.

One might expect an analysis of the basic hedonic phenomenon to focus on certain sensations—whatever it is that the subject is *feeling* when experiencing pleasure. But hedonists throughout the ages have encountered problems with this approach. I include the character Protarchus with these hedonists, as he seems to learn this lesson early in the dialogue. In the dialogue's 'Choice

of Lives' argument (20e1-23a3; recapitulated at 60d3-e5; henceforth 'CL'), no sooner does Protarchus accept Socrates' criteria for the good and reaffirm his predecessor's hedonist thesis than Socrates confronts him with the example of an ecstatic mollusc. Such a creature would experience certain raw feelings in abundance, so the thought experiment goes, and yet since it would have no share of mind or its kindred, it would have no awareness of present feelings, nor memory and reckoning for past and future feelings, respectively (21b6-d5). On a plausible reading, the main problem with the mollusc's life appears to be that its supreme 'pleasure' occurs in the absence of anything we might call an intentional attitude. The organism can experience certain feelings, but it lacks the equipment for taking any attitudes toward the feelings it is experiencing; whether past, present or future. The very proposal leaves Protarchus 'speechless' and he rejects the mollusc's life at once.<sup>2</sup>

A careful reconstruction of this argument would take us too far afield. But to see how CL pressures Protarchus into rethinking not just the value of pleasure but also his account of the basic hedonic phenomenon, it is worth noting a worry raised by several commentators about his response to CL. For while it seems clear enough that Protarchus rejects the mollusc's life, his reason ought not be a sudden recognition of the instrumental value of certain intentional attitudes in maximizing pleasure, given the terms of the debate established with some care. *Ex hypothesi*, the pure life of pleasure Protarchus is defending already reaches the limit of pleasure—pleasure conceived as raw feelings, at any rate—and so the absence of attitudes necessary for maximizing these raw feelings is really no strike against such a life.<sup>3</sup>

Since the problem cannot reside in the supposed instrumental value of the missing attitudes, an alternative presents itself: perhaps these attitudes represent non-pleasures of distinct intrinsic value. On this picture, Protarchus reflects on the mollusc's life and concedes that it is supremely pleasant, but is brought to discover that the withheld mental life is also good in itself, and is thereby converted on the spot from Philebus' crude hedonism to some form of pleasure-inclusive pluralism. However, this reading has problems of its own.

2 As Verity Harte notes, the character Philebus, who is present for the discussion but contributes little once Protarchus takes custody of his hedonist position, is perhaps a case-study in a life of 'speechlessness' (Verity Harte, 'The Life of Protarchus' Choosing: Plato *Philebus* 20b-22c' in M. Lee, ed., *Strategies of Argument*, Oxford, 2014, pp. 3-20 at p. 12).

3 Versions of this objection are raised in J. C. B. Gosling, *Plato: Philebus* (Oxford, 1975), pp. 183-4; Frede, *Plato, Philebus* (n. 1 above), pp. 180-1; Matthew Evans, 'Plato's Rejection of Thoughtless and Pleasureless Lives', *Phronesis* 52 (2007), pp. 337-63 at pp. 350-1; and Harte, 'The Life of Protarchus' Choosing', (n. 2 above), pp. 9-12, who classifies this as 'The Instrumentalist Objection' to CL.

To begin with, it is unclear on this reading why Socrates focuses strictly on attitudes about the very feelings the mollusc is experiencing. After all, the life of an ecstatic mollusc that could also think about, say, other beings, mathematical proofs, or distant planets should also be more attractive if indeed the mere having of certain attitudes is intrinsically valuable. Why make it all about its inability to form attitudes specifically towards its own feelings?

A second difficulty for this reading concerns another, heretofore-unaddressed outcome of CL: Socrates' apparently symmetrical concession that his favoured life of pure thinking turns out to be inadequate as well. Since no parallel thought experiment follows that of the mollusc, Plato leaves us to speculate whether Socrates' own concession is unmotivated (a counsel of despair, in my view), or whether he too is persuaded by something he sees in the mollusc's life. But if the latter, then it is not at all clear what Socrates is responding to. From the revelation that the mollusc's raw feelings are not sufficient for the best life, it hardly follows without further argument that they are nevertheless necessary for the best life. A life of, say, perpetual sneezing without any accompanying mental life seems dreadful; it does not follow that a life combining perpetual sneezing with mental activity is as good as it gets. Why then should the example of the mollusc provoke any concession whatever from Socrates?

In short, what we need is a reading of CL that explains Socrates' narrow focus on the mollusc's attitudes about its own feelings, without taking the value of those attitudes to be instrumental, while at the same time explaining Socrates' corresponding concession. Taking a cue from my interpretive principle that Plato's unified account of pleasure develops in dialectical connection with questions about its value, I propose the following reading. The example of the ecstatic mollusc confronts Protarchus with a life that is indeed resplendent in 'pleasure', on his working definition of the basic hedonic phenomenon as a subject's mere experience of a raw feeling. But he sees at once that such a life fails to satisfy Socrates' three criteria for the good. Rather than challenge these criteria, Protarchus revises his account of the basic hedonic phenomenon: it now includes not only a raw feeling, but also a second-order attitude toward that raw feeling.

How does this reading improve on those we have already outlined? First, it avoids the problem associated with attributing mere instrumental value to the mollusc's missing attitudes. On Protarchus' revised account, these attitudes are to be included in the basic hedonic phenomenon, and hence they help constitute what Protarchus now takes to be intrinsically valuable. So the mollusc example has persuaded him that a supremely pleasant life—*contra* the way Socrates frames it—must contain more than mere raw feelings. Moreover, this

interpretation explains the focus on the mollusc's attitudes about its own raw feelings. CL has the effect of converting Protarchus from one account of pleasure to another, such that he shifts from recognizing raw feelings alone to the view that certain attitudes directed towards those feelings are also necessary. He has not come to recognize mental activity as a distinct genre of intrinsic value; rather, he has incorporated certain mental attitudes into his working conception of pleasure. As we will see later, having established that these attitudes are necessary for pleasure, this raises a new question for Protarchus: Why should we think that raw feelings are also in fact necessary? Could a pleasure not consist of an attitude directed at some state of affairs that is not a raw feeling belonging to the subject? I will argue in due course that both of our textual puzzles represent Plato's attempt to answer these questions.

But how does this reading furnish us with an explanation for Socrates' corresponding concession in CL? If my account of Protarchus' side of the bargain is on target, then we are in a position to see why Socrates responds in kind. Protarchus' innovation on the question of pleasure forces a choice for Socrates. On the one hand, Socrates could maintain his opening distinction between the pure lives of pleasure and thinking and exclude these second-order attitudes from the latter life. Not only is this a needlessly strong and implausible position, but it would represent an abrupt about-face for Socrates, who, in formulating the mollusc example just a moment ago, clearly *did* assume that the missing attitudes were instances of thinking. Socrates has little motivation to take this route, and so he opts for the alternative. He abandons the pure life of thinking in favour of a mixture because, following Protarchus' lead, he now concedes that certain acts of reflection—minimally, those directed at one's own raw feelings—are intimately bound up with pleasure on Protarchus' new working definition. Pleasure and thinking can no longer coherently be pried apart as their debate had initially assumed.

So this reading seems to avoid the problems we found in other interpretations. On Protarchus' new working account of pleasure, for a state of affairs to obtain in which a subject is pleased, the following two conditions must hold: (a) there must exist an appropriate intentional attitude, and (b) the object of this intentional attitude must obtain. Indeed, in response to comparable philosophical pressures, contemporary hedonist Fred Feldman arrives at a similar conception of pleasure. Call this view 'AP', for 'Attitudinal Pleasure'. On AP, the mental attitude in question is the sort of attitude we adopt when we 'take pleasure in' or 'are pleased by' a given state of affairs. It may be cashed out in various ways which (I hope) avoid the charge of circularity. We 'take pleasure in' a certain state of affairs when we 'welcome' it, or when we wish that it

would continue, or when we would intervene to ensure that it does not cease, etc. The advantages or disadvantages of one formulation or another need not detain us here. Let us simply gloss this attitude as one of suitably 'liking' or 'enjoying' some object.

Feldman distinguishes between two ways of taking attitudinal pleasure in a given object. When we take pleasure in a state of affairs for its own sake, apart from any consequence or other relation it has to other things, then we take *intrinsic* attitudinal pleasure in that object. On the other hand, when we take pleasure in a given state of affairs because of its consequences, or for any property that falls outside the intrinsic properties of that object, then we take *extrinsic* attitudinal pleasure in that object.<sup>4</sup>

With this much on the table, Feldman identifies the basic hedonic phenomenon as follows, using the example of Jeremy's enjoyment of the taste of cold beer. Let the taste of cold beer be represented by *B*. A basic hedonic phenomenon is:

J1: Jeremy taking intrinsic pleasure to degree +3 at *t* in the fact that he himself is experiencing *B* at *t*.<sup>5</sup>

The crucial elements of this state of affairs are: (1) a specific individual (i.e. Jeremy); (2) a specific intensity of intrinsic attitudinal pleasure (i.e. +3); (3) a specific time (represented by *t*); and (4) a specific object: in this case, the object is Jeremy's experiencing *B* at *t*. But notice that to be counted among the essential elements of a basic hedonic phenomenon, the object need not be an experience or feeling. Another example of a basic hedonic phenomenon would be the following. Let *TW* represent the fact that the Trojan War has ended:

J2: Jeremy taking intrinsic pleasure to degree +3 at *t* in *TW*.

On Feldman's view, J1 and J2 are specimens of the basic hedonic phenomenon. As such, this view formulates the hedonist's thesis as the claim that candidates such as J1 and J2 are the only bearers of intrinsic value.

If reflection on the inadequacies of the ecstatic mollusc's life leads Plato to accept AP as his account of the basic hedonic phenomenon, then this seems to explain the rapprochement of the Protarchean and Socratic positions in the

4 Fred Feldman, *Utilitarianism, Hedonism, and Desert: Essays in Moral Philosophy* (New York, 1997), pp. 142-3.

5 Feldman, *Utilitarianism* (n. 4 above), p. 144.

aftermath of CL. From the point of view of someone who accepts AP, the dialogue's opening contest of lives represents a false choice. This is clear if one asks on which side of the 'pure pleasure vs. pure thought' distinction AP-pleasures belong, for they do not seem to fit neatly onto either side of this distinction. To be sure, they fall squarely within the ambit of hedonic phenomena—it would be odd indeed to deny that the 'pleasure' one takes in, say, the fact that the Trojan War has ended counts as a genuine pleasure. And yet it also seems odd to deny their status as mental acts, since AP-pleasures by definition involve the taking of intentional attitudes. To anticipate a bit, we will see in Section 4 below that this is precisely why Socrates wishes to characterize pleasures as belief-like, and argues that pleasures can be false in much the same sense that beliefs can be false. In short, in AP-pleasures intellectual and hedonic elements seem to be two sides of the same coin.

What AP furnishes, it should be noted, is an account of distinctively *human* pleasures. Consider Plato's image of an ecstatic mollusc. This raises a question for Plato: if reflection on the inadequacy of the mollusc's 'pleasure' leads him to favour AP as an account of the basic hedonic phenomenon, then what precisely is the status of those 'pleasures' that the ecstatic mollusc is experiencing? We may fear that Plato finds himself in a conceptual bind. On the one hand, the image of the mollusc has revealed that the mere having of certain feelings is an unappealing account of the basic hedonic phenomenon. But on the other hand, adopting the more promising AP seems to require Plato to withhold the term 'pleasure' from the mollusc's experience, since this experience clearly involves no intentional attitudes and thus cannot be counted as an AP-pleasure. And the point may of course be broadened: to the extent that Plato denies that a non-rational being is capable of intentional attitudes, then in adopting AP, must he really deny that non-rational animals can experience pleasure?

I think there is a way out of this bind for Plato. That is, he can continue to grant that what the mollusc is experiencing is indeed pleasure, with the important caveat that this is pleasure *for a mollusc*. This way he need not oppose common sense views about animal psychology. All he needs to stipulate, I think, is that whereas the raw 'pleasant feelings' being experienced by the mollusc are indeed 'mollusc pleasures'—hedonically speaking, this the best that a mollusc can do, after all—those same 'pleasant feelings' are not to be counted as *human* pleasures. For humans, and indeed for all creatures capable of adopting intentional attitudes, 'pleasure' refers to AP-pleasure. So Plato need not altogether abandon the conception of pleasure as the mere experience of some sort of feeling. This conception still holds for non-rational animals. In the aftermath of CL, he has simply clarified that the pleasures involved in



human happiness require thought, and the taking of intentional attitudes in particular.<sup>6</sup>

Let this suffice as our outline of AP. The next section will consider the implications of attributing this view to Plato for the first of our two textual puzzles. This is the agreement between Socrates and Protarchus at 33b6-7 that the 'most godlike' of lives is free from pleasure and pain, and the apparent inconsistency of this position with CL's verdict. In short, I will propose that if Plato accepts AP, then this suggests a way of reconciling the apparent inconsistency.

### 3 'Divine' Pleasures

The last section outlined AP as an account of pleasure, and supplied some textual support for the hypothesis that reflection on the issues raised in CL may well recommend AP as an account of the basic hedonic phenomenon. That is to say, this hypothesis explains certain key elements of CL and its immediate aftermath. Not only does it explain Protarchus' motivation for rejecting the ecstatic mollusc's life as a candidate for the most desirable life, but it also explains Socrates' reasons for rejecting the life of pure thinking. To add to the textual evidence for this hypothesis, the rest of this paper will argue that it supplies the resources for solving two formidable textual puzzles.

The first puzzle concerns the agreement between Socrates and Protarchus that the 'most godlike' of lives is free from both pleasure and pain. This seems plainly inconsistent with CL's verdict that the mixed life is preferable to either of the pure lives. This is a puzzle for any interpretation of CL. On the reasonable assumption that Socrates and Protarchus take the most godlike life to be the best life, this commits them to the view that the best life is a pleasureless (and painless) life of pure thinking. On the equally safe assumption that the best life is preferable to all others, this commits Protarchus and Socrates to the view that a god's life of pleasureless (and painless) thinking is preferable to

6 The inclusion of animal pleasure in his hedonist position seems to be something Protarchus inherits from Philebus. In the dialogue's opening remarks, Socrates attributes to Philebus the view that pleasure and related phenomena are good for 'all living beings' (πάσι ζώοις, 11b4-5). Socrates' articulation of his own case suggests that its scope is more restricted. He champions 'wisdom and thought and memory and their kindred, right opinion and true reasonings ... for all who are capable of taking part in them' (ὁ φρονεῖν καὶ τὸ νοεῖν καὶ μεμνήσθαι καὶ τὰ τούτων αὐτῶν συγγενή, δόξαν τε ὀρθὴν καὶ ἀληθεῖς λογισμούς ... σύμπασιν ὅσα περ αὐτῶν δυνατὰ μεταλαβεῖν, b7-10). Unless Socrates holds that non-rational animals can take part in 'true reasonings' and the like, then it seems that he and Protarchus begin the debate with conceptions of happiness that range over distinct sets of creatures.

the mixed life. And this is plainly inconsistent with their joint conclusion in CL that the mixed life is preferable to the pleasureless life.

One might suppose that there is no real textual problem here. Perhaps CL initially convinces Socrates and Protarchus, but by the time they get to 33b6-7 they have simply changed their minds, owing to later developments in the dialogue. Unfortunately, matters are not so simple. Such a move seems to be positively ruled out by the recapitulation of CL at 60d3-61b7, where Plato seems to stress that the commitment to CL's verdict has been steadfast:

Soc.: And if we made any mistake at that time, let anyone now take up the question again. Assuming that memory, wisdom, knowledge, and true opinion belong to the same class, let him ask whether anyone would wish to have or acquire anything whatsoever without these not to speak of pleasure, be it never so abundant or intense, if he could have no true opinion that he is pleased, no knowledge whatsoever of what he has felt, and not even the slightest memory of the feeling. And let him ask in the same way about wisdom, whether anyone would wish to have wisdom without any, even the slightest, pleasure rather than with some pleasures, or all pleasures without wisdom rather than with some wisdom.

Prot.: That is impossible, Socrates; it is useless to ask the same question over and over again.

...

Soc.: And just now we received an indication, as we did in the beginning, that we must seek the good, not in the unmixed, but in the mixed life.

Prot.: Certainly.<sup>7</sup>

Protarchus actually seems to find it tedious to go over these points again, since they were so well-established earlier on—Socrates is simply asking ‘the same question over and over again’. Such a sentiment would be strange indeed if CL's verdict had been repealed and then restored somewhere along the line. What we have in the *Philebus* are two endorsements of CL's verdict, one on either side of the curious remark about the most godlike of lives, with no suggestion of any wavering between the first endorsement and the second. So it is implausible that Socrates and Protarchus change their minds about CL when they are discussing the most godlike of lives. We need some other way of reconciling the inconsistency.

<sup>7</sup> Unless otherwise noted, all translations are from H. N. Fowler (tr.), *Plato*. Vol. 3: *Statesman, Philebus, Ion*. Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, Mass., 1925).

Again, this is a serious textual challenge for any interpretation. But I think attributing AP to Plato offers a possible solution. For if we take AP to be his working conception of pleasure, then this opens up a coherent way for Plato both to endorse CL's verdict and to hold that the divine life is a life of pure thinking without pleasure or pain. Moreover, my proposed solution does not require that we reject either of the background assumptions I laid out in explaining the inconsistency—i.e. that the divine life is the best life, or that the best life is preferable to all others. And on top of all this, on my solution it seems possible that the mixed life preferred in CL can actually be identified (in a way) with the most godlike life praised at 33b6-7.

Before getting to this, however, I want to consider an alternative solution to the problem. The same interpretive puzzle has led Matthew Evans to claim that the standard reading of CL's conclusion must be reconsidered. On Evans' view, CL's actual result is not that the mixed life is in fact superior to all other lives. Its conclusion is rather that the sort of life enjoyed by the gods, while devoid of pleasure and on that account superior to a human life, is nevertheless to be rejected by human beings on the ground that such a life is impossible for us.<sup>8</sup> On this picture the inconsistency vanishes between CL's verdict and the claim that the most godlike of lives is free from pleasure and pain. Plato can go ahead and praise the most godlike of lives all he likes without undermining CL, because CL's concern is restricted to the question of what sort of life *that is liveable by humans* is best. On Evans's view, the life of the ecstatic mollusc is to be rejected on similar grounds.<sup>9</sup>

There are textual reasons to doubt Evans's solution, however. For with his claim that the pure lives are to be rejected in CL on 'liveability' grounds rather than 'desirability' grounds, Evans seems to restrict the scope of CL to human lives. Clearly, on Evans's interpretation a god would follow the reasoning in CL to a different conclusion than the one reached by Socrates and Protarchus.

8 Evans, 'Plato's Rejection' (n. 3 above), p. 34.

9 Evans' view that Plato holds that a divine life of pure thinking is in fact best but nonetheless not liveable for a human is also difficult to square with his consistent commitment to the goal of both philosophy and moral development as assimilation to god (ὁμοίωσις θεῷ). See especially *Phaedo* 79b1-81a7; *Republic* 500b6-d1; *Phaedrus* 249b4-c4 (in which the life of a crustacean, ὀστρέου, is also mentioned); *Theaetetus* 176a5-b2; and *Timaeus* 90d1-7. It also clashes potentially with Aristotle's exhortation to humans in *EN* 10.7 to 'strain every nerve' to shed their mortality and live like the gods (1177b31-1178a5), although any interpretation of these remarks is controversial. For some discussion of these passages, see Julia Annas, *Platonic Ethics Old and New* (Ithaca, NY, 1999), ch. 3; David Sedley, "Becoming Like God" in the *Timaeus* and Aristotle' in Tomas Calvo and Luc Brisson (eds.), *Interpreting the Timaeus-Critias* (Sankt Augustin, 1997), 327-39; and John M. Armstrong, 'After the Ascent: Plato on Becoming Like God', *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 26 (2004), pp. 171-83.

Why is this a problem? One of the striking features of the starting dialectical positions of Protarchus and Socrates is their breadth of scope. Socrates expresses Protarchus' starting dialectical position as one about what is good for 'all living beings' (πάσι ζώοις); meanwhile Socrates claims his own position concerns all beings 'capable of taking part in' (δυνατὰ μεταλαβεῖν) reason in various forms (11b3-c1). That Plato holds that the gods fall within the scope of Socrates' position is clear. If the most godlike of lives involves pure thinking, then the gods are presumably to be included among those beings capable of taking part in reason. In short, Socrates must at the dialogue's beginning hold that his own position covers the gods as well as humans, and so the anthropocentric restriction of scope Evans finds in CL seems to be a sudden and utterly unacknowledged development.<sup>10</sup> We are reminded of the breadth of scope in Socrates' position in his discussion of the criteria for the good—essentially the first step in CL—where the third criterion for the good is that it is a unique object of pursuit for 'all who apprehend it' (πάν τὸ γιγνώσκον αὐτό, 20d6, my translation). This seems to imply that, if a human being can apprehend that the divine life is where the good resides, then that human being ought to—in any case *will*—strive to possess it. And yet the moral of CL on Evans's reading is that humans should resign themselves to a human life and to the human good, even when they are aware of something better.

Fortunately, there is an alternative solution to our puzzle. The claim about the most godlike life appears in the context of a discussion about a certain account of pleasure. This is the so-called 'restorative' account, the view that pleasure is the natural restoration of a deficiency. It is in this context that Socrates and Protarchus have the following exchange (33b2-10):

Soc.: Yes, for it was said, you know, in our comparison of the lives that he who chose the life of mind and wisdom was to have no feeling of pleasure, great or small (μηδὲν δεῖν μήτε μέγα μήτε μικρὸν χαίρειν).

Prot.: Yes, surely, that was said.

Soc.: Such a man, then, would have such a life; and perhaps it is not unreasonable, if that is the most divine of lives.

Pro.: Certainly it is not likely that gods feel either joy or its opposite.

Soc.: No, it is very unlikely; for either is unseemly for them.

<sup>10</sup> While it may be less clear whether Plato includes the gods among 'living things', and thus takes them to fall within the scope of Protarchus' starting position, this is strongly suggested by his reasoning in the *Timaeus* that since reason cannot belong to anything apart from soul (νοῦν δ' αὖ χωρὶς ψυχῆς ἀδύνατον παραγενέσθαι τῷ) and, since the cosmos must be rational if it is to be as good as possible, it follows that the cosmos must be understood to be an ensouled rational animal (30a6-c1).

As Gabriela Roxana Carone has argued, that these remarks appear in the context of a discussion of the restorative model of pleasure suggests that what is being denied is strictly that the gods experience *restorative* pleasures.<sup>11</sup> Indeed, immediately following these remarks Socrates and Protarchus consider a distinct kind of pleasure, the sort of pleasure that is 'an affair of the soul alone' (ὁ τῆς ψυχῆς αὐτῆς ἔφραμεν εἶναι). So Carone's claim that the denial of pleasure to the gods is restricted to a certain species of pleasure is persuasive.<sup>12</sup> This leaves open the possibility that other, non-restorative pleasures are compatible with the divine.<sup>13</sup>

But even if we agree with Carone on this point, the question remains: What sorts of pleasures, if any, are available to the gods on Plato's view? For if the gods enjoy some species of non-restorative pleasures, then are these the same sorts of pleasures in the mixed life CL recommends? If the answer is no, then it seems the mixed life and the most godlike life remain distinct, and we are left with roughly the same inconsistency between CL and 33b6-7. If the life of the gods is best, then why isn't *this* the life CL recommends? It is for this reason, I think, that the mixed life and the most godlike life must turn out to be basically the same if we really want to eliminate the inconsistency. But how can

11 Gabriela Roxana Carone, 'Hedonism and the Pleasureless Life in Plato's *Philebus*', *Phronesis* 45 (2000), pp. 257-83.

12 At 32b5, Socrates presents the restorative account as merely 'one form of pleasure and pain' (ἓν εἶδος τιθώμεθα λύπης τε καὶ ἡδονῆς). Then, at 32d1-2, after the restorative pleasures and pains have been compared with anticipatory pleasures and pains, he raises the question of pleasure's unity as a kind: whether the whole of pleasure is desirable or rather some other class already mentioned (περὶ τὴν ἡδονήν, πότερον ἔλον ἐστί τὸ γένος ἀσπαστόν, ἢ τοῦτο μὲν ἐτέρῳ τινὶ τῶν προειρημένων δοτέον ἡμῖν γενῶν). With this question left open, it seems premature to attribute to Socrates a settled account of pleasure, restorative or otherwise. Rather, he appears to be canvassing different sorts of pleasure in part to raise worries about potential disunity in the kind. See Anthony Price, 'Varieties of Pleasure in Plato and Aristotle', *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 52 (2017), 177-208.

13 Indeed, the *Republic's* discussion of pleasure seems to follow a similar pattern. The pleasant rewards of the unjust life that take centre stage in the dialogue's early books are presumably restorative in nature. But by the end of Book 9 we find Socrates arguing that a philosopher, who, under the motivating hypothesis of the dialogue, can expect scorn and torture, nevertheless enjoys 729 times *more pleasure* than the tyrant torturing him (587d9-e3). It is unlikely that Socrates takes the implausible position that the tortured philosopher's pleasures are of the restorative variety. And while it does not follow that Socrates in Book 9 takes the philosopher's pleasures to be attitudinal *per se*, his calculation of the philosopher's bliss clearly requires a conception of pleasure *like* AP in so far as it must support the view that a subject may be said to be enjoying great pleasure even while suffering extreme bodily pain. My thanks to an anonymous reviewer for calling my attention to this parallel in the *Republic*.

the mixed life, a life consisting of thinking *and* certain pleasures, be attributed to the gods?

To answer this question, it is worth reviewing what I think is the main reason Plato wants to deny that the gods experience any pleasure—or pain, for that matter. Plato's view, aired in the *Phaedo* (61c5-63c7) and elsewhere, is that the moral ideal for any creature able to attain it is to free itself from bodily experiences. That the gods are perfect beings means for Plato that they are not subject to the sorts of defects that seem to be required for restorative pleasures and pains.<sup>14</sup>

But this same reasoning seems to rule out any 'pleasant feeling' in connection with the restorative model of pleasure: roughly, the welcome feeling a subject experiences when a part of its body is being restored to its natural condition. Stimulation itself seems to involve some bodily defect in the case of ordinary biological organisms. The pleasant feeling of warming, for example, involves the restoration of the organism's body from the defects brought on by cold; the pleasant feelings of eating and drinking require the corresponding deficiencies of hunger and thirst; and so on. In short, being the sort of body that can be stimulated in the relevant ways requires the very bodily deficiencies that a god cannot suffer. So in withholding the restorative pleasures from the divine life in the *Philebus*, Plato seems effectively to be withholding 'pleasant feelings' as well.<sup>15</sup>

But AP presents us with a very different account of pleasure. On AP, pleasure consists of some state of affairs and a certain attitude the subject takes towards that state of affairs. Most notably, AP covers cases of the basic hedonic phenomenon that involve no 'feelings' of any kind. When the state of affairs in question is a pleasant feeling (being experienced either by the same subject who adopts the attitude, or, less standardly, in cases in which the subject

14 Consider the *Timaeus*, where from the fact that the cosmic god is 'self-sufficient' (αὐταρκής) and 'blessed' (εὐδαίμονα) it follows that its body is without any of the organs associated with sense perception, respiration, nourishment and locomotion (33c1-33d7). If this account serves as a guide to Plato's view as to the life of a god, then whatever pleasures a god may be supposed to enjoy it seems they cannot involve any of these activities.

15 At *Republic* 9, 584b6-8, Socrates focuses on the pleasures of smell as those that are unconnected with pain. And in the *Philebus* itself at 51b2-6 he characterizes pleasures arising from colours, forms, odours, and sounds as being 'unmixed with pain' (ἀλύπτους); later at 51e1-4 he curiously demotes *Republic* 9's pleasures of smell to a 'less divine class' (ἥττον μὲν ... θεῖον γένος), although they are mixed with no 'necessary pains' (ἀναγκαίους λύπας). But, as *Timaeus* 65a2-7 makes clear, the absence of bodily *pain* does not show an absence of bodily *deficiency*: in these cases the preceding deficiency simply goes unfelt. So if the gods are free from bodily deficiency, then they are free from even the pleasant feelings that involve unfelt deficiencies.

experiencing the feeling and the subject who adopts the attitude are distinct), then in those cases pleasure involves pleasant feelings. But AP also allows objects that are not feelings at all, much less feelings associated with certain bodily deficiencies. Discussing the attitude involved in AP, Fred Feldman explains:<sup>16</sup>

Propositional [a.k.a. attitudinal] pleasure is not a feeling. To take pleasure in a fact is not necessarily to have any sensory feelings. A person could take pleasure in various facts even if he were anesthetized. I may, for example, take pleasure in the fact that the war in Bosnia has at least temporarily stopped. I might do this even though I am not feeling any sensory pleasure. I might be feeling no sensations at all. So, from the fact that someone is taking propositional pleasure in some fact, it does not follow that he is experiencing any pleasant feelings.

So a subject adopting the attitude of being 'pleased at' or 'pleased by' some state of affairs may be taking pleasure in states of affairs that have nothing to do with feelings of any kind. This is important for our purposes, as it suggests that nothing prevents blessed, divine beings from experiencing AP-pleasures. Without bodies, or in any case without experiencing any of the deficiencies that ordinarily come with having a body, a god can be pleased that the Trojan War has ended, for example.

Plato himself furnishes us with another example in the *Timaeus*, when the divine craftsman 'rejoices' at, and is 'well-pleased' by, the cosmos he has just set into motion (ἡγάσθη τε καὶ εὐφρανθεὶς, 37c6).<sup>17</sup> Although Plato clearly denies (for reasons already discussed) that the gods—including the divine craftsman, who creates the lesser gods—experience bodily restorations, he is perfectly comfortable describing the father of the cosmos as one who rejoices *in* and is well-pleased *by* those objects that do not implicate him in anthropocentric embodiment.

If we apply the same reasoning in the *Philebus*, then it seems the question of whether the gods can experience a certain species of pleasure is largely to be decided by the question of whether that pleasure implies anthropocentric embodiment. If the question being posed is whether the gods can experience

<sup>16</sup> Feldman, *Utilitarianism* (above n. 4), p. 143.

<sup>17</sup> Carone, 'Hedonism' (above n. 11), pp. 263 n. 12 and 264 n. 14. The use of ἡγάσθη appears to be a play on ἄγλαμα (glory or statue) appearing a line before. It is also worth noting that the passive form of εὐφρανθεὶς is often used to capture the fact that the subject is taking pleasure *in* or *at* something. Socrates uses the word χαίρειν at 33b3 when he denies that the gods experience pleasures.

the sorts of restorative pleasures that seem to require a body subject to certain deficiencies—hunger, thirst, and the like—then Plato has Socrates and Protarchus withhold *that* sort of pleasure from the gods in no uncertain terms. But in the case of attitudinal pleasure, the pious reason to withhold it from the gods is not in play. One can experience attitudinal pleasure even if one is anaesthetized, as Feldman claims, or if one is a brain in a vat, or if one is a disembodied deity inspecting the newly-formed cosmos. Indeed, a subject who is in any one of these states and is experiencing neither pleasant nor painful feelings can take pleasure in the very fact that she is ἀπαθής.

How does this suggest a way out of the inconsistency with which we began this section? How does AP provide a way of identifying the mixed life with the most godlike of lives? Suppose the mixed life is one consisting only of attitudinal pleasure. Such a life need not involve pleasant feelings at all. Insofar as the subject's attitudinal pleasures are directed towards pleasant feelings of one kind or another, then to that extent the life in question involves pleasant feelings. For example, Jeremy may be experiencing the pleasant feeling of eating when he is hungry, and he may also take pleasure in the fact that he is experiencing that feeling. Nevertheless, how can this life be *identified* with the most godlike of lives? After all, disembodied gods can experience no 'pleasant feelings', and so whatever attitudes their lives may be thought to contain, these cannot be attitudes towards 'pleasant feelings'.

There are two ways that a human life consisting only of AP-type pleasures can be identified with the most godlike life of pure thinking. First, we have already seen that Plato seems to hold that the gods can experience attitudinal pleasure in cases that do not involve attributing 'pleasant feelings' to the divine. A human life involving no pleasant feelings can consist of the same sorts of attitudinal pleasures. Plato may well doubt that a life consisting of no pleasant feelings whatever is possible for a human being. Nevertheless, insofar as pleasant feelings can be eliminated from human life in Plato's view, to that extent we are capable of approximating the lives of the gods. And in either case, human or divine, we have already seen how these attitudinal pleasures are to be counted as instances of thinking. So insofar as it is possible to live a life consisting only of attitudinal pleasures taken towards states of affairs that are not the subject's own pleasant feelings, this life mixes pleasure and thinking; at least, it seems, on CL's terms.<sup>18</sup>

18 Notice that divine disembodiment requires that for any AP-pleasure the attitude's object cannot be the subject's *own* pleasant feelings. Nothing rules out AP-pleasures in which this object is the pleasant feeling of another subject. A disembodied god can take pleasure in the fact that *I* am experiencing certain pleasant feelings, for example.



But there is another form in which the two lives can be identified. Recall that I proposed that a creature experiencing neither pleasant nor painful feelings may take attitudinal pleasure in the fact that it is in that very state. For a god, who is presumably always in such a state, it is possible to live a life taking perpetual attitudinal pleasure in the fact that it is in that very state. Humans will perhaps experience only an intermittent version of such a life. But again, insofar as Plato holds that humans are capable of attaining a state involving neither pleasant nor painful feelings, to that extent they can take pleasure in the fact that they are in that very state. So on this picture for either a god or for a human being, the most desirable life would consist of pleasures of the following composition: a certain attitude the subject takes toward its own freedom from pleasure and pain.

To sum up, if we take Socrates and Protarchus at 33b6-7 to be withholding only *restorative* pleasures from the most godlike of lives, then we need not follow Evans's solution. But we do need an explanation, I think, as to what sorts of non-restorative pleasures *can* be included in the most godlike of lives. AP supplies us with a range of pleasures that can be attributed to the gods without entailing that the gods are anthropomorphically embodied, and which fit perfectly well with Plato's view, aired in the *Philebus* and elsewhere, that the life of a god is one of pure thinking.

One advantage to our solution is that it goes well beyond rendering consistent CL's verdict and the remark about the most godlike of lives at 33b6-7. Indeed, if this solution is on the right track, then we can see how the mixed life recommended in CL and the most godlike of lives actually turn out to be the same, in a way. As we saw earlier, AP seems to blur the line between each of the pure lives in the following sense: while AP-pleasures clearly ought to be considered pleasures, they are also clearly a species of intentional attitude, and hence of intellection. If we imagine a subject experiencing only AP-pleasures in which the object of the relevant attitude answers to no pleasant feelings belonging to the subject, then we are imagining a subject who seems to be living *at once* a pure life of pleasure and a pure life of thinking. That is to say, a life consisting only of certain AP-pleasures is one way of construing the mixed life—not because it blends pleasure and reason in some sort of mish-mash, but because those AP-pleasures are both experiences of pleasure and acts of thinking. Seen in this way, the mixed life recommended in CL and the most godlike of lives turn out to be much more akin than we may have supposed, and certainly more similar than Evans's solution would suggest.

Let this suffice as our solution to the first textual puzzle. The next section will outline what I think is another advantage of attributing AP to Plato in the *Philebus*. There has been considerable debate concerning another important

episode in the dialogue, namely Socrates' contention that some pleasures are 'false' ( $\psi\epsilon\upsilon\delta\acute{\epsilon}\zeta$ ).<sup>19</sup> This proposal raises a great number of issues, among them the worry that Socrates equivocates between two incompatible senses of the term 'false'. Allow me briefly to sketch these two senses in the next section. I will then explain why I think this distinction raises a problem for Socrates' discussion of false pleasures. Finally, I will explain how my proposal that Plato in the *Philebus* comes to embrace AP offers a way of solving this problem.

#### 4 False Pleasures in the *Philebus*

Protarchus is understandably puzzled when Socrates begins to speak of false pleasures. Many interpreters share Protarchus' puzzlement, in part because the notion of falsity Socrates uses seems to morph over the course of the discussion. And this is putting it mildly: for example, Dorothea Frede identifies at least four different senses in which Socrates uses the term 'false'.<sup>20</sup> While there seems to be broad agreement that Socrates uses more than one sense of falsity in connection with pleasure, commentators are divided about whether this is a serious problem for Socrates' (and perhaps Plato's) position. On one side is J. C. B. Gosling, who condemns Plato for 'rank equivocation'.<sup>21</sup> But other commentators have challenged the assumption that Socrates' talk of falsity must be univocal for his argument to go through. Frede herself glosses all four of Socrates' senses of 'false' as 'ways in which something can go wrong with

19 The relevant passage is 35c-41b. See J. C. B. Gosling, 'False Pleasures: *Philebus* 35c-41b', *Phronesis* 4 (1959), pp. 44-53; J. C. B. Gosling, 'Father Kenny on False Pleasures', *Phronesis* 6 (1961), pp. 41-5; Anthony Kenny, 'False Pleasures in the *Philebus*: A Reply to Mr. Gosling', *Phronesis* 5 (1960), pp. 45-52; I. Thalberg 'False Pleasures', *Journal of Philosophy* 59 (1962), pp. 65-74; J. Dybikowski, 'False Pleasure and the *Philebus*', *Phronesis* 15 (1970), pp. 147-65; Terry Penner, 'False Anticipatory Pleasures: *Philebus* 36a3-41a6', *Phronesis* 15 (1970), pp. 166-78; Dorothea Frede, 'Rumpelstiltskin's Pleasures: True and False Pleasures in Plato's *Philebus*', *Phronesis* 30 (1985), pp. 151-80; Verity Harte, 'The *Philebus* on Pleasure: the Good, the Bad, and the False', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 104 (2004), pp. 111-28; Evans, 'Plato's Rejection' (n. 3 above); David Wolfsdorf, *Pleasure in Ancient Greek Philosophy* (New York, 2013), pp. 80-102; and Jennifer Whiting, 'Fools' Pleasures in Plato's *Philebus*' in M. Lee (ed.), *Strategies of Argument* (Oxford, 2014), pp. 21-59.

20 Dorothea Frede, 'The Hedonist's Conversion: The Role of Socrates in the *Philebus*', in C. Gill and M. M. McCabe (eds.), *Form and Argument in Late Plato* (Oxford, 1996), pp. 213-48 at 234-5, cited in Whiting, 'Fools' Pleasures' (n. 19 above), p. 23; cf. her *Platon, Philebos. Übersetzung und Kommentar* (Göttingen, 1997), p. 242. Indeed, Wolfsdorf identifies ten distinct kinds of pleasure (*Pleasures*, n. 19 above, p. 99), although each of these kinds appears to be classifiable in terms of one of the two senses of falsity I will outline.

21 Gosling, *Philebus* (above n. 3), p. 212.

processes of restoration'.<sup>22</sup> Jennifer Whiting proposes in a similar spirit that Socrates 'employs a core notion of falsity departures from which are justified in their respective contexts and contribute to the argument *as a whole*'.<sup>23</sup>

While I think Frede and Whiting are right to challenge the view that Socrates' talk of 'falsity' must be univocal to be consistent, I also think that Socrates' practice in the *Philebus* is more troubling than either would have us believe. For it is one thing for Socrates to use 'false' and related terms in multiple senses, if behind these senses lies a 'core notion of falsity'. It is another for Socrates to employ senses of falsity that are downright *incompatible*, where the incompatibility of sense *a* of falsity and sense *b* of falsity means that if pleasure *p* is false in sense *a*, then this rules out any chance that *p* may also be false in sense *b*, and vice-versa. In fact, Socrates seems to employ two senses of falsity that appear to be incompatible in precisely this way. On this picture it is hard to see what sort of unity lies behind Socrates' distinct uses of the term 'false', and indeed why Socrates ought to be acquitted of the rank equivocation Gosling condemns. But, as I will argue, these two 'incompatible' senses of falsity turn out to fit together dialectically on the supposition that AP represents Plato's working conception of pleasure. That is to say, AP furnishes us with a way of understanding how certain so-called 'pleasures' may be false in both senses. So while I worry that Frede and Whiting underestimate the problem posed by Socrates' equivocal talk of false pleasures, I agree that there is a core meaning being adapted to different dialectical contexts—specifically, the core meaning of 'false' in putative cases of false pleasures follows from the view that true pleasures are AP-pleasures.

First, allow me to identify the two senses of 'false' I have in mind. When Protarchus first wonders how exactly pleasures can be true or false, Socrates responds with a rhetorical question: 'But, Protarchus, how can there be true and false fears, or true and false expectations, or true and false opinions?' (36c11-13). Protarchus insists that of these only opinions may be true or false. This brings us to the first sense in which pleasures may be false: they may be false in the same way that opinions, or, to put matters more generally, statements and other things of a suitably propositional form, may be true or false. That Protarchus denies that pleasures may be false in this sense need not trouble us for the moment. All I wish to establish is that this is one way to understand the claim that a pleasure is false. Call this the *propositional sense* of falsity. Most

22 This is connected to Frede's view that the *Philebus* presents a unified account of pleasure as a restoration. As ought to be clear from my discussion of AP, I disagree with Frede on this point, though I do not offer arguments against her view here.

23 Whiting, 'Fools' Pleasures' (n. 19 above), p. 24.

important for our purposes, when an item is false in the propositional sense it is no less a specimen of its kind on account of being false; that a statement or an opinion is false makes it no less a statement or an opinion. If a pleasure is false in this sense, then it is still a full-blown pleasure, albeit a false one.

Alternatively, when Socrates claims that some pleasures are false, he may be using 'false' as what is sometimes called an *alienans* term, i.e. an adjective that functions either to deny or render questionable the application of the word it precedes. Examples include 'fake' and 'alleged'. In the description 'fake beard' the term 'fake' serves either to render questionable or to deny outright that the item in question is in fact a beard. Similarly, in the description 'alleged murderer' the term 'alleged' seems at least to raise a question as to whether the person being picked out is in fact a murderer.

When used as an *alienans* term, 'false' serves to qualify or deny the application of the description it precedes. Examples abound in the English language. Hence a false friend is typically taken to be no friend at all. Moreover, 'false' often precedes attitudes or emotions as an *alienans* term. False modesty is at best mere *quasi*-modesty, and similarly with false courage. But one must be careful. In other cases of attitudes or emotions, the term 'false' functions in the propositional sense and not in the *alienans* sense. Consider the cases Socrates mentions in his rhetorical question quoted above. A false fear is typically not taken to be a non-fear or a fear of questionable status, but rather a full-blown fear, albeit a groundless one; likewise with false expectations and hopes.<sup>24</sup>

My point is of course not to insist that Greek linguistic practices match our own on a case-by-case basis, but that 'false' (ψευδής) has both propositional and *alienans* uses in Greek as well as in English.<sup>25</sup> More importantly, the two

<sup>24</sup> This distinction between the propositional- and *alienans* senses of falsity seems to correspond roughly to the one Wolfsdorf (*Pleasures*, n. 19 above, p. 69) makes between ontological and representational untruth, although he does not acknowledge their incompatibility as I do here. Indeed, that on Wolfsdorf's interpretation Socrates takes certain false pleasures in the *alienans* sense to be *false* on that account than other, propositionally false pleasures seems to obscure the incompatibility of these two senses.

<sup>25</sup> ψευδής is applied to statements and, especially, *testimony*, and is therefore being used in the propositional sense; but can also mean 'unreal' or 'counterfeit' (see *LSJ s.v.*). Despite the appearance of incompatibility, both senses are often in view in different ways when something is said to be 'false'. For example, uses of the *alienans* sense often carry with them some thought of the propositional sense as well, since of course part of what it means for *x* to be a *deceptively* inferior specimen or non-specimen of *y* is for *x*'s outward appearance to promote or encourage *false beliefs* that *x* is (straightforwardly) *y*. For example, it is used in connection with logical fallacies (*LSJ* gives the example of Aristotle, *Topics* 162b3). Presumably, logical fallacies *look like* valid inferences though they are not, and in virtue of appearing valid they promote false beliefs (i.e. either about the truth of whatever is inferred or about the validity of the inference itself). Hence I have reservations

senses seem to be incompatible. It is one thing to claim that  $x$  is false in the sense that  $x$  is a full-blown opinion or statement that is false, and quite another to claim that  $x$  is false in the sense that it is either a non-specimen or inferior specimen of the relevant kind. If pleasure  $p$  is false in the propositional sense, then it is every bit as much a pleasure as a true one, which ought to rule out characterizations of  $p$  as somehow an inferior specimen of pleasure, as it would be if it were false in the *alienans* sense.

If this is along the right lines, then it seems that much progress can be made in interpreting Socrates' talk of false pleasures if we first fix the sense in which he uses the term 'false': are we meant to take it in the propositional sense or in the *alienans* sense? If the former, then Socrates is claiming that some pleasures are false in roughly the way that opinions are, which suggests that false pleasures are no less pleasures than true ones. If the latter, then Socrates is claiming either that these pleasures are not really pleasures at all or that they are mere quasi-pleasures.

So which sense does Socrates have in mind? Unfortunately, matters aren't so simple, for in the course of arguing that some pleasures are 'false' Socrates seems to use the term in both the propositional and *alienans* senses. The evidence for this is abundant. Let us begin with the propositional sense. In the following passage, Socrates takes himself to have shown what I take to be equivalent to the propositional sense of falsity, as the assimilation to opinions ought to make clear (40c9-e2):

Soc.: We saw, you remember, that he who had an opinion at all really had an opinion, but it was sometimes not based upon realities, whether present, past, our future.

Prot.: Certainly.

Soc.: And this it was, I believe, which created false opinion and the holding of false opinions, was it not?

Prot.: Yes.

Soc.: Very well, must we not also grant that pleasure and pain stand in the same relation to realities?

Prot.: How so?

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about Wolfsdorf's apparent reasoning (*Pleasures*, n. 19 above, p. 82) that where Socrates speaks of pleasures as mental representations, he is necessarily working with the propositional (or to use Wolfsdorf's own terminology, *representational*) conception of falsity. Representations may fail to represent their originals accurately, and be propositionally false on that account, but they may also deceptively resemble their originals in such a way that they may be said to be false in the *alienans* sense as well.

Soc.: I mean that he who feels pleasure at all in any way or manner always really feels pleasure, but it is sometimes not based upon realities, whether present or past, and often, perhaps most frequently, upon things which will never even be realities in the future.

Prot.: This also, Socrates, must inevitably be the case.

One who falsely opines really opines nevertheless. Similarly, one who is pleased really feels pleasure, even when that pleasure is false in the very same way that opinions are false, namely that it is ‘not based upon realities’. And from the claim that *one who is pleased falsely* nevertheless really feels pleasure, it would seem to be a short and uncontroversial step to the claim that *the pleasure itself* in this case is really a pleasure, albeit a false one.

Let this suffice as evidence for the propositional sense of ‘false’. Now let us turn to Socrates’ use of ‘false’ in the *alienans* sense. For a pleasure to be false in this sense would mean that it is either not really a pleasure at all or that it is at any rate inferior to other, truer pleasures. Socrates indeed seems to speak this way of false pleasures as well. And lest we suspect that this second sense of ‘false’ arises only later in the discussion and in connection with other considerations, it is worth stressing that it is on the table from the very beginning. Indeed, only a few lines after Protarchus’ preliminary objection to the proposal that some pleasures (and pains) may be false, Socrates counters with the following rhetorical question: ‘Do you really want to claim that there is no one who, either in a dream or awake, either in madness or any other delusion, sometimes believes he is enjoying himself, *while in reality he is not doing so*, or believes he is in pain while he is not?’ (Οὔτε δὴ ὄναρ οὔθ’ ὕπαρ, ὡς φῆς, ἔστιν οὔτ’ ἐν μανίαις οὔτ’ ἐν παραφροσύναις οὐδεις ἔσθ’ ὅστις ποτὲ δοκεῖ μὲν χαίρειν, χαίρει δὲ οὐδαμῶς, οὐδ’ αὖ δοκεῖ μὲν λυπεῖσθαι, λυπεῖται δ’ οὔ; 36ε5-8).<sup>26</sup> Interpreters differ as to how to interpret these remarks, so let me explain how I read them.

As is often the case in Greek, it is unclear here whether Socrates phrases his remark as a question. Indeed, I am reading it as a rhetorical question, in which Socrates is pressing Protarchus on his flat denial that pleasures may be false. Socrates is in effect issuing the following challenge: ‘So even in cases of a person clearly getting all sorts of things wrong—in dreams, madness and other forms of delusion—do you really want to claim that even in these cases a person can’t be wrong about whether or not she is experiencing a pleasure, Protarchus?’

<sup>26</sup> Here I use the translation from Frede, *Philebus* (n. 1 above), as it seems to reproduce more faithfully than Fowler’s the interpretive ambiguity I wish to explore.

Notice what Socrates is *not* challenging, on my reading. He is not challenging the view that I can be wrong about the source of the pleasure I am experiencing—as, say, when I take myself to be enjoying wine when I am really enjoying port. Presumably one does not have to bring in dreams or madness to explain mistakes of this kind. Rather, Socrates is challenging the view (apparently Protarchus') that someone cannot be wrong that what she is experiencing is in fact a pleasure. So, for example, suppose that I am dreaming that I am flying like a bird. In this case it is clear that I take myself to be flying like a bird, but that I am wrong about this. Suppose also that I am taking pleasure in my birdlike flying. Protarchus seems to take the view that I am right that I am experiencing a pleasure, even when I am spectacularly wrong about the experience giving rise to it. So the rhetorical force of Socrates' remarks, I propose, is to highlight the extent to which Protarchus' position seeks to insulate pleasures from the sorts of considerations that ordinarily render beliefs (and perhaps other attitudes) false. In clear cases of false belief—madness, dreams, and the like—Protarchus nevertheless holds that none of the falsity in question infects the judgment that one is in fact pleased.<sup>27</sup>

So, on my reading of the passage, Socrates unpacks Protarchus' denial of false pleasures as the denial of the claim that a person may take herself to be taking pleasure when *in reality* she is not.<sup>28</sup> And if this is indeed a denial of

27 One ambiguity in the passage, and throughout Socrates' debate with Protarchus about false pleasures, is whether Protarchus in this discussion conceives of a pleasure's connection to the world primarily as one of a product to its source (as he seemed to earlier at 13b6-c5), or rather as one of attitude to its object. If the first, then Protarchus' view is roughly that whatever, say, the dreamer's false beliefs about the source of his pleasure (e.g. she misidentifies the source of her birdlike flying-pleasures as *this instance of birdlike flying*, while in reality the source of her pleasure is the dream), she is nonetheless correct that she is pleased. If the latter, then Protarchus' view is that whatever the dreamer's false beliefs about the object of her pleasure (e.g. her birdlike flying, that it is the case), she is nonetheless correct that she is pleased. See Harte, 'The *Philebus* on Pleasure' (n. 19 above) for a discussion of Protarchus' dialectical pattern in connection with this part of the dialogue and in 13b4-c5.

28 While it is tempting to take Protarchus in this exchange to be arguing in favour of incorrigibility concerning present-tense attributions of pleasure, it should be noted that (i) Greek thought about the 'inner' vs. 'outer' world often deviates from familiar post-Cartesian notions, and so Protarchus' position may not be committed to what post-Cartesian philosophers ordinarily mean by *incorrigibility*; and that (ii) Protarchus' official view is that present-tense self-attributions of pleasure can indeed 'go wrong', but on account of some other 'evil' than the falsity that makes beliefs 'go wrong' (41a2-3). Without a fuller account of what this other evil is, we ought to reserve judgment about whether Protarchus' position involves anything like incorrigibility. By the same token, perhaps a fruitful point of comparison within the ancient world is with Epicurus' famous claim that 'all perceptions are true', along with his claim that 'the objects presented to madmen and to people

what Socrates has just claimed—and he seems to present it as such—then Socrates' proposal that certain pleasures are false is in fact a proposal that certain things (let us remain uncommitted as to what these are) appear to a person to be pleasures that she herself is enjoying, but that she is wrong about this; they *are not* in fact pleasures.<sup>29</sup> Thus when I am insane I may think I am enjoying myself, but I am mistaken—whatever I am undergoing or experiencing, it is not really a case of enjoying myself. In this case and for this reason, my pleasure is false.

Here we have Socrates presenting his claim that there are false pleasures as equivalent to the claim that certain so-called pleasures are not really pleasures, although someone may mistake them for pleasures under certain conditions. So the force of the 'false' in Socrates' claim that there are 'false pleasures'

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in dreams are true, for they produce effects—i.e. movements in the mind—which that which is unreal never does' (DL 10.32). See Gisela Striker, 'Epicurus on the Truth of Sense Impressions', *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 59 (1977), pp. 125-42; and C. C. W. Taylor, 'All Perceptions are True' in M. Schofield, J. Barnes, and M. Burnyeat (eds.), *Doubt and Dogmatism* (Oxford, 1980), pp. 105-24.

29 Protarchus' response is less clear than it could be. To Socrates' rhetorical question at 36e5-8, he replies: 'We have, Socrates, always believed that all this is as you suggest' (πάνθ' οὕτω ταῦτα, ὧ Σώκρατες, ἔχειν πάντες ὑπειλήφαμεν, 36e6). This may be taken in at least two ways. First, it may be taken to affirm the content of Socrates' rhetorical question, i.e.: 'Yes, Socrates, it is as you suggest: there is no one who, either in a dream or awake, either in madness or any other delusion, sometimes believes he is enjoying himself, while in reality he is not doing so, or believes he is in pain while he is not.' This is how I read Protarchus' reply. However, given that Socrates' question seems rhetorical, Protarchus could be assenting that it is 'as Socrates suggests' in the sense that Protarchus *accepts* the implication of Socrates' question, along the lines of: 'Yes, Socrates, it is as you suggest: it is *not* the case that there is no one who, either in a dream or awake, either in madness or any other delusion, sometimes believes he is enjoying himself, while in reality he is not doing so, or believes he is in pain while he is not.' On this reading, Protarchus agrees with Socrates that present-tense self-attributions of pleasure may be mistaken. However, this alternative reading starts to look less plausible once we read on just a little further in the exchange between Protarchus and Socrates, where Socrates reframes their debate as follows: 'Then we must consider how it is that opinion is both true and false and pleasure only true, though the holding of opinion and the feeling of pleasure are equally real' ('Ὅτω ποτὲ οὖν δὴ τρῶπι δόξα ψευδής τε καὶ ἀληθής ἡμῖν φίλει γίγνεσθαι, τὸ δὲ τῆς ἡδονῆς μόνον ἀληθές, δοξάζειν δ' ὄντως καὶ χαίρειν ἀμφοτέρω ὁμοίως εἴληχεν, 37b5-7). Here Socrates appears to be saddling Protarchus with the view under consideration, namely that pleasures can only be true. On the alternative reading's supposition that Protarchus agrees with Socrates that it is possible for present tense self-attributions to go wrong, then it is difficult to see how Socrates can legitimately formulate Protarchus' position as 'pleasures can only be true'. On the other hand, on the supposition that Protarchus' position is that present-tense self-attributions of pleasure cannot go wrong, then this seems to be precisely the sort of position Socrates may legitimately characterize as the view that 'pleasures can only be true'.



seems to be roughly the following: 'appearing to someone to be so but in fact not being so.' If this is right, then what we have here is clearly a case of the *alienans* sense of 'false'. The term functions to deny the application of the term it precedes.

Lest we be tempted to dismiss this as a momentary departure by Socrates from the propositional sense, the *alienans* sense reappears a few pages later. After dwelling on his famous images of the scribe and painter within the soul, Socrates takes stock of what he has established: 'From what has now been said, it follows that there are false pleasures in human souls that are *quite ridiculous imitations of true ones*, and also such pains' (40c4-6).<sup>30</sup> My reason for italicizing these six words ought by now to be clear. What Socrates takes himself to have established here, it seems, is the existence of certain pleasures in human souls that imitate 'true pleasures' in a ridiculous way, and that this is the ground for calling them false. As is the rule in Plato's talk of images, the claim that these false pleasures are *imitations* of true ones (and ridiculous ones at that!) implies that they are somehow derivative of true pleasures, inferior and thus mere quasi-pleasures at best. Socrates' talk here of false pleasures being ridiculous imitations of true ones seems to undermine precisely the sort of parallel between beliefs and pleasures he insisted upon earlier in arguing on behalf of false pleasures in the propositional sense. If Socrates has the propositional sense of falsity in view, then his characterization of false pleasures as inferior imitations of true pleasures seems inappropriate. To claim that this is what it means for pleasures to be false is of course to use 'false' as an *alienans* term. The term 'false' is this time meant to express that the pleasures in question are inferior specimens of pleasure, in much the same way that we might say that a false nose is a ridiculous imitation of a real nose.

To this it may be objected that I am construing the second 'that' clause in the quotation as epexegetical for the term 'false'. Thus I am construing the quotation as follows: 'From what has now been said, it follows that there are false pleasures in human souls—that is, that there are pleasures that are quite ridiculous imitations of true ones, and that this is what it means for them to be false. Similarly with pains ...' But, an objector might argue, this is not the only way to take Socrates' point. This is indeed how I construe the line, but it seems to me that unless we do this we must take Socrates to be making a claim of questionable relevance, given the character of the debate up until now. For without something like an epexegetical construal it seems we must interpret Socrates' point along the following lines: 'From what has now been said, it follows that there are false pleasures in human souls, *and that on top of* being

<sup>30</sup> Again, this translation is from Frede, *Philebus* (n. 1 above), with my emphasis.

false these pleasures are also quite ridiculous imitations of true ones, and also such pains.' This is an odd remark for Socrates to be making, because the matter in dispute continues to be, I take it, whether there are false pleasures. This is what Protarchus denies, and what they have been debating for several pages now. So once Socrates shows that it follows from their discussion that there are indeed false pleasures in human souls, he seems to have no reason to make what on the rival interpretation is a distinct point about how these false pleasures stand to true ones. On my reading Socrates' point fits the dialectical context more naturally. He asserts that their discussion has established the existence of false pleasures in human souls, and then explains the sense in which he takes them to be false.

So far we have seen evidence that in contending that certain pleasures are 'false' Socrates means for the falsity to be taken in both the propositional and *alienans* senses. The damning verdict suggested by all of this is that Plato is simply equivocating between two incompatible senses of 'false'. But in the next section I want to propose that if we take seriously my proposal that Plato in the *Philebus* accepts AP as the best unified account of the basic hedonic phenomenon, then this offers a way of avoiding this damning verdict. For on this picture it seems that when so-called 'pleasures' are false in the *propositional* sense, then they are necessarily false in the *alienans* sense as well; or so I will argue in the next section.

## 5 False Pleasures in the *Philebus* on AP

To recap, on the view I call AP, the state of affairs of a subject's being pleased obtains iff the following two conditions are met:

1. A certain state of affairs obtains; this may or may not refer to the event of a pleasant feeling occurring in a subject's body.
2. The subject takes a certain mental attitude towards the state of affairs outlined in (1).

As I suggested earlier, Socrates' proposed life of a mollusc presents Protarchus with a case in which (2) fails to obtain. That is to say, in the case of a pleasure enjoyed by a mollusc (1) does indeed obtain; the mollusc is experiencing some pleasant feeling in its body. However, the realization that no corresponding attitude obtains leads Protarchus to reject his working conception of pleasure.

Now I want to propose that on a fairly straightforward case of a false pleasure, we are presented with the other side of the coin, so to speak, where (2)

obtains but (1) does not. Suppose, for example, that I am under the false impression that I am my mother's favorite child. Suppose also that I take the relevant attitude toward this, such that I am also pleased that I am my mother's favorite child. In this case (2) obtains but (1) does not; sadly, there simply is no state of affairs answering to the object in which I am taking pleasure.

In this case, it seems clear that my pleasure is false in the propositional sense. I have a false belief in the straightforward sense that I take (1) to hold, represented by the proposition 'I am my mother's favorite child', and yet it does not hold. But I am also taking pleasure in the state of affairs represented by this proposition, and so one might reason that, given its relation to that proposition, the pleasure should likewise be construed as an attitude admitting of propositional truth and falsity.

So far so good. But why suppose that Plato would be right in characterizing this as a case of a false pleasure in the *alienans* sense as well? For the simple reason that if AP gives us the strict conditions for a full-blown pleasure, then the attitude I take toward the proposition that I am my mother's favorite child satisfies only half of these conditions. Plato can reasonably take this as a case for applying an *alienans* term, since the failure to satisfy (1) means that there is a relevant defect such that we ought to withhold the unqualified use of the term 'pleasure'.

So while the propositional and *alienans* senses are, strictly speaking, incompatible, I propose that Socrates uses them in a kind of dialectical two-step. That is, he asks us first to consider 'pleasures' that are false in the propositional sense, and then, once this sense of falsity is spelled out in their case, he proceeds to show the reason for the scare quotes—namely, that propositionally false 'pleasures', since they are essentially attitudes directed towards a state of affairs that does not obtain, are not really pleasures according to AP after all, and so 'pleasures' that are false in the propositional sense are also false in the *alienans* sense.

By the same token, as is ordinarily the case with *alienans* terms, here too the pseudo-specimen's resemblance to a full-blooded specimen means that it is not utterly unrelated to the genuine article. The false nose one wears on Halloween *looks* something like a real nose. If it did not, then we would not treat it as though it had anything to do with noses. Similarly, I propose, since the false pleasure I take in being my mother's favorite satisfies one of the two conditions for genuine pleasure (as defined by AP), Plato may be defended for treating it as though it resembles the genuine article, and for characterizing such pleasures as mere quasi-pleasures. If this is persuasive, then one advantage of supposing that Plato accepts AP is that it provides us with the

resources to defend him against the charge that he is being either sly or obtuse in characterizing certain pleasures as false in both senses.<sup>31</sup>

If Protarchus does indeed come to adopt AP in the wake of CL, then this provides a general context for the subsequent discussion of false pleasures (anticipatory and otherwise) that has exercised so many commentators. As we have seen, CL reveals to Protarchus that a life full of pleasant feelings but devoid of attitudes towards those feelings fails to be very pleasant, and thus fails to be very good. Put in AP's terms, the mindless life turns out to be a life in which we get an abundance of (1) but without (2). Once Protarchus realizes this, he rejects that life. What the phenomenon of false pleasure—and false anticipatory pleasure in particular—presents for Protarchus is the other side of the coin, as it were. If we imagine a life full of false anticipatory pleasures, then this is a life satisfying (2) but not (1). So in approaching this thorny section of the dialogue it may be helpful to connect it with CL. CL has made it abundantly clear to Protarchus that, if pleasure is indeed the good as he claims, then the pleasant life must involve more than 'pleasant feelings': it must also contain the right attitudes. But Protarchus may well wonder at this point whether pleasure, and thus the pleasant life, doesn't consist solely of attitudes. What is missing in a life satisfying only condition (2)? The later discussion of false pleasures answers this question: such a life, it seems, would not be worth the hedonist's praise either, since its 'pleasures' would be false in two senses.

31 On this picture a true (in both senses) pleasure I take in being my mother's favourite child is subjectively indistinguishable from a false (also in both senses) pleasure taken in being my mother's favourite child. Plato's externalism concerning pleasure on the AP-model amounts to the view that whether or not a subject is indeed experiencing pleasure is not to be solely determined subjectively. In this sense, pleasure is knowledge-like rather than belief-like: whether we indeed know something is likewise to be determined by states of affairs external to the knowing subject.

Plato may endorse a disjunctivist position concerning pleasure—roughly, a position that rejects a characterization of a (propositionally) true pleasure as one that is subjectively indistinguishable from a (propositionally) false pleasure, but which fails to represent some state of affairs accurately and is for that reason false. Part of Plato's externalism may be the view that a true pleasure ought to be characterized as an instance of a subject's correct interaction with the world, so that built into the account of the subject's experience of true pleasure is the fact that the subject is apprehending a given state of affairs correctly. For versions of disjunctivism in various contexts, see J. Hinton, 'Perception and Identification', *Philosophical Review* 76 (1967), pp. 421-35; P. Snowdon, 'Perception, Vision, and Causation', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 81 (1981), pp. 175-92; and A. Haddock and F. MacPherson, *Disjunctivism, Perception, Action, Knowledge* (Oxford, 2008). I expand on this point in the conclusion.

## 5 Conclusion

To take stock: attributing AP to Plato solves several textual puzzles. First, it allows us to make better sense of the reactions of both Protarchus and Socrates to CL. Second, it irons out a troubling inconsistency between CL, on the one hand, and the subsequent agreement between Protarchus and Socrates about the nature of the divine life, on the other. Third, as we have just seen, it furnishes an interpretation of the dialogue's discussion of false pleasures such that we may acquit Socrates of the charge of rank equivocation. Socrates' uses of both senses of 'false' turn out not only to be compatible, but complementary.

My concern in this paper has been to argue that Plato takes AP seriously, and not the distinct question of whether *we* ought to take it seriously. However, given that the *Philebus* represents Plato's most sophisticated treatment of the question of pleasure's nature and its contribution to the good life, it would be disappointing indeed if the account of pleasure on offer were deeply flawed. So allow me now to outline why Plato may hold that AP represents an attractive account of pleasure to a hedonist interlocutor like Protarchus—or, indeed, even to a pluralist who counts pleasure along with other intrinsic goods—in response to the sorts of dialectical pressures that arise in the dialogue. Specifically, I would like to illuminate the sense in which AP seems to represent a synthesis of two less attractive conceptions of pleasure.

As the *Philebus* makes plain early on, pleasure is remarkably difficult to define. This is an especially pressing problem for the hedonist, since she not only owes us a thorough account of pleasure's nature, but also a defence of her claim that pleasure so conceived is equivalent to the good. In our discussion of AP and the philosophical work it appears to do in the *Philebus*, two distinct pitfalls for the hedonist's project came to light. First, one may conceive of pleasure as a raw feeling, as I think Protarchus does going into the 'Choice of Lives' argument. A problem with this way of understanding pleasure for the hedonist is that on this conception, the enjoyment of pleasure no longer appears to be distinctively, or even *sufficiently*, human. By this I do not have in mind merely the familiar, vaguely elitist-sounding objection (as we find at times in Plato and Aristotle) that a life characterized by such raw feelings renders happy humans indistinguishable from non-rational animals. Rather, as I think we see in Protarchus' response to CL, such pleasures simply do not seem to involve the mental life of a thinking subject in the right sort of way. Just as Plato appeals to molluscs, so we might appeal to zombies to make the same point: a rich mental life seems to be a necessary condition for any plausible conception of human happiness.

On the other hand, we may want to define pleasure as strictly a certain kind of intentional attitude. This seems to correct the mistake of the former account, but at a cost. For now it looks as though the hedonist's recommendation to pursue pleasure is unconcerned with whether these pleasures are in touch with reality. This provokes the well-worn and powerful objection that the hedonist is committed to the view that the ecstatic dupe or brainwashing victim is happy, just so long as he never learns the truth.

In AP we find an account that seems tailor-made to avoid these twin pitfalls of hedonism. By insisting on (2), it ensures that the alert participation of the conscious human being is essential in the hedonist's account of happiness; zombies and molluscs need not apply. By the same token, by insisting on (1) as a condition for pleasure, it also seems to rescue the hedonist's account of happiness from an unpalatable subjectivism.

However, AP clearly has some counterintuitive implications. In cases in which we are deceived that (1) obtains, we are not really experiencing an AP-pleasure. This is perhaps the most shocking and strange feature of the view. On this point, we may suppose, AP deviates dramatically from our ordinary views about pleasure. And in this respect, AP-pleasures are not belief-like, but rather *knowledge*-like. The picture here is an undeniably 'externalist' one as this term is used in epistemological matters: to determine whether a subject is in fact experiencing an AP-pleasure, it is not enough to examine that subject's state of mind or attitudes. Whatever that subject is experiencing only counts as a pleasure if some further fact obtains, namely the object of the attitude.

For post-Cartesian readers of the *Philebus* in particular, this may be the hardest pill to swallow in accepting AP. Intuitively, pleasure is not only the sort of thing that necessarily involves the subject's feelings, but this ought to be, as it were, the *whole* story. For example, suppose that you and I are coworkers, and that we each believe that we are going to get the same promotion at work. You were told truthfully that you will get the promotion, whereas I am the victim of a mean-spirited joke. As you and I think about our respective promotions, it seems that you and I could be having qualitatively identical experiences, at least in terms of our feelings. Whatever feelings of joy, anticipation, pride etc. that you are feeling, I too am feeling. How then can it make sense to insist that you alone are experiencing pleasure, whereas I am not experiencing pleasure, but something else? Whether adopting such a view represents victory or surrender for the hedonist is a question I leave for the reader.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>32</sup> I would like to thank Rachel Barney, Jennifer Whiting, Phil Clark, Brad Inwood and Raphael Woolf for their comments on earlier versions of this paper. Thanks also to an anonymous reader for a number of helpful suggestions.