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Emotional Experience, Imagination, and Our Understanding of Evaluative Concepts

by

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Doctor of Philosophy in Philosophy

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Declaration

This thesis is submitted to the University of Warwick in support of my application for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. It has been composed by myself and has not been submitted in any previous application for any degree.

Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to argue for a version of what I call "emotional experientialism". Emotional experientialism is the claim that emotional experience has an essential role to play in understanding evaluative concepts. I distinguish between a specific and a general version of emotional experientialism. Specific emotional experientialism claims that specific emotional experiences, such as shame, play an essential role in our understanding of specific evaluative concepts, such as SHAMEFUL. I argue that specific emotional experientialism is unwarranted and that we should instead endorse general emotional experientialism. General emotional experientialism claims that having some form of emotional experience has an essential role to play in understanding evaluative concepts in general. Specifically, I argue that having some form of emotional experience is essential to understanding what it is like to value something and, in turn, understanding what it is like to value something plays an essential role in rendering intelligible why a given emotional experience is appropriate in the given circumstances. I argue for this claim by committing to the neo-sentimentalist biconditional and interpreting it as a claim about evaluative concepts: a given evaluative concept applies if and only if a given emotional response is appropriate. In addition, I argue that we can have some understanding of evaluative concepts without emotional experience, but I claim that for this appropriateness to be intelligible, we need to understand what it is like to value things in the relevant way. We can do this, I claim, either through actual emotional experience, or by means of dramatic imagination of what emotional experience might be like.

Introduction

1. The Aim

The aim of this thesis is to argue for a version of what I call "emotional experientialism". Emotional experientialism is the claim that emotional experience has an essential role to play in our understanding of evaluative concepts.

Emotional experientialism is to be found in a number of contemporary accounts in the philosophy of emotions. It is often expressed in its negative corollary. For example, Julien A. Deonna and Fabrice Teroni (2012: ch. 10), in an argument that will be the focus of Chapter 5, imagine a creature entirely devoid of emotional experience. They claim that such a creature must lack an understanding of "the point of our evaluative practices", and so of the evaluative concepts that they involve. They ask of this creature (Deonna and Teroni 2012: 123):

> But does she understand the evaluative judgments she makes? [...] She no doubt understands something, but not, we may think, the point of our evaluative practices. [...] If there is any point for her in making evaluative judgments, it is simply not the same as ours.

Another example is Michelle Montague. She discusses the character Data, from Star Trek, whom she supposes to be without emotions. For this reason, she suggests, Data may lack an understanding of evaluative concepts: "although he can say what is of value and disvalue, and know what is of value and disvalue, he cannot really know value and disvalue at all: he cannot really know what value and disvalue are" (Montague 2016: 231). A third example is Peter Goldie (2002), who gives us a similar thought experiment that is the focus of Chapter 2. He imagines a person with no prior experience of fear, and asks what happens to her understanding of DANGER when she experiences fear for the first time.[1] Goldie (2002: 245) thinks that such a person must learn something new about DANGER in the process:

> Before, she knew that the ice was dangerous, for she knew that it merited fear, but, because she now is able to think in a new way of fear, she now understands in a new way what it is for the ice to be dangerous.

1 Throughout this thesis I will follow the convention of using capital letters to refer to concepts. So "DANGER" means "the concept of danger" and so on.

As we shall see, these examples are importantly different. While Deonna and Teroni's, and Montague's, thought experiments are general, linking an incapacity for emotional experiences of all sorts with a lack of understanding of all evaluative concepts, Goldie links the absence of a specific sort of emotional experience (fear) with a lack of understanding of a specific evaluative concept (DANGER). But what all these cases share is the idea that there is something lacking in the understanding of evaluative concepts of someone who has never experienced the relevant emotion or emotions in general.

This raises the following questions: what role does emotional experience play in our understanding of evaluative concepts? What sort of understanding, if any, can we have without emotional experience? And how, if at all, should we think of the kind of understanding of evaluative concepts for which emotional experience is necessary?

In this thesis, I argue that emotional experience provides us with an understanding of what it is like to value something and that, in turn, an understanding of what it is like to value something renders intelligible why certain emotional responses are appropriate in the given circumstances. I commit to the neo-sentimentalist biconditional according to which something has value if and only if the relevant emotional experience is appropriate. I interpret this as a claim about evaluative concepts and argue that understanding that an evaluative concept applies involves understanding that certain emotional experiences are appropriate: understanding that an action is shameful, for example, involves understanding that it is appropriate to feel shame for it.

Importantly, I claim that we can have what I will call, following Goldie, a "theoretical understanding" of evaluative concepts even *without* ever having had the relevant emotional experience. Following both Goldie and Deonna and Teroni, I allow that it may be possible to correctly apply evaluative concepts on the basis of this theoretical understanding. And I also allow that theoretically understanding an evaluative concept can involve understanding *that* certain emotional responses are appropriate in the given circumstances.

I argue, however, that this theoretical understanding of the appropriateness of an emotional response does not make the appropriateness of the emotional response fully intelligible. We can understand, on this theoretical basis, *that* a certain emotional response is appropriate. But, I argue, this understanding is not equivalent to the kind that renders *intelligible* why a certain

emotional experience is appropriate in a given circumstance. To understand this, I claim, we need to understand what it is like to value things in the relevant way. And I claim that this is an understanding that we can get through emotional experience.

However, I also argue that this failure of theoretical understanding does not directly lead to emotional experientialism, because I claim that it is at least sometimes possible to have an understanding of what a type of emotional experience (shame, grief, joy) is like through *imagination* and without ever having experienced the emotion first-hand. But I claim that part of what makes this imagining possible is having experienced *other* emotions in a first-hand way. If we had never had emotional experience of *any* sort, then we would lack the imaginative resources to attain this sort of understanding. I thus endorse Deonna and Teroni's claim that a creature without any emotional experience must lack a certain sort of understanding of all evaluative concepts. But I reject Goldie's idea that specific emotional experiences and specific evaluative concepts are similarly linked: I claim that, at least sometimes, imagination can bridge the gap.

2. The Structure

This thesis has six chapters. Chapter 1 introduces a number of key concepts that will be relevant throughout the thesis. First, it distinguishes emotional experience from other (non-experiential) aspects of emotions. Second, it explains how I understand the evaluative intentionality and affective phenomenology of emotional experience. Third, it explains my interpretation of the neo-sentimentalist biconditional as a claim about evaluative concepts. Fourth, it explains more fully what I mean by "emotional experientialism", distinguishes its different forms, and provides more detail about the version I will defend.

In Chapter 2, I examine a first argument for emotional experientialism, which I find in the work of Peter Goldie. Goldie's argument relies on drawing a close analogy between emotional and perceptual experience and on trying to establish that in emotional experience, intentionality and phenomenology are inextricably interlinked. But he fails to establish emotional experientialism, I claim, because he relies too much on the analogy with perceptual experience and fails to successfully establish the link that he claims exists between the intentionality and phenomenology of emotional experience.

Chapter 3 turns to a second argument for emotional experientialism drawn from Linda Zagzebski (2003). Zagzebski helpfully brings out the link between emotional experience and motivation. She tries to develop this through a hierarchical account of evaluative judgement according to which we start by being capable of making evaluative judgements only while actually experiencing the relevant emotion, for example, to judge "that is pitiful" while feeling pity, and then subsequently become able to make evaluative judgements that are not in agreement with our present emotional experience, for example, to judge "that is pitiful" while feeling no pity, or "that is not pitiful" despite ourselves feeling pity for it. I argue, however, that this hierarchical account of the development of our capacity to make evaluative judgements is unsatisfactory. If the initial evaluative judgements are genuinely to count as such, then they must already involve something of what Zagzebski assumes comes in only at higher stages of the hierarchy of evaluative understanding.

In Chapter 4, we meet a third and final argument for emotional experientialism, which I reconstruct from Deonna and Teroni's remarks about the emotionless creature mentioned at the start of this introduction. I explain this argument by appealing to the concept of valuing, which I understand in terms of being emotionally vulnerable to the things we value. This is the chapter in which I establish the links that are central to the argument of the thesis. First the link between having an emotional experience and acquiring an understanding of what it is like to value something. And, second, the link between acquiring an understanding of what it is like to value something and acquiring an understanding that renders intelligible why certain emotional responses are appropriate in the given circumstances. My claim is thus that a creature without any emotional experience must find the appropriateness of our emotional responses unintelligible and, in this sense, such a creature must lack an important understanding of evaluative concepts.

In Chapter 5, I turn to imagination and explain how we can, at least sometimes, have the relevant understanding of what it is like to value something even if we do not value it and so can also have an understanding of what it is like to have an emotional experience *without* ever having experienced that emotion first-hand. In this chapter, I explain the particular sort of imagination that I claim is necessary: dramatic imagination. Dramatic imagination involves adopting a different perspective to our own, and so involves imagining what it might be like to have different sorts of experience. My claim is that, even in the absence of actual emotional experience, we can advance our understanding of evaluative concepts beyond the

theoretical by dramatically imagining what it might be like to value things in new and different ways. I also attempt to forestall the objection that what I am claiming we can imagine is too radically different from our existing stock of experience for us to be able to imagine it.

In Chapter 6, I clarify and develop the account of the previous chapters by applying all of the above to a specific evaluative concept: GRIEVOUS. I develop my account by explaining how specific evaluative concepts are often related to a *range* of emotional experiences. I argue that, in the specific case of grief, even if we have never felt grief, we can still acquire an understanding of the evaluative concept GRIEVOUS by imagining what it is like to lose a loved one.

1. Emotional Experience, Evaluative Concepts, and Emotional Experientialism

The aim of this thesis is to defend a version of what I call "emotional experientialism". Emotional experientialism is the view that emotional experience plays an essential role in our understanding of evaluative concepts. In this chapter, I lay the groundwork for this argument. I set out a number of constraints on the range of emotional experiences and evaluative concepts I will be concerned with in this thesis. I also articulate emotional experientialism, differentiating between its forms and identifying the version I will defend.

I start, in Section 1, by distinguishing emotional experience from other (non-experiential) aspects of emotions. In Section 2, I explain how I will understand emotional experience, characterising it in terms of its evaluative intentionality and affective phenomenology. Section 3 explains how I will understand evaluative concepts in terms of what I call the "neo-sentimentalist biconditional". Section 4 introduces emotional experientialism, the main topic of this thesis, and distinguishes its specific and general forms. Section 5 explains some of the different relations that we can bear to a concept and insists on the importance, for the purposes of this thesis, of not confusing these.

1. Emotional Experience

This thesis is concerned with emotional experience, so it will be helpful to begin by saying how I understand emotional experience and specifying the sorts of emotional experience that I will be concerned with.

Emotional experiences are occurrent, episodic, and have an affective phenomenal character. They are occurrent and episodic in the sense that they last for a certain (more or less) defined period of time. And they have a phenomenal character that is affective: emotional experiences have a certain affective "feel". By the "phenomenal character" of experience I mean what Thomas Nagel (1974) called "what it is like" to have the experience: to describe what it is like to have an emotional experience we need to appeal to its affective feel.

The experiential dimension of emotions contrasts with their dispositional dimension.[2] Statements like "I am afraid of drowning" are sometimes ambiguous. They may be reports of emotional experiences, but they may also be reports of emotional dispositions. I might say "I am afraid of drowning" because I am caught in a strong tide and am afraid for my life. In this case, I am reporting an emotional experience that is occurrent. But I might also use the same form of words while experiencing no emotion to explain why I do not want to join you for a trip to the beach. In this latter case, the statement expresses a disposition: a disposition to have the corresponding emotional experience in the relevant circumstances. Some sorts of emotion seem to have more complex dispositional dimensions. Love is one example. There is an experiential dimension to love: we can experience an occurrent feeling of love for a person. But to love someone also seems to involve a range of dispositions to feel and act in various different ways. If a person loves their partner then they will be likely to feel happiness when they see them, upset if their partner suffers hardship, concerned if their partner is ill, and so on. In this thesis, I will not be concerned with the dispositional aspect of emotion but only with episodic and occurrent emotions: with emotions in their experiential dimension.

Nor am I interested in emotional episodes that are not experienced by the subject, if such emotional episodes exist. These would be episodes of unconscious emotion.[3] Some care is needed here, however, because there are a number of different things that might be meant by "unconscious emotion" (Goldie 2007: 929, Deonna and Teroni 2012: 16-18) and the issues are anything but clear. If there are unconscious emotions that are *in no sense experienced* by their subject, then such emotions fall outside the scope of this thesis.

However, some sorts of "unconscious" emotion seem still to be experienced. We might talk about an emotion being unconscious where our attention is directed elsewhere than to our emotional experience (Goldie 2000: 62-72). You are driving and having an argument and because conditions are bad and you are focused on the road you do not realise that you are getting angry. In this sort of situation, it might be necessary for your passenger to point out your anger in order for you to become aware of it. In this sense, your anger is unconscious. But an emotion that is unconscious in this sense is still experienced: it still feels a certain

2 For a more extensive discussion of the distinction see, for example, Deonna and Teroni 2012: 7-9.

3 Unconscious emotions are a contentious subject. For an argument that there are no unconscious emotions see Hatzimoysis 2007. For discussions more sympathetic to the idea see Lacewing 2007 and Lemaire 2022.

way, even if you are not focused on how it feels. And so this sort of emotional experience falls within the scope of this thesis.

An emotion may also be considered unconscious "insofar as the subject has never viewed it as falling under a certain concept" (Deonna and Teroni 2012: 17). A father may feel an unconscious guilt for his daughter's death in the sense that he fails to recognise the feelings he has about her death *as* guilt (Deonna and Teroni's example). He may need to go through a process of therapy and reconciliation in order to be able to recognise his guilt for what it is and in this sense become conscious of it. But emotions that are unconscious in this sense are still experienced and so still fall within the scope of this thesis.

2. Emotional Experience: Evaluative Intentionality and Affective Phenomenology

How is emotional experience to be characterised? In this section, I lay out how I will understand emotional experience by appealing to two aspects of emotional experience emphasised in the literature. Emotional experiences are characterised in terms of their evaluative intentionality and affective phenomenology. I take these two aspects in turn.

The intentionality of emotional experiences is particularly important to acknowledge, because it plays an important role in connecting emotional experience with evaluative concepts. The claim that emotional experiences are intentional is not universally accepted, but it is the majority view among contemporary philosophers of the emotions and it will be assumed to be true in this thesis. Those who deny that *all* emotional experiences are intentional are invited to treat this instead as a constraint on my account: I am only interested in this thesis on those emotional experiences that are intentional.

To say that emotional experience is intentional is to say that when we have an emotional experience there is something that the experience is "about" or "of", which can be termed the "intentional object" of the experience. We are afraid of the dark, or of loneliness, or of that dog; we feel shame at what we did or at who our friends are; we are disgusted that our politicians get away with it. This short list of examples illustrates the variety of things that can be the intentional object of emotional experience. The list includes physical objects located in time and space (the dog), abstract concepts (loneliness), and states of affairs past, present, and future (that our politicians get away with it). To this list we can add hypothetical,

imagined, and remembered objects, and probably more besides.

We can better understand the intentionality of emotional experiences by contrasting emotional experiences with the experiential dimension of non-intentional affective states like tingles or nausea. These sorts of bodily sensations are most often thought to be non-intentional.[4] There seems to be nothing that a feeling of nausea is "about" that is analogous to the way that shame or guilt may be about our actions, or delight about a happy event. "Feeling theories" of the emotions deny that emotional experiences are intentional because they understand emotions either as feelings understood on the model of these non-intentional bodily sensations, or as more complex composites of such non-intentional sensations (fear is just a fluttering in the stomach, a raising of hackles, and so on). Such theories of the emotions lie outside the scope of this thesis.[5]

Emotions are also often distinguished on the basis of their intentionality from moods, which are supposed to be non-intentional.[6] Moods, like emotions, have distinctive phenomenal characters (they feel certain ways), but unlike emotions they seem not to be focused on any particular intentional object. Examples of moods would be generalised feelings of happiness, grumpiness, or anxiety, where there is nothing in particular that we are happy, grumpy or anxious about. There are many questions about the relationship between moods and emotions, but these will be set to one side here, along with moods in general, as lying outside the scope of this thesis.

There is an important further aspect to the intentionality of emotions: emotional experiences present their intentional objects as having characteristic evaluative properties. Philosophers of the emotions claim that corresponding to each species of emotion (fear, admiration, disgust) there belongs a particular evaluative property (the fearsome, the admirable, the disgusting).[7] The idea here is that we can, for example, feel shame about our job or about our relatives; and although these two episodes of shame have different intentional objects (our job in the first

4 There are some who deny this and want to argue that even such bodily sensations are intentional. See, for example: Klein 2007, Barlassina and Hayward 2019.

5 Examples of feeling theories include James 1884, Lange 1885, Prinz 2004, and Whiting 2006.

6 In his book on intentionality, John Searle (1983: 1) took this view of moods. For a recent argument that moods are, in fact, intentional, see Mitchell 2019.

7 See, for example (from philosophers with widely differing conceptions of what emotions are): D'Arms and Jacobson 2000: 66, Deonna and Teroni 2012: 85-86, Tappolet 2017: 15-16.

case, our relatives in the second), in both cases the intentional object is presented in the same evaluative way, namely as being shameful.[8] The claim is thus that each type of emotional experience presents its intentional object as possessing its characteristic evaluative property. In this thesis, I will generally endorse this idea that emotions present their intentional objects as having characteristic evaluative properties.

Talk about the intentional object of emotional experience being presented as possessing an evaluative property can become confusing. It may be tempting to say, for example, that the intentional object of my fear is *the fearsomeness* of the dog, or the dog *understood as fearsome*. These temptations (certainly the first) should be avoided. The initial attraction of the idea that emotional experiences have intentional objects is that it seems to correspond with how we ordinarily talk about emotions. We are afraid of the dog or disgusted at the carcass. But it seems wrong to say that we are afraid of the fearsomeness of the dog or disgusted at the disgustingness of the carcass. For this reason, I think it is better to talk about the dog or the carcass as the intentional object of the emotional experience. My preferred way of putting it in this thesis will be to say that emotional experiences have a certain intention structure, namely one in which the intentional object of the emotional experience is presented as possessing the relevant evaluative property. It is because evaluative properties characterise the intentionality of emotional experience in this way that I talk about emotional experiences as possessing an "evaluative intentionality".

There are some difficulties, however, with the suggestion that each species of emotion corresponds to a particular sort of evaluative property.[9] When considering, for example, anger, it seems like a range of evaluative properties might be involved. Suppose that you wake up to discover your housemate has yet again used your favourite mug and left if half-full of mouldy porridge. It is not immediately obvious that we can specify one particular evaluative property that is involved here: your anger may involve taking the state the mug has been left in as enraging, as a very bad thing; or your housemate's having left it in this state as rude or inconsiderate. So we already seem to have identified four ostensibly different values

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8 In contemporary philosophy of the emotions it has become common, following work done by Anthony Kenny (2003: 132-134), to talk about this characteristic evaluative property as the "formal object" of the emotion (for example, de Sousa 2002: 251, see also Teroni 2007). For reasons that it would be too lengthy to go into here, I think this terminology introduces unnecessary complications, so I will not employ it here.

9 Kevin Mulligan (1998: 173) called this "*the multiplicity problem*".

(enraging, very bad, rude, inconsiderate) that are potentially associated with this case of anger —and we could likely go on to identify others.

What then is the particular sort of evaluation associated with anger? In general, we might note that very often there is a linguistic link between emotions and particular evaluative terms: "shame" and "shameful", "praise" and "praiseworthy", "disgust" and "disgusting", and so on. In such cases, it seems plausible to suggest that the cognate value term picks out the evaluative property in terms of which the emotion may be considered to present its intentional object. For emotions that do not (or not so obviously) have a linguistically linked value it will always be possible to generate value terms like "anger-worthy". So the suggestion might then be that anger is an emotion that presents its intentional object as anger-worthy.

But this does not seem to address the problem of the four ostensibly different values that seemed to be involved in our example. A defender of the idea that there is a one-to-one relation between emotional experience and evaluative property might try to show that these values, though ostensibly different, can actually be assimilated to one another somehow. So perhaps being inconsiderate is just a particular way of being rude; and being enraging, rude, or inconsiderate are just particular ways of being very bad. Another way to deal with this problem, would be to discriminate. Perhaps we have here two sorts of anger: rage, which presents its intentional object as enraging, and offence, which presents its intentional object as rude. What we described as one emotion, was really a combination of these two sorts of anger.

In what follows, I will often link emotional experiences and evaluative properties in a one-to-one way. But I do this only for ease of exposition. I do not want to assume that there must be such a one-to-one relation and I mean nothing in the arguments I give to depend on there being such a relation. These questions are important because, as we shall see in Section 4 of this chapter, whether we think of emotional experience and evaluative properties as linked in this one-to-one way has consequences for how we think about the relation between emotional experience and our understanding of evaluative concepts. At times in this thesis I continue to talk in one-to-one terms for ease of exposition, before explicitly turning this issue and addressing it at greater length in Chapter 6.

I said above that emotional experiences must also be characterised in terms of their *affective phenomenology*: to have an emotional experience involves feeling a certain affective way. Shame has its own distinctive feel, as do anger, joy, and the rest of the family of emotional experiences.

One question about affective phenomenology that has received attention in the philosophical literature is what it has to do with bodily feelings. It is a commonplace that emotional experiences involve bodily feelings of various sorts. This is probably most plausible when it comes to the more primitive emotions like fear. When we are afraid we may feel our elevated heart rate, feel the hairs raise on the back of our neck, and so on. It is perhaps less plausible when it comes to more intellectually rarefied emotions like, for example, those to do with aesthetic appreciation.

Some theorists of the emotions (for example, Prinz 2004) follow William James (1884) in prioritising these bodily feelings and claim that our awareness of these bodily changes *constitutes* the emotion. Other philosophers downplay the importance of these bodily feelings. They observe that no amount of bodily feeling seems capable of constituting an emotional experience: that we can have all of the bodily signs of fear, and yet not be afraid. The strongest possible view here is that emotional phenomenology is only contingently connected with bodily feelings and the feelings that constitute emotional experience are purely psychic (Stocker 1983). In this thesis, I will not decide between these issues and will remain neutral about the connection between affective phenomenology and bodily feelings.

A major question, and a question that we will meet a number of times in the coming chapters, is the question of the connection between the intentional structure of emotional experience and its phenomenal character. This question is important because it links the emotional experience and the evaluative concept. It is a question about what connection there is between an emotional experience (pity, say) having the particular affective feel that it does and it being an experience that presents its intentional object as possessing a particular evaluative property (in the case of pity, as being pitiful). If there is some connection here, then this may be a fruitful starting place to look when trying to identify the role that emotional experience might play in understanding evaluative concepts. In Chapters 2 and 3, I will explore the relation between the evaluative intentionality and affective phenomenology of emotional experience and explain how it is connected with the view that emotional

experience plays a role in understanding evaluative concepts.

To anticipate, I will tackle two options. The first is that intentionality and phenomenology are separable. On this sort of account, which Goldie (2000) has called an "add on theory", the distinctive affective feel of pity, say, is supposed to be separable from its presenting its intentional object as pitiful. The opposing view says that intentionality and phenomenology are inseparable. Any experience with the same affective phenomenology as pity *must* on this account present its intentional object as pitiful (and vice versa). Both the philosophers discussed in Chapters 2 (Goldie) and 3 (Zagzebski) claim that in emotional experience intentionality and phenomenology are inseparable, but they give slightly different interpretations of this idea.

3. Neo-Sentimentalism

Neo-sentimentalism is a position in meta-ethics.[10] I will call its key claim: "the neo-sentimentalist biconditional". I interpret the neo-sentimentalist biconditional as a claim about evaluative concepts. It says that:

> A thing falls under a particular evaluative concept if and only if it is appropriate to feel the relevant emotional experience towards it.

I have just stated the biconditional in its most general form, but it can also be expressed in terms of specific pairs of evaluative concepts and emotional responses. The neo-sentimentalist biconditional thus has as many forms as there are evaluative concepts. In these more specific forms it is the claim that, for example, a person is pitiful if and only if it is appropriate to pity them; an event joyful if and only if it is appropriate to feel joy for it; an action shameful if and only if it is appropriate to be ashamed of it, and so on.

I find it plausible to think that the neo-sentimentalist biconditional applies to *all* evaluative concepts, but this is not a claim that I defend in this thesis. The biconditional may apply more plausibly to some concepts than to others. There may be questions, for example, about its application to aesthetic concepts, because there may be doubts whether any particular kind of

10 The term "neo-sentimentalism" is D'Arms and Jacobson's (2000), but the general idea had been around for some time in the literature. Wiggins 1998, for example, talks about something like this as "sensible subjectivism". And McDowell 1998 discusses a related idea framed in terms of merit rather than appropriateness.

emotional response is appropriate when aesthetic concepts apply. I do not attempt, in this thesis, to specify the exact range of evaluative concepts to which the neo-sentimentalist biconditional applies. I will be concerned only with those evaluative concepts to which the neo-sentimentalist biconditional does apply. If there are any evaluative concepts to which it does not apply, then they will lie outside the scope of the thesis.

The neo-sentimentalist biconditional can be interpreted as a claim about evaluative concepts, as above, but it can also be interpreted as a claim about evaluative properties. It then claims that a thing possesses a particular evaluative property if and only if it is appropriate to feel the relevant emotional experience towards it. As I mentioned above, in this thesis, I will be concerned with the biconditional as a claim about evaluative concepts. As we shall see later in this section, there are some circumstances where the neo-sentimentalist biconditional raises different issues depending on exactly how it is interpreted. However, these circumstances arise only in relation to metaphysical questions. I will discuss these issues later in this section, but they are questions about which I aim to remain neutral in this thesis.

Neo-sentimentalism captures the idea that there is a close connection between emotional experience and evaluative concepts, but because it works out this connection in terms of appropriateness it provides us with an attractive way of thinking about those cases where emotional experience and evaluative concept come apart. If I pity something and yet that thing is not pitiful, this can be explained in terms of my pity being inappropriate. And likewise if the thing is pitiful and yet I do not pity it, this can be explained in terms of pity being appropriate despite my failure to feel it.[11]

Understanding appropriateness is thus central to understanding the neo-sentimentalist biconditional. In this thesis, I will understand the appropriateness of emotional experience in terms of the idea that emotions have *standards of correctness*.[12] If you are afraid of a dog, then your fear is appropriate to the extent that the dog is really frightening. If the dog is friendly and poses no real danger, then your fear is inappropriate. If instead the dog is a muscular doberman chomping and straining towards you, then your fear is probably

11 Neo-sentimentalism provides one way for sentimentalists to deal with evaluative disagreement. An alternative approach is taken by Blackburn 1993, 1998 and Gibbard 1990.

12 This approach is now widespread in the philosophy of emotions. I draw this language from Deonna and Teroni 2012, 2022. But see also, for example: D'Arms and Jacobson 2000, Tappolet 2016.

appropriate. There are thus standards of correctness for fear that relate to how dangerous the thing you fear is. When these standards are satisfied, fear is appropriate. Similarly for other emotions (specifying the exact nature of these standards of correctness for particular emotions can prove controversial).

A further claim that I will defend in this thesis is that to understand an evaluative concept we must understand this appropriateness. But I claim that we can do this in different ways, some of which depend on our having had the relevant emotional experience. In later chapters, and in particular in Chapter 4, I distinguish between an understanding *that* an emotional response is appropriate in given circumstances and an understanding that makes *intelligible* why the given emotional experience is appropriate. The former understanding, I claim, is possible without emotional experience. But the latter requires an understanding of what it is like to experience the relevant emotional response.

The most prominent issue concerning appropriateness is what has become known as the "wrong kind of reason objection" (Rabinowicz and Rønnow-Rasmussen 2004). This is the problem that neo-sentimentalism faces in further specifying how appropriateness is to be understood. The difficulty is that there sometimes seem to be reasons that make an emotional response inappropriate (and so invalidate the biconditional) and yet the evaluative concept still applies. A popular example here is the offensive (racist) joke. The offensiveness of the joke makes it inappropriate to be amused and so the neo-sentimentalist biconditional concerning FUNNY (something is funny if and only if it is appropriate to be amused) is not satisfied. And yet, it is claimed, the joke may be funny, despite its offensiveness. What we seem to need is a principled way to distinguish the way the funniness of the joke makes it appropriate to be amused from the prevailing inappropriateness of being amused, given the joke's offensiveness.

In this thesis, I will try to sidestep such problems by restricting my discussion to those cases in which the emotional experience that generates our understanding of evaluative concepts is appropriate. This restriction is a sensible one to make on other grounds, since it is plausible to think that our understanding of SHAMEFUL, say, is more likely to come from those cases in which we feel appropriate shame than those cases in which our shame is inappropriate.

The final thing that I want to say about how I will interpret neo-sentimentalism in this thesis

is to briefly clarify how I aim to avoid some of the questions about the metaphysics of the neo-sentimentalist biconditional that have been prominent in the existing literature. In this context, whether the biconditional is interpreted in terms of evaluative properties or concepts is often important. Projectivists try to argue that the biconditional shows that evaluative properties are in some sense metaphysically suspect: not "in" the object, but rather "projections" of our emotional responses (Gibbard 1990, Blackburn 1993, 1998). Objectivists try to counter this argument, claiming that the truth of the biconditional in no way undermines evaluative properties' claim to objective reality (McDowell 1998, Wiggins 1998). And alongside this there is a debate about whether or not the biconditional should be interpreted reductively, as claiming that emotional experience is more fundamental than evaluative concepts, or vice versa. Recently, these questions have gone somewhat out of fashion, and it has even been argued that the objectivist and projectivist positions are not really as distinct and opposed as they claimed to be (D'Arms and Jacobson 2006). In this thesis, I put these questions of metaphysics to one side.

4. Emotional Experientialism

The idea that our understanding of evaluative concepts depends on our emotional experience has parallels with questions regarding the role of perceptual experience in the acquisition of knowledge and understanding of our physical surroundings. In this section, I will introduce some relevant ideas as they have been dealt with in this context, and then explain how they are applicable to the case of emotional experience and evaluative concepts.

The possible positions in the context of perceptual experience have been helpfully described by Quassim Cassam (2014: ch. 6). He first distinguishes two most general forms of claim that might be made in this debate. First is what he calls "*experientialism about understanding*": "our understanding of concepts of ordinary objects and their properties is grounded in sensory experience". Second, "*experientialism about knowledge*": "our knowledge of our surroundings is grounded in sensory experience" (Cassam 2014: 118). This distinction highlights the fact that there have been two related ways of posing questions about experience's role: one in terms of knowledge, the other in terms of understanding. We can ask what experience has to do with our understanding of concepts of our surroundings, concepts like PHYSICAL OBJECT, COLOUR, SHAPE, as well as more specific forms of these concepts such as YELLOW, and SPHERE. And we can also ask about what experience

has to do with our knowledge of our surroundings: what does experience have to do with our knowing, for example, that there is a yellow sphere on the desk before us? The two forms of experientialism seem to be related, but they are not identical, and there seems no *a priori* reason to think that belief in one form of experientialism must go along with belief in the other.

Both forms of experientialism have analogues in the emotional case. We can term these forms of "emotional experientialism". There is emotional experientialism about understanding: our understanding of evaluative concepts is grounded in emotional experience. And there is emotional experientialism about knowledge: our knowledge of the evaluative properties of our surroundings is grounded in emotional experience. Emotional experientialism about understanding says, for example, that our understanding of concepts like FEARSOME, SHAMEFUL, and ADMIRABLE is grounded in our experience of emotions like fear, shame and admiration. Emotional experientialism about knowledge says that such experience grounds our knowledge that the fearsome, shameful, and admirable objects around us are fearsome, shameful, and admirable. My concern in this thesis will exclusively be with understanding and so with emotional experientialism about understanding. Questions about evaluative knowledge and whether or not it can be justified by emotional experience have been discussed elsewhere in the literature, but they lie outside the scope of this thesis.[13]

Experientialism comes in different forms, because there are different ways in which the claim that understanding is grounded in experience might be worked out. In the case of sensory experience, Cassam helpfully distinguishes two different readings of experientialism about understanding. The first he calls the "empiricist" reading. This claims that "our concepts of objects and their properties are ultimately derived from experience" (Cassam 2014: 119). This is a thesis about concept acquisition, claiming that the ultimate source of our acquisition of concepts of objects and their properties is sensory experience. Cassam (2014: 119) contrasts empiricism with a more general alternative reading of experientialism about understanding, which he calls "the *essential role* interpretation". On this interpretation, sensory experience grounds our understanding of concepts of ordinary objects and their properties because sensory experience has an essential role to play in this understanding. The

13 For arguments in favour of the idea that emotions can justify evaluative beliefs see Deonna and Teroni 2012: 118-121 and Pelser 2014. For arguments against, see Goldie 2004 and Brady 2012, 2013.

negative corollary of this is that without sensory experience we would lack an understanding of the relevant concepts. This claim may or may not be a claim about the acquisition of understanding (Cassam 2014: 119).

These formulations make the empiricist reading into a *particular version* of the essential role reading: the empiricist reading claims that sensory experience has an essential role to play in our understanding of these concepts, and the essential role that it plays is that our understanding is ultimately derived from experience. Empiricism thus entails experientialism in its essential role interpretation and is therefore a stronger claim than it. In Chapter 3, we will meet a defence of something like the emotional equivalent of empiricism. But, in this thesis, I will for the most part not be concerned with the stronger claim of empiricism and will instead focus on experientialism in its more general essential role interpretation. From now on, I will thus concentrate on the essential role interpretation of experientialism about understanding, which for the sake of brevity I will from now on refer to simply as "experientialism".

The basic claim of *emotional* experientialism—experientialism as it applies to the case of emotional experience and our understanding of evaluative concepts—is easy to state, but somewhat more complex to explain. Emotional experientialism claims that emotional experience has an essential role to play in our understanding of evaluative concepts. This is a claim that we will often meet in its negative corollary: in the absence of emotional experience, we can have no understanding of evaluative concepts.

Emotional experientialism comes in differing degrees of generality. This relates to the question *which types* of emotional experience are lacking and, correspondingly, which evaluative concepts are supposed not to be understood. There are broadly two options. It is easier to explain these in terms of the negative corollary of emotional experientialism, so that is what I will do. The more *specific* form of emotional experientialism is probably the most discussed (though not under this name). It claims that if we have never had a specific type of emotional experience, then we must lack an understanding of the corresponding evaluative concept. So, for example, if we have never experienced grief, then we must lack a certain understanding of GRIEVOUS; if we have never experienced fear, then we must lack a certain understanding of FEARSOME; and so on. I will discuss arguments for this sort of specific emotional experientialism in Chapters 2 and 3.

In fact, it is probably possible to have even more specific forms of emotional experientialism than this. These would link our understanding of the value of particular objects with the emotional experiences associated with valuing those objects. For example, it might be claimed that you must lack an understanding of the injustice of the US Supreme Court's repeal of Roe v. Wade; or of the beauty of St Paul's Cathedral; or of the kindness of my grandfather if you have not yourself had an emotional response to those particular things. In this thesis I will not, for the most part, be concerned with these highly specific forms of emotional experientialism, although I will touch on them in Chapter 5.

By contrast, *general* emotional experientialism claims that if we have never had *any* emotional experiences, then we must lack an understanding of *all* evaluative concepts. We will meet an argument for general emotional experientialism in Chapter 4 that is based on the claim that a creature entirely devoid of emotions must lack an understanding of all evaluative concepts. General emotional experientialism is thus a claim that there is something general about emotional experience that we need to have experienced for ourselves in order to understand something equally general about evaluative concepts.

Emotional experientialism also comes in two different strengths. The *strong* reading of emotional experientialism claims that emotional experience plays an essential role in *any* understanding of evaluative concepts. The negative corollary of this reading thus denies the possibility of any form of understanding of evaluative concepts to someone who has not had the relevant emotional experiences. I will argue in Chapter 2, however, that the strong reading is unwarranted. For the most part, I will therefore be interested in emotional experientialism in its *weaker* form. This reading of emotional experientialism claims that emotional experience plays an essential role in a certain sort of understanding of evaluative concepts.[14] It thus leaves open the possibility that there are other forms of understanding of evaluative concepts that are possible without emotional experience. The negative corollary of the weaker reading thus says that there is a particular sort of understanding of evaluative concepts that someone who has never experienced an emotion cannot have. To anticipate, I will argue in this thesis that there is a certain sort of understanding—a disengaged or non-participant understanding, which I call a "theoretical understanding"—of evaluative concepts

14 A major question, as we shall see throughout the thesis, but especially in Chapter 4, is how exactly to specify the particular understanding that we must lack.

that we can have without ever experiencing the relevant emotions. But there is also an engaged or participant understanding that only comes with emotional experience.

In this thesis, I will examine two arguments for specific emotional experientialism, in Chapters 2 and 3, but I will try to show that neither argument is ultimately successful. In Chapter 4 I find a more promising argument for general emotional experientialism, that I argue we should accept. The remaining two chapters of the thesis, Chapters 5 and 6, then try to explain how we can expand on this general understanding of evaluative concepts.

5. Understanding Concepts

I have talked about grasping and understanding a concept, but it will be helpful in this introduction to more explicitly distinguish some of the different relations we may be in to concepts. In this section, I distinguish between *employing* a concept, *possessing* a concept, *acquiring* a concept and *generating* a concept. As we shall see, it is often easy for these distinctions to be confused (particularly the first three). This will be a complaint I make against the two different accounts of the relation between emotional experience and evaluative concepts examined in Chapters 2 and 3.

We can start with the idea of employing a concept. To employ a concept is to use that concept in thought or speech. We employ the concept, DELIGHTFUL, when we think that something is delightful or explicitly say, “that is delightful”. I will treat concepts as being employed in occurrent mental states like judgements, conjectures, and acts of imagination. Such occurrent mental states last for as long as we continue to think or speak in terms of the concept. They may be states with a particular sort of phenomenology, although this claim is more contentious and it does not matter for my purposes how it is decided.[15]

Concept employment is to be distinguished from concept possession. Whereas I think of concept employment as typically involving judgement, which is an occurrent mental state, concept possession is a standing state of the subject. If we possess a concept, then we generally go on possessing this concept whether or not we are now judging something to fall under the description of the concept. We can, of course, lose possession of a concept (the ex-

15 The idea that cognitive states have a distinctive phenomenology is endorsed by supporters of “Cognitive Phenomenology” (see Bayne and Montague 2011 for a collection discussing some of the issues).

lawyer may in time forget all about torts, say), but concept possession will generally be a state of substantial duration. It is natural also to suppose that there is a certain relation between concept possession and concept employment, specifically that it is necessary to possess a concept in order to employ it. But a person will go on possessing a concept even in those moments when they are not actually employing it.

Possessing a concept has a complex relation to understanding that concept. What we want to say about this will depend, as we shall see in Chapter 2, on more general questions about how we think about concepts. There are some ways of thinking about understanding concepts on which possession and understanding might be equated. But it is perhaps more plausible to distinguish between a more minimal sense of possession of a concept and a broader sense (or number of senses) in which a concept can be understood.

The distinction can perhaps be illustrated by contrasting two senses in which someone might be said to "understand what torture is". The first might be said of someone who can reliably identify torture; distinguishing it from, for example, humane punishment or suffering inflicted in self-defence. This is the sort of understanding of torture one might get from reading a dictionary definition, although I do not mean to imply by this that it can simply be equated with the ability to (mentally) entertain such a definition, since it does not seem to be sufficient for even such a minimal sort of understanding of a concept to simply know the word and be able to recite its definition. If a person could do this for torture and yet consistently failed to recognise as torture situations which were unambiguously such, then I think we should not want to say this person possessed the concept of torture, even in this minimal sense.

The more substantial sense in which someone might be said to "understand what torture is" implies a greater depth of understanding, perhaps requiring actual experience of torture, or perhaps a particularly vivid imagining of its possibilities—although what exactly is involved here requires further specification and may also be different for different concepts. The key point is that there is more to understanding a concept in this sense than just being able to identify instances of it. I will return to the possibility of this "deeper" understanding (and to its relation to the emotions and imagination) in later chapters, where I will try and say more about what it involves.

One of the most important questions for attempts to link emotional experience and evaluative concepts will be the question exactly what sort of understanding of evaluative concepts emotional experience is involved in. This distinction between a more minimal sense of concept possession and other senses in which the concept may be understood opens up a number of points at which emotional experience might be involved. Some philosophers, as we shall see, seem attracted to the idea that emotional experience is necessary to possess an evaluative concept in even the most minimal sense.[16] They thus endorse what I called, in the previous section, *strong* emotional experientialism. By contrast, weak emotional experientialism allows that we can possess evaluative concepts, in some sense, without having had any emotional experience, but maintains that there are certain forms of understanding of evaluative concepts that go beyond mere concept possession and that these are impossible without emotional experience.

Another distinction that we can make is between the possession or understanding of a concept, which is a standing state of the subject, and the subject's *acquisition* of their understanding of that concept, which may be conceived of either as an instantaneous event, or as a temporarily extended (and perhaps ongoing) process: understanding can come either "in a flash" or as a gradual dawning. Acquisition seems to be the most plausible point for emotional experience to get involved with our understanding of evaluative concepts. I will argue that the most plausible sort of claim we will meet with in this thesis is the idea that *acquiring* an understanding of an evaluative concept involves having a certain sort of emotional experience. We will meet this idea in Chapters 2, 3, and 4. We will see in Chapters 2 and 3 in particular that it is important to distinguish between questions of concept employment and concept acquisition. I will argue that this distinction is not always adequately made in the literature on emotions.

It is important to note that talk about concepts is often ambiguous between many of these above senses. Talk, for example, about "grasping" a concept may mean any of (more minimal) possession, (more substantial) understanding, or the acquisition of either of these two.

Another, related, question concerns the *generation* of concepts (Wiggins 1998: 194-199). There may be some concepts that are innate or universal, but most concepts are social in the

16 For example Zagzebski 2003. Her account is discussed in Chapter 3.

sense that they belong to a certain society's way of living and of thinking about themselves in their world. There is an obvious sense in which the generation of concepts is linked to the invention or conception of the objects to which they correspond. We start to have the concept of a space shuttle about the time space shuttles first start to be made. But perhaps more interesting are the cases where world and concept develop out of step. For example, it is probable that people behaved towards each other in ways that we would now describe as torture for some time before people started to think about what was being done in those terms. The question how this happens is a question about the generation of the concept, TORTURE. Another example would be SEXUAL HARASSMENT (Fricker 2007: 150-152), a concept that did not exist as recently as the second half of the last century, despite the fact that sexual harassment seems to have been going on in one form or another for most of human history.

Generation is an entirely different stage at which there might be a role for emotional experience to play. One possible argument here would be that without emotional experience there would have been no generation of evaluative concepts. This would establish an essential link between emotional experience and evaluative concepts. But note that this argument is compatible with thinking that any given individual may be able to acquire an understanding of an evaluative concept without emotional experience. This is because it is plausible to think that the conditions for generation and the conditions for acquisition might be different. Once the evaluative concept has been (socially) generated by individuals that have emotional experience, it is plausible to think that the concept may then be available to be "picked up", even by an individual who has had no emotional experience—or who has never had the particular emotional experience (for example, pity) in question. Of course, there will then be questions to answer about the sense in which such an individual would understand the concept, and whether there are differences between how they (without emotional experience) understand it, and the way it was understood by individuals involved in its original generation and is now understood by individuals who have had the relevant emotional experiences. Although the question of the generation of evaluative concepts, and of the role of emotional experience in this generation, is an important one, it is not a question I will explicitly address in this thesis.

We need, then, to keep all of these different notions separate and to be clear about which we are appealing to: concept employment, concept possession, understanding a concept (in its

potentially myriad forms), concept acquisition, and concept generation. This will be particularly important in the first two chapters of this thesis, where we will meet arguments for emotional experientialism that confuse issues of concept acquisition and concept employment.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I articulated the view that will be the main subject of this thesis: emotional experientialism. This claims that emotional experience plays an essential role in our understanding of evaluative concepts. It has both specific and general forms and both are perhaps clearest in their negative corollaries. In its specific form this claims that if we have never had specific types of emotional experience (shame, pity), then we must lack an understanding of the corresponding specific evaluative concepts (SHAMEFUL, PITIFUL). In its general form it claims that if we lack all emotional experience, then we must lack an understanding of evaluative concepts in general.

I have also put a number of constraints on the scope of this thesis. To recapitulate:

- I will be concerned with emotional experience, and not with any other aspects of emotions (for example, their dispositional dimension).
- I will understand emotional experience as combining evaluative intentionality and affective phenomenology. If there are emotional experiences that cannot be characterised this way, then they fall outside the scope of the thesis.
- I will be concerned only with those evaluative concepts that can be understood in terms of the neo-sentimentalist biconditional.
- I will focus on emotional experiences that are appropriate and not address the question whether inappropriate emotional experiences play any role in our understanding of evaluative concepts.

In the rest of this thesis, I put all of this into practice. In Chapters 2 and 3, I will critically examine arguments for specific emotional experientialism. In Chapter 4, I will endorse an argument for general emotional experientialism. Chapters 5 and 6 will then explain how imagination makes it possible to expand this general understanding, without the need for actual emotional experience.

2. A Perceptual Understanding of Evaluative Concepts?

In this chapter, I examine two possible arguments for emotional experientialism drawn from the work of Peter Goldie (2002: 241ff), but I argue that neither is ultimately successful. This argument from Goldie is an argument for a version of *specific* emotional experientialism, because he argues that our understanding of a specific evaluative concept (DANGER) depends on our having a specific type of emotional experience (fear).

The chapter has eight sections. Sections 1 to 3 introduce Goldie's argument. Section 1 explains how Goldie thinks about emotional experience and describes the sort of account of emotional experience, which he calls an "add-on theory", that he hopes to avoid. Section 2 presents Goldie's interpretation of Jackson's thought experiment about the colour scientist, Mary, who has learnt all she can about redness from books and yet still seems to learn something new when she has her first experience of a red object. Section 3 presents Goldie's analogous thought experiment about Irene, who has similarly learnt all she can about danger from books before she has her first experience of fear.

In the remainder of the chapter, I develop and criticise arguments reconstructed from Goldie's claims. Section 4 clears the way for this reconstruction by discussing a confusion in Goldie between concept employment and concept acquisition. Section 5 clarifies Goldie's claims and reconstructs a first argument for emotional experientialism, which I claim is not successful. Section 6 clarifies some of the issues facing someone who, like Goldie, wants to draw an analogy between our understanding of evaluative concepts and our understanding of perceptual concepts like colour concepts. Section 7 reconstructs an alternative argument for emotional experientialism, different to that given in Section 5. In Section 8, I show how this argument fails because of Goldie's failure to establish that, in emotional experience, intentionality and phenomenology are inextricably linked.

1. Goldie on Emotional Experience and Feelings Towards

To understand Goldie's argument, we need to first understand how he conceives of emotional

experience. This is the view of emotional experience that Goldie tries to substantiate by means of the arguments I will examine throughout this chapter, but it will be helpful to get an overview of Goldie's position in this first section before going on to examine his arguments in detail.

Goldie (2000: 40-41) rejects what he calls "add-on theories" of emotional experience. Add-on theories see emotions as composite states that combine two elements: a cognitive element, that is a belief, thought, or judgement (there is debate among add-on theorists as to what is the right sort of cognitive element) that, for example, an action is shameful; and an affective feeling element, for example a feeling of shame, which is conceived as not being itself intentional. According to the add-on theorist, when a person has an emotional experience they are in a state that combines a presentation of the object of the emotion as possessing a certain evaluative property with feeling a certain affect. The distinctive feature of add-on theories is that the affective element is conceived of as being a mere supplement or "add-on" to a cognitive element that is itself supposed to be unchanged from how it might exist in a non-emotional state. And because the intentionality of the emotional experience belongs to this separable cognitive element, the intentionality of the emotional experience (its representation of its object as possessing an evaluative property) is thus separable from its distinctive phenomenology (its affective feel).

Goldie (2002: 241) believes instead that emotional experience involves "a sort of *feeling towards* the object". Goldie's language attempts to capture the claim that the phenomenology and intentionality of the emotional experience are inextricably linked: the feeling (phenomenology) and the toward-ness (intentionality) are combined in the idea of "feeling towards". Goldie (2002: 242) thus claims that in emotional experience "[i]ntentionality and phenomenology are inextricably linked".[17] Goldie recognises the idea that phenomenology and intentionality are inextricably linked needs further specification and substantiation. We need to know more exactly how these two aspects of emotional experience are inextricably linked and, connectedly, we need some argument for rejecting add-on theories. Goldie's argument that emotional experience gives us a "new way of thinking" about evaluative

17 This is an analogue of the phenomenal intentionality thesis: see, for example, Kriegel 2013. This says of ordinary perceptual experience that intentionality and phenomenology are inextricably linked. As we shall see, Goldie also makes an analogous claim to that usually made by adherents of the phenomenal intentionality thesis that a perceptual experience has the intentional content that it does *because* it has the phenomenology it does.

properties is an attempt to do both these things.

Note that when Goldie talks of a "new way of thinking" about evaluative properties he is not talking about a new way of *theorising* about these properties. His claim is rather that our ordinary and everyday way of thinking in terms of evaluative properties is changed. It is the sort of thinking we do when we see an action and think "what a cowardly thing to do", rather than, for example, when we theorise about the relation between cowardice and norms of masculinity or when we try to construct a philosophical account of what cowardice is.

Goldie's idea is that the "new way of thinking" about evaluative properties provided by emotional experience is *transformative*. With emotional experience comes a new way of thinking about evaluative properties. Our way of thinking of the evaluative property after we have had the relevant emotional experience is not just a combination of the same pre-emotional way of thinking, plus an affective feeling. The way we think about the evaluative property is itself transformed.

> That is to say, the content of the thought is different; one's way of thinking of it is completely new. It is not just the old way of thinking of it, plus some new element. Rather, it is more like coming to see a hidden shape in a drawing, or coming to see the shape of the face on the visible surface of the moon: one's way of seeing is completely new. (Goldie 2002: 243)

We cannot therefore think of emotional experience as the add-on theorist does: as combining separate intentional and phenomenological elements. The way in which we think of the ice as dangerous when experiencing fear for the first time is different, Goldie thinks, from how we thought of the ice as dangerous before experiencing fear. The intentional aspect of the emotional experience is changed and so the phenomenology of the experience cannot be thought of merely as an add-on. Or this is what Goldie tries to argue, by means of an analogy that I will discuss in Sections 2 and 3.

2. Mary's Experience and Understanding of Colour

Goldie (2002: 243-246) develops his argument by analogy to colour perception, and to Jackson's (1982, 1986) thought experiment about Mary the colour scientist. Jackson imagines a colour scientist called Mary who has lived her entire life in a colourless room. She has access to information about the outside world and this has enabled her to learn about colour

and colour vision. She learns in this way all there is to know about the physics of colour and about the material properties of different coloured objects. Mary is then let out of her room and sees, for the first time, coloured objects—specifically, she is presented with a red rose. Jackson claims that at this point Mary learns something new: she learns what it is like to see something red.

Jackson takes Mary to be learning about a property of conscious experience.[18] Jackson is interested in the philosophy of consciousness, and he appealed to his Mary thought experiment to try to argue against materialism. Whatever the merits of Jackson's argument, the idea that Mary learns something on emerging from her room has remained compelling for philosophers, like Goldie, with otherwise very different views and interests from Jackson. The question for these philosophers is: what exactly does Mary learn on emerging from her room?

Goldie (2002: 244) thinks "that Mary gains a *new way of thinking* of a property that she was already able to think of in another way." In fact, Goldie seems to think that Mary gains two new ways of thinking: one to do with properties of her experience, the other to do with properties of the world as she experiences it.[19] Let's start with the first of these. Before leaving her room, Mary has what Goldie (2002: 244) calls "only a *theoretical* concept of the experience" of seeing something red. Mary knows before leaving her room that people have such experiences, and she knows that having such experiences tends to have certain sorts of causal effect. After leaving her room and seeing the red rose Mary gets to know what it is like to have such experiences. She acquires a grasp of the phenomenology of the experience. This constitutes, for Goldie, a new way of thinking about the experience. She now, Goldie (2002: 244) says, has "a *phenomenal* concept of the experience."

I dislike Goldie's terminology, because it implies that there are two distinct concepts: a theoretical concept and a phenomenal concept. This is an implication that Goldie (2002: 244) himself explicitly says that he wants to avoid:

> (I express her new way of thinking in terms of a new *concept* to make the point vivid; but I do not want to be taken to suggest that Mary now has two utterly *distinct* concepts, one theoretical and the other phenomenal. Rather, her newly-acquired

18 Or at any rate he originally took her to be doing so, he may have changed his view in later work.

19 By this I mean properties of the object of experience, considered to be independent from experience.

phenomenal way of thinking of the experience of seeing something red will *subsume and transform* her earlier non-phenomenal way of thinking of the experience).

A better alternative is to say that before having the relevant experience Mary has only a theoretical understanding of the concept of the experience, whereas afterwards she also has a phenomenal understanding of that same concept. I am not sure this makes Goldie's point any less vivid and it seems to me to make it less misleading. This is the terminology I will use going forward and I will, where necessary, alter quotations from Goldie accordingly.

In addition to this new way of thinking about experience, Mary connectedly gains, according to Goldie (2002: 244), a new way of thinking about "the properties of the world as she experiences them". Goldie claims that before leaving her room Mary has a theoretical understanding of the concepts of colour properties. She knows all there is to know about colour science and colour vision science. Given the read-outs from meters measuring frequencies of light reflected and other such facts, she is able to accurately determine the colours of objects. She knows on this basis that (some) roses are red and would be able to tell us, if given the relevant information about the frequencies of light it reflects, that the rose we are about to show her is red. She can do this even before she leaves her room and sees it. But after she leaves her room and sees the rose she comes to know what the rose looks like. By extension she also comes to know how red things generally look in experience. She thus acquires what Goldie (2002: 244) calls a "*perceptual*" understanding of RED.[20]

Goldie also claims, plausibly enough, that both of these new ways of thinking are associated with new abilities that Mary acquires. In acquiring her phenomenal understanding of the experience of red, Mary is supposed to become able to do things that she could not beforehand, like imaging or remembering what it is like to see something red. And in acquiring her perceptual understanding of RED, Mary is supposed to acquire abilities such as the ability to classify objects on the basis of how they look, and to predict the way that objects will look on the basis of knowledge of their colours. Exactly what connection Goldie supposes there to be between the acquisition of these new abilities and the new way of thinking remains somewhat obscure. Sometimes Goldie seems to take the new abilities as evidence of the new ways of thinking; but sometimes he seems tempted by the stronger claim

20 Goldie's terminology is again misleadingly one of separate concepts: "theoretical concepts" of colour properties and "perceptual concepts" of colour properties. For the reasons given above with relation to concepts of experience, I will talk about theoretical and perceptual understandings of concepts of colour properties.

that acquisition of the new ways of thinking consists in the acquisition of these new abilities. These are issues that we will return to in Section 5.

Goldie appeals to the Mary thought experiment to help understand what we can learn from our sensory experience of colours. According to Goldie, colour experience can give us a phenomenal understanding of concepts of experience of colour and a perceptual understanding of concepts of colour properties. Sensory experience is necessary for these forms of understanding: without sensory experience of the colours, we could not have such understandings of them. The question is: is something analogously true of emotional experience and values? And, if there is an analogy, what does it amount to?

3. Irene's Emotional Experience and Understanding of Evaluative Concepts

To answer this question, Goldie (2002: 244) proposes an analogous thought experiment: Irene the "icy-cool ice-scientist". Irene is supposed to have "been brought up in an incredibly coddled manner" so as to have never felt fear (Goldie 2002: 245). She then finds herself out on some ice and feels afraid for the first time. The question, then, is what does Irene learn with this first experience of fear?

Goldie supposes that Irene understands a great deal before she feels fear. Knowing all she does about ice (and, presumably, also about human physiology) she "has complete knowledge of the dangers that can arise from walking on ice" (Goldie 2002: 244). She is also supposed to know such facts about fear and the psychology of fear as that people typically feel afraid when they are in danger, and that feeling afraid typically causes people to behave in certain ways, usually so as to escape or otherwise avoid the danger. Irene thus has theoretical understandings of both the "concept of fear" and the "concept of dangerousness" (Goldie 2002: 245). These correspond, respectively, to Mary's theoretical understanding of the concept of the experience of red, and to her theoretical understanding of RED (i.e. they are theoretical understandings respectively of a property of experience and of a property of the object of experience).

Before we go on, I want to note a potentially problematic feature of Goldie's example. This concerns whether danger is the right property to think of as corresponding to fear. Among philosophers who link values with emotions some agree with Goldie in linking danger and

fear (for example: de Sousa 2002: 251, Prinz 2004). But others suggest different evaluative properties such as the fearsome (D'Arms and Jacobson 2003, Tappolet 2016: 50-52), the frightening (de Souse 1987), or the threatening (Nussbaum 2001). All of these properties seem to be closely related to each other; but each may be thought of in different ways that may subtly affect the arguments that it is possible to make concerning them. I will consider just the dangerous and the fearsome here.

If we think in terms of the neo-sentimentalist biconditional (see Chapter 1) that links evaluative properties with appropriate affective responses, then the most plausible claim seems to be that something is fearsome if and only if it is appropriate to feel fear towards it. By contrast, being dangerous can seem not to be covered by the neo-sentimentalist biconditional. Being dangerous might be thought of as a relational and response-independent property (Tappolet 2016: 51): A is dangerous to B if A is likely to inflict (physically, mentally, or spiritually) damage to B. This can make danger look more like a naturalistic property, perhaps not even a genuinely evaluative property. Of course, there may be relations between danger and fearsomeness, so conceived. Perhaps fearsomeness supervenes on dangerousness, for example. But Goldie's attempt to link Irene's understanding of the ice's danger with her knowledge that it merits fear may start to look problematic. He may seem to be on surer ground talking about fearsomeness here.

Perhaps, then, it would be better to reframe Goldie's argument in terms of fearsomeness. I have not done this, however, partly for consistency of exegesis, partly because I think that for the most part the difference does not greatly matter. I will stick to talking about DANGER in what follows and anyone who objects to this is invited to reframe the argument in terms of FEARSOME.

Goldie claims that when Irene is on the ice and for the first time feels afraid she learns something new: she learns what it is like to feel afraid. Goldie claims that, as with Mary, this gives Irene new ways of thinking about both fear and dangerousness: it gives her what Goldie calls a phenomenal understanding of FEAR and a perceptual understanding of DANGER. As before, Goldie talks in terms of different concepts: theoretical and phenomenal concepts of fear; theoretical and perceptual concepts of danger. And as before, he simultaneously says that the two concepts are not really distinct. So for the reasons given in the previous section, I have again preferred my terminology. We should also note at this point that, as we will see in

the final two sections of this chapter, the idea that Irene's new understanding of DANGER is perceptual is contentious. So there are doubts over whether this understanding of DANGER deserves to be called a "perceptual understanding". It is, however, a convenient label for purposes of exposition, so I will continue to talk about Irene's "perceptual understanding of DANGER" below.

Goldie (2002: 245) claims that Irene's new understanding "*reverberates*" through her "mental economy": "like Mary, she gains new powers and potentialities of thought, imagination and feeling." Goldie's way of putting this (and his discussion of the new powers) seems to imply that these are three more or less distinct powers, although as we will see, this assumption may be problematic. Notwithstanding that worry, let's start by taking each sort of power in turn.

First take the last, Mary's new powers of feeling. Goldie (2002: 246) talks about "feelings towards, which [Irene] is now capable of experiencing, […]" But it is not clear which sorts of feeling towards Goldie is talking about. Perhaps Goldie is talking about Irene's capacity to experience fear and using "capacity" in the Aristotelean sense, according to which to acquire the capacity to experience fear one must have exercised that capacity at least once. If this is what Goldie means, then his claim does not seem to be particularly informative, because it is trivial that to have such a capacity one must have experienced fear. Perhaps, then, we should interpret Goldie as claiming that feeling afraid allows Irene to gain the capacity to experience other sorts of feelings towards than fear. But if this is what Goldie means, then it is not a claim he argues for.

What, then, about Irene's new powers of imagination? Goldie (2002: 245-246) says that now "when [Irene] imagines someone else feeling fear, she can imagine 'from the inside' what it would be like to be in his or her shoes." Goldie supposes that Irene's ability to imagine others' fear "from the inside" comes about because she is now able to deploy her phenomenal understanding of FEAR. She has now experienced fear herself and so knows what it is like to feel fear. So she can now imagine what people are feeling when they are feeling fear: they are feeling as she did when she was afraid (although probably their fear is directed towards a different object). Irene can now have a sort of projection of what their experience is like. Goldie's claim is that Irene lacks the capacity to do this before she has herself experienced fear. But after she has experienced fear she gains the power to imagine others' fear "from the

inside”. This claim seems plausible enough, but it is one that I will return to and challenge in Chapters 5 and 6. As imagination plays little obvious role in the arguments of Goldie that I am examining in this chapter, however, I will put these questions of imagination to one side, and concentrate on Irene’s supposedly new powers of thought. These seem to play the most important role in Goldie’s argument.

Goldie claims that Irene gains new powers of thought after her first experience of fear. These are new powers to think about danger that come with Irene’s new perceptual understanding of DANGER. Irene could already think of things as dangerous before, but Goldie (2002: 245) claims:

> When Irene now thinks of the ice as dangerous, she can do so in a new way—in a fearful way: she can now think of it *with fear*. Before, she knew that the ice was dangerous, for she knew that it merited fear, but, because she now is able to think in a new way of fear, she now understands in a new way what it is for the ice to be dangerous. Before, when she said “That ice is dangerous”, the thought expressed was a judgement made without feeling; afterwards what she expressed was *feeling towards* the ice.

There is, Goldie claims, a difference in the *content* of the thought before and after. Before, Irene thinks of the dangerous thing as meriting fear, but she understands what fear is only theoretically. After experiencing fear, Irene knows the phenomenology of fear, she knows what it is like to experience fear. So now when she thinks of something as dangerous, and so as meriting fear, she thinks of it as meriting an emotional experience with a particular phenomenology. This seems to be what, for Goldie, constitutes the difference in content. And Irene’s new power of thought consists in her capacity to think of DANGER in this new, phenomenologically-infused way. We will return to this new capacity in Section 7.

4. A Confusion

One of the difficulties we face in interpreting Goldie on thinking about danger is that Goldie confuses issues relating to concept employment with those relating to concept possession and acquisition.[21] It is important to recognise this confusion, because it is a confusion that we will need to clarify in reconstructing Goldie’s argument for emotional experientialism in the

21 This confusion seems particularly tempting for philosophers who are attracted to perceptual accounts of the emotions. It is also there in Linda Zagzebski (2003), whose work on emotions will be discussed in Chapter 3.

following sections. The confusion becomes apparent as we ask what Goldie's example of Irene is supposed to achieve. There seem to be broadly two options here.

The first option is that the distinction Goldie is investigating is the distinction between thinking of something as dangerous when unafraid and thinking of it as dangerous when feeling fear. This possibility seems to be what Goldie (2002: 243) has in mind in passages like the following:

> When we think of something as being dangerous, we might just think of it as meriting fear, and we can do that without actually feeling fear towards it. Then, when we come to think of it *with fear*, the dangerousness of the object, and the determinate features towards which the thought is directed, is grasped in a different way.

The suggestion is that a different concept of danger (or the same concept of danger but with a different understanding and so different "content") is employed in each case. Thought with feeling has different content to thought without.

When Michael Brady (2013: 67-69) discusses this paper of Goldie's, he takes him to be making this point about employment. And Brady (2013: 68) argues against this interpretation of Goldie on the basis that:

> the difference between an intellectual apprehension of danger, and feeling fear towards that thing, would seem to be a difference between the thought that something merits a state with a feeling that one is not presently experiencing but nevertheless has experienced in the past, and the thought that something merits a state with the feeling that one is presently experiencing. But it is difficult to see how this difference between the experiences constitutes a difference in representational *evaluative* content.

I agree with Brady on this point. It is difficult to see why the thought that something is dangerous should have different content depending on whether or not that thought is accompanied by fear. Of course, this difference in evaluative content is just what Goldie takes himself to be establishing. But I think that he would need to do more to argue for this conclusion. Insofar as Goldie's argument is interpreted in this way, the argument seems to be assuming what it is trying to establish.

In any case, what is striking about Brady's objection for our purposes is that in exploring the difference between intellectual and emotional apprehensions of danger, Brady assumes that

fear "*nevertheless has [been] experienced in the past*". This is to ignore the most prominent feature of Goldie's thought experiment, the fact that Irene has never before experienced fear.[22] The argument Brady is ascribing to Goldie here simply ignores the Irene thought experiment. This is understandable of Brady, since as I am trying to argue in this section, Goldie's argument confuses two distinct lines of thought. But it also means that there is an alternative line of argument to be extracted from what Goldie says about Irene that is not touched by Brady's objections.

The alternative distinction is between thinking of something as dangerous before and after having first experienced fear. The fact that Goldie's argument depends so centrally on the Irene thought experiment seems to suggest that this is what he has in mind, because that thought experiment concerns the acquisition of understanding of DANGER. Irene acquires a new (perceptual) understanding of DANGER after her first experience of fear. But this approach may be in tension with the first interpretation of the argument as an argument about concept employment. Emotional experience plays a role in the acquisition of a perceptual understanding of DANGER, but once we have acquired this understanding there seems to be no reason why we cannot go on to employ it with *or without* an accompanying emotional experience. After experiencing fear, all future judgements that something is dangerous will then "reverberate" (as Goldie likes to put it) with the new perceptual understanding of DANGER. And all such judgements made after Irene has first experienced fear, whether made with or without feeling, will in this sense have *the same* content.

The problem we face in interpreting Goldie's argument in this paper is that he often frames his argument as an argument about the difference between emotional experience and dispassionate thought (i.e. about the first distinction), but the argument he presents about Irene is most plausibly read as an argument about the acquisition of understanding (i.e. about the second distinction). Goldie himself does not keep these issues sufficiently separate. For the purposes of this thesis, however, it is this latter point about our understanding of evaluative concepts that is most relevant. In the next sections I will therefore make two attempts to reconstruct Goldie's argument as an argument about the acquisition of understanding.

22 This criticism of Brady is made by Daniel Vanello (2020: 4631-4632).

5. A First Argument for Emotional Experientialism

In this section, I want to develop a first argument for emotional experientialism that arises if we read Goldie as I suggested in the previous section. I think that this argument works in a qualified way. It does establish something like emotional experientialism. But it does not establish all that Goldie claims: it does not give Irene a new understanding of DANGER that is *transformative* of Irene's prior theoretical understanding. Or at any rate, I can find no reason for thinking so.

As we saw in Section 3, Goldie claims that Irene acquires new powers of thinking about danger after her first experience of fear. The argument for emotional experientialism that I will reconstruct from Goldie's discussion depends on these new powers of thought. In Section 3 we saw that Goldie talked about these new powers of thought in the context of Irene's now thinking of the ice "*with fear*", but this seems to embody just the sort of confusion discussed in the last section. The question is not what is the difference between thinking of something as dangerous with and without fear, but rather what is the difference between thinking of something as dangerous before and after first experiencing fear.

There is, however, a different sort of ability that Goldie discusses that might be made into a suitable "new power of thought". This is the ability to *identify* objects that fall under the concept in question. In this section I want to investigate whether a successful argument for emotional experientialism can be made on this basis. Because Goldie's argument proceeds by analogy to Mary, we need to start with her and her different capacity to identify red things before and after experiencing them.

According to Goldie, Mary already possesses a capacity to identify red things, before she leaves her room. This capacity relies on her being able to get the right physical information about the object to be identified and the light that it reflects or emits. It is assumed Mary has the laboratory equipment (spectrometers, etc.) to do this. As Goldie (2002: 244) puts it:

> so she would [before] have been able to make judgements about the colour of things in the world using [her] *theoretical* [understanding] of colour properties; in particular, she would have been able to judge "That rose is red" (she would have had the requisite laboratory equipment to "read off" the colour properties).

This capacity to identify red things is already "complete" in the sense that Mary seems able to

fully determine the extension of RED. If you give Mary *any* object she will be able to point her laboratory equipment at it and tell you its colour.[23]

To the extent that Mary's capacity to identify red things is already in this sense complete, Mary's new experience and new perceptual understanding of RED will add nothing to it. There are no *new* objects that she can now determine the redness of, that she could not, using her laboratory equipment, before. However, Mary does seem to gain something on leaving her room. She seems to gain an ability to identify red things by using her eyes, rather than her equipment: "she can [now] classify things by the way they *look*" (Goldie 2002: 244). So even though there are no red objects that Mary can now identify that she could not before identify using her laboratory equipment, she does gain a new capacity to identify red things because she can now identify them by other means, namely by simply looking at them.

Sensory experience thus allows Mary to acquire a new capacity to identify colours on the basis of how they look and so to acquire a new understanding of the corresponding colour concepts. There seems to be a case for claiming that this new capacity constitutes Mary's new perceptual understanding of RED. We would expect, by analogy, that Irene's experience of fear would give her similar new capacities, and the presence of these new capacities would then form a basis for claiming that Irene has a new understanding of DANGER. But Goldie does not seem to attribute any new abilities to identify dangerous things to Irene after her experience of fear. This is a possibility that I propose to investigate on his behalf.

After experiencing fear, does Irene gain any new capacity analogous to Mary's capacity to identify red things based on how they look? Perhaps the most straightforwardly analogous capacity would be a capacity to identify dangerous things based on *feeling afraid* of them. This is not an argument that Goldie himself advances in connection with Irene, but it is, I think one that is worth pursuing. The idea would be that, with her first experience of fear, Irene becomes able to identify things as dangerous simply by feeling afraid of them and without having to go through any of the theoretical considerations that she did beforehand. This would then constitute a deepening of Irene's prior understanding of DANGER: she can now identify things as dangerous on the basis of feeling afraid of them, and in this sense she

23 This ignores the problem of red's vagueness: the fact that for some shades between red and orange, say, there seems to be no determinate answer as to whether the shade is red. But I do not think this issue should have any effect on our argument.

has a new understanding of DANGER that was not included in her prior theoretical understanding of DANGER. Because this would be an understanding of DANGER that we could not have without experiencing fear, this would be an argument for specific emotional experientialism: experiencing fear would have an essential role to play in this understanding of DANGER.

There are two apparent difficulties here, which can both be resolved. The first is that emotional experience may seem superfluous. As we saw in Chapter 1, emotional experiences depend on their cognitive bases. In Irene's case, she will not feel afraid of the ice unless she is perceptually aware of the ice and its properties: unless she can see that she is out on the ice, can hear from its cracking its thinness, can feel the ice moving beneath her feet. This can make it look as if her fear has no role to play in her coming to identify the ice as dangerous. It may seem like she must already be aware of the dangerousness in order to feel afraid. However, emotional experience does seem like it has a role to play here in picking out those features of the world that are evaluatively salient (de Sousa 1987: 195). Even if we admit that it is in principle possible for Irene to pick out all of the relevant features and so identify something as dangerous without emotional experience, we might think that emotional experience, by making the relevant features salient, makes this process much easier and so makes the capacity to identify much more efficient.

The second difficulty is that even if Irene does acquire a capacity to identify dangerous things by being afraid, this capacity may seem to be highly unreliable: we often feel afraid of things that are not dangerous and conversely we are often unafraid of things that are. This problem is probably more pressing for Goldie's example than it would be for other sorts of emotional experiences because of the prominence of phobias; but there are likely to be similar unreliabilities in these other cases too (neurotic embarrassment, excessive anger, etc.). Mary's ability to identify colours on the basis of how things look is not *unfailingly* reliable either, of course. She will sometimes be subject to illusions and the like, which will mean, for example, that she may falsely identify the white book as red when it is placed under red light. But the unreliability seems to be more pervasive in Irene's case. It is easy to imagine that Mary's new capacity to judge by looks will supplement and even supersede her capacity to judge by laboratory equipment. She will rarely want to consult her spectrometer when she can use her own eyes. By contrast it seems that Irene will need to go on employing her prior theoretical understanding to intellectually assess where danger lies. Nevertheless, there does

seem to be something to the idea that Irene can identify dangerous things based on feeling afraid of them, even if she cannot always rely on her feelings. I believe that therefore we *can* think of this new ability as constituting a new understanding of DANGER.

But even if these challenges can be met, there is an additional problem with Goldie's argument. This is that if this is all that the new understanding consists in, then it does not seem to match up to Goldie's claims for it. The new understanding, recall, was supposed to be "transformative" of Irene's understanding of DANGER. And it is difficult to see why we should think this to be so if all the new understanding consists in is this new ability to identify dangerous things based on feeling afraid of them. What reason is there to think that this new ability transforms Irene's prior theoretical understanding of DANGER? It is difficult to see what exactly the reason could be. The new ability seems to exist alongside the prior theoretical understanding, leaving that understanding unchanged. For this reason, the argument for emotional experientialism we have been considering in this section does not seem to give Goldie what he wants. We need to look elsewhere for an argument that gives emotional experience a more transformative role to play in our understanding of evaluative concepts.

6. Perceptual Understanding of Concepts

There is another difficulty with Goldie's argument, which I want to raise before I go on to consider alternative arguments for emotional experientialism. I have been taking for granted Goldie's talk of Mary's "perceptual" understanding of RED and Irene's "perceptual" understanding of DANGER. But what exactly does Goldie mean by calling these forms of understanding "perceptual"? Goldie never explicitly defines his use of "perceptual", but we can see what he might mean by considering Mary's case.

Mary's perceptual understanding of RED seems, for Goldie, to consist in her knowledge of how red objects look. In the case of colour, this seems plausible: having a perceptual understanding of a colour concept seems to involve knowing how the colour looks in experience. And it also seems plausible to think that Mary does not know what red looks like before she has her first sensory experience of red, and so lacks this perceptual understanding of RED.

Mary's understanding seems to count as perceptual because it is an understanding of how things appear through one of the sensory modalities, in this case sight. For colour concepts like RED, perceptual understanding is a matter of knowing the appearance, the look, of red things. For different sensory concepts, for example concepts relating to sounds, perceptual understanding may be a matter of knowing how things appear through different senses. A perceptual understanding of PERFECT CADENCE would consist, for example, in knowing how a perfect cadence sounds. So, as a first attempt at definition, we might say that an understanding is perceptual if it is an understanding of how things appear through one (or more) of the sensory modalities.

In this section I want to argue that even where there does unambiguously seem to be a possibility of a perceptual understanding of a concept (whether evaluative or not), there may be doubts about how important (or transformative, to use a term from Goldie) this perceptual understanding is. For some concepts, perceptual understanding seems to count for relatively little, as we shall see. The example of colour perception is powerful because Mary seems to gain something very important in acquiring her perceptual understanding of RED. Knowing how red things look seems to get to the heart of the concept of redness. Perhaps this intuition is not generally accepted: it might be denied by a physicalist about colour, for example.[24] But it has a broad appeal. Perceptual understanding seems to be very important, possibly central, to our understanding of colour concepts. But it is not necessarily so important for all concepts.

Consider a different property and different thought experiment. Harriet is a materials scientist who has learned all there is to know about gold through reading books. She has never herself come into contact with gold, nor has she ever encountered representations of gold in photographs or the like. She is then given a sample of gold and so has her first experience of gold. What does she learn? By analogy with Mary, before being given the sample Harriet has a theoretical understanding of GOLD. And if the analogy with Mary holds good, then after her first experience of gold Harriet gains a perceptual understanding of GOLD: she learns what gold looks like. It seems right to talk about a "perceptual understanding" here because gold has various characteristic sensory properties; and one can understand the way gold appears through the different sensory modalities (how it looks, how it feels, how it sounds

24 For early defences of colour physicalism, see Armstrong 1968 and Smart 1997. From more recent defences, see, for example: Tye 2000 and Byrne and Hilbert 2003.

when struck, and so on).[25]

Our question now is: how important (or transformative) is Harriet's new perceptual understanding of GOLD for her general understanding of the concept? Harriet's perceptual understanding of GOLD supplements her theoretical understanding of the concept. She knows what it looks (and feels, etc.) like, which (we are assuming) she did not before. In this sense she now has a fuller understanding of GOLD than she did before. This goes along (as it did for Mary) with certain new abilities. Because Harriet now knows what gold looks like, she may be able to identify things as gold (and as not gold) on the basis of how they look (and feel, etc.). But the scope of these abilities seems much more limited than it did in Mary's case. It is notoriously true that all that glisters is not gold, and it may even be that the *majority* of the things that look like gold are not really so. Knowing what gold looks like may be helpful for the purposes of ruling out objects as not gold, but it seems of less use in making positive identifications. For this Harriet will probably still need to rely principally on her theoretical understanding. This contrasts with Mary. Her perceptual understanding of RED seems to give her an ability to identify red things that is not only more reliable than Harriet's ability to identify gold, but in Mary's case may even supersede the abilities connected with her prior theoretical understanding. The occasions on which Mary will rely on her light-meter over her eyes to tell whether something is red after she has left her room seem likely to be limited. All of this suggests that Mary gains more, in acquiring a perceptual understanding of RED, than Harriet gains in acquiring a perceptual understanding of GOLD.

This conclusion seems to be strengthened by considering other sorts of material and other elements than gold. There is a range of synthetic chemical elements including, for example, copernicium and nihonium which are highly unstable and difficult to synthesise. These elements have been produced in such small quantities and for such brief periods of time that it seems right to say that we have never seen the elements themselves but only recorded their effects. Because nobody has ever seen copernicium, nobody knows what copernicium looks like. The very idea of "the look of copernicium" may even be absurd, given that it is close to

25 What is more contentious is the claim that Harriet's perceptual understanding is novel. Does Harriet really know nothing about how gold looks before her first experience of it? The problem is that if you know how yellow things look and also how metallic things look, then it seems likely that you can form a pretty good idea how gold things look even before you have actually seen anything gold. But let's assume that the analogy with Mary does hold and Harriet has no perceptual understanding of GOLD before her first experience of it.

a theoretical impossibility to assemble enough of the element to make it visible. Because it is impossible to know what copernicium looks like, there seem to be good grounds for thinking that it must be impossible to have a perceptual understanding of COPERNICIUM. There does not therefore seem to be a perceptual understanding of COPERNICIUM, as there is a perceptual understanding of RED. This means that we can have only our theoretical understanding (perhaps we can have a perceptual understanding of the element's various effects, but that seems to be something different). And yet this does not seem to constitute a deficiency in our understanding of COPERNICIUM. Our understanding of COPERNICIUM does not, for this reason, seem to be any less full than our understanding of GOLD.

Even if Goldie is right to talk about a perceptual understanding of DANGER, then, there will still be a question about how important this perceptual understanding is for our general understanding of DANGER. Is DANGER in this respect more like RED or GOLD? But even to ask this much may be getting ahead of ourselves. We need now to take a step back and ask whether it makes any sense to talk about a perceptual understanding of DANGER.

As we have seen, Goldie attributes a perceptual understanding of DANGER to Irene. But what reasons has he given for thinking that the understanding he describes really deserves to be called perceptual? Recall our first attempt at a definition of perceptual understanding: that it is an understanding of how things appear through one (or more) of the sensory modalities. If this is right, then perceptual understanding of DANGER would be a matter of understanding how dangerous things look (or tactilely feel, or sound, or smell). But this is not an argument that Goldie makes in this paper. He does not claim that Irene comes to know "how danger looks". And, indeed, it is unclear whether it makes sense to say that danger has a distinctive sort of look. It certainly seems doubtful that dangerous things have a look in the same way that coloured things do. Moreover, even if it does make sense to talk about the look of danger, we have been given no reason to think Irene should have been unable to know this look before feeling afraid. So this idea does not seem promising.

The clearest argument we found earlier in this chapter for thinking that Irene's experience of fear brings a new way of thinking about danger ran as follows. To be dangerous is to merit fear; so, to think about danger as such we need to be able to think about fear as such; to think about fear as such we need to be able to think about the phenomenology of fear; and we can only do this after we have experienced fear. So we can only think about danger as such, after

we have experienced fear. We need to have this experience in order to know the property to which DANGER refers. This understanding of DANGER is perceptual because it parallels Mary's perceptual understanding of RED. Mary also needs to experience red to know what RED refers to and so understand RED.

The problem here is that there seem to be good reasons for resisting the idea that evaluative concepts like danger can be understood in this in this perceptual way. In the sensory perceptual case, it is plausible to think about our understanding of sensory properties as being "read off" experience. We have the experience of the red thing and our understanding of RED can be more or less immediately derived from that experience. Of course, there is no guarantee that we will get it right and pick up on the relevant aspect of the experience (perhaps we initially mistake the visual texture for the colour, say). Having the experience does not guarantee acquiring the understanding. But when we do get it right it seems like we acquire our understanding by simply "picking up" or "reading off" the relevant property. This certainly seems to be what happens according to the sensation-based account of colour experience considered above: we acquire our understanding of RED simply by experiencing the red sensation and correctly associating it with "red".

But this seems too easy a route to understanding of evaluative concepts. Values just seem more complex in this respect. It seems implausible that we could acquire an understanding of what danger is, for example, simply by having a single experience of fear. The relationship between value and emotional experience seems more complicated than this. These issues are connected to the idea that in emotional experience intentionality and phenomenology are inextricably linked—an idea that remains plausible, but that I am claiming Goldie's argument fails to establish, because it relies on an analogy between emotional experience and colour experience that I have suggested we should reject. Understanding an evaluative concept such as DANGER may be somehow connected to knowing what it is like to feel fear, but the connection seems to be much more complicated than in the case of sensory experience and colour concepts. More seems to be involved here than simply knowing what the experience is like. I will return to this idea, and try and say more about what might be involved, in Chapter 4.

Much more appealing is the idea that our understanding of evaluative concepts has to be earned. We need to understand, for example, something of the way things go right or wrong.

Danger seems to partly be a matter of existential threat. To be endangered is to be at risk of coming to an end. It is implausible to think an understanding of these sort of complex aspects of value can simply be read off an emotional experience. If this is so for DANGER, it is likely to be even more so for concepts like SHAMEFUL or GUILTY which are connected with broader understandings of ethics or morality.

7. A Second Argument for Emotional Experientialism

There is another way to argue for emotional experientialism that may address some of the issues considered in the previous section. This builds on the idea we met towards the end of Section 3 that Irene, after experiencing fear, is able to think of DANGER in a new, phenomenologically-infused way. Before, she could think of the ice as meriting fear. Afterwards, she knows the phenomenology of fear, and so can think of the ice as meriting an experience with *that particular* phenomenology. This is a way of thinking of the danger of the ice, and so a way of understanding DANGER, in which emotional experience plays an essential role, as emotional experientialism claims.

Note that this claim about the inseparability of phenomenology and intentionality is distinct from Goldie's claim that there is something "perceptual" about Irene's understanding of DANGER. We can make the claim about inseparability of phenomenology and intentionality in a perceptual context, and claim, for example, that the phenomenology of Mary's experience of red is inseparable from its intentionality: from its being an experience *of* red. But we can also make this inseparability claim *outside* the perceptual context. For example, if we think that abstract thought has a phenomenology, then we might claim that there is an inseparable link between a thought being about a particular mathematical theorem and its having the particular phenomenology it does. The importance of this for my argument here is that Goldie's claim about the inseparability of phenomenology and intentionality can still be valid, even if we reject the idea that anything perceptual is going on here.[26]

We can now see, however, that Goldie's discussion in the passage quoted in Section 3 is particularly culpable of the sort of confusion between concept employment and concept acquisition that I identified in Section 4. Goldie talks about Irene now thinking of the ice "in

26 I think that Goldie may have confused these two claims and would have been better of dropping all reference to the perceptual from his argument.

a fearful way: she can now think of it *with fear*"; and this idea of "thinking with fear" very much suggests that he is contrasting thinking of the ice as dangerous while feeling afraid from thinking of it as such with no accompanying emotion. But if we are interested in Irene's acquisition of a new understanding of DANGER, then we should, as I argued in Section 4, be instead contrasting how she thinks of danger before and after first experiencing fear (whether or not her later thoughts are accompanied by any fear).

Brady (2013: 67), in criticising Goldie, ironically makes something very like the argument we are looking for:

> Suppose we assume that thinking of something as dangerous is thinking of it as meriting fear. If so, then a full or adequate grasp of the concept "dangerous" would seem to require that the subject thinks of it as meriting an emotional response with a typical or paradigmatic affective component; and this would seem to require that the subject has *had* the relevant affect or feeling.

To think of something as dangerous is to think of it as meriting fear. And Brady's idea seems to be that since fear has an affective component we cannot think of something as meriting fear unless we have ourselves experienced fear and so experienced that particular affective feeling. We can thus only possess the concept DANGER if we have previously experienced fear. This seems to me to be an alternative way of reconstructing the passage of Goldie quoted at the end of Section 3. It is also an argument for a sort of emotional experientialism: without emotional experience, we cannot possess an understanding of the corresponding evaluative concept. And this argument seems to be largely independent of the considerations about Irene's new abilities that we discussed in the last section.

Note that what Brady is arguing here seems to be stronger than Goldie's argument, as I originally presented it in Section 3. Goldie's claim is that Irene already in some sense possesses the concept DANGER before feeling fear: she already has a theoretical understanding of DANGER. What she gains after being afraid is a perceptual understanding of DANGER—she gains a deeper understanding of a concept that she has already in some sense grasped. But Brady seems to assume that without having oneself experienced the relevant affect or feeling a person cannot possess the corresponding concept, not even a theoretical understanding of it. Brady's exposition seems to me to be equivocal on this point, because he talks about a "full *or* adequate grasp" of DANGER (my italics). But the difference between these two may be more important than Brady acknowledges. If Irene's grasp of

DANGER before feeling fear is merely supposed to be not full, then this seems to be compatible with her understanding the concept in some sense. If, however, her grasp is supposed to be inadequate, then this sounds a lot more like she does not really understand the concept at all. If we accept this stronger reading, then Irene's prior theoretical understanding of DANGER starts to look dubious. It seems to me that it must be merely a pseudo-understanding, since if the stronger reading is right, then Irene cannot at this point possess the concept, DANGER. For this reason, I will put this stronger reading to one side and concentrate on the weaker in what follows.

I will now consider two problems for Goldie. These problems are not challenges to the soundness of the above argument per se. But Goldie makes certain claims about emotional experience and evaluative concepts and I think that these claims sit badly with the argument we have just presented. Two objections will be considered. The first is that Goldie (2002: 242) claims that in emotional experience "[i]ntentionality and phenomenology is inextricably linked." But in the next section it will be argued that the argument we have presented in this section seems to suggest that the role of phenomenology is more separable. The second objection is that although Goldie claims that Irene's new understanding of DANGER is perceptual, he does not present good reasons for thinking of it as such. The differences between Mary's new (perceptual) understanding of RED and Irene's new understanding of DANGER should make us cautious of assimilating the latter to the former.

8. The Link between Intentionality and Phenomenology

Recall that, as we saw in Section 1, Goldie wants to argue that the intentionality and phenomenology of emotional experience is "inextricably linked". He wants thus to give an alternative account of emotional experience to the so-called "add-on theories", which make emotional experiences composite states, combining separate intentional and phenomenological elements. Goldie claims, against the add-on theorists, that emotional experience is transformative of our cognition of value. With emotional experience comes a new way of thinking about evaluative concepts, like DANGER. When we are afraid of the ice for the first time we do not just experience a combination of the same old way of thinking of the ice as dangerous, plus an affective feeling. The way we think of the ice as dangerous is itself transformed. In this sense, intentionality and phenomenology are interlinked. We are now in a position to assess this claim. What grounds has Goldie given for thinking that

Irene's understanding of DANGER is transformed in this way?

As we saw in the last section, Irene's new understanding of DANGER seems to run through the thought that to be dangerous is to merit fear (or, to put it as I did in Chapter 1, to make fear appropriate). Goldie seems to allow that before ever having experienced fear, Irene can think of something as dangerous by thinking of the thing as meriting fear. In doing this, Irene can presumably think of the dangerous thing as meriting a response with a certain phenomenology, because she knows beforehand that fear has a certain phenomenology. Irene knows that there is something that it is like to experience fear, even before she has been afraid. She just does not yet know the exact nature of this phenomenology. All that seems to have changed after Irene's first experience of fear is that she now knows this phenomenology. Now when she thinks of something as dangerous, and so as meriting fear, she knows what it is like to experience the fear that dangerous things merit.

If this is the argument, then the transformative nature of the new understanding of DANGER seems to me to have been overstated. With the sort of gestalt shift that Goldie uses as comparison (see quotation in Section 1), the change in understanding can claim to be total—such is indeed implied by the very idea of a gestalt. In the famous duck-rabbit figure, for example, there is a sense in which a shift in gestalt changes how every element is perceived: the ears are now seen as the bill, the mouth as ears. Likewise perhaps for seeing a face in the moon: the trench becomes a mouth, the craters spots, and so on. Moreover, we can *describe* all of these changes of aspect so as to explain or at least gesture towards the nature of the transformation. By contrast, when it comes to Irene's new understanding of DANGER, very little seems to have changed on Goldie's account. Irene still understands the dangerous thing to merit fear, it is just that now she knows the phenomenology of this particular emotional experience. And we have seen no reason to think this knowledge transformative. This is not to say that there is no improvement in Irene's understanding of DANGER. But nothing has been said here to show that Irene's prior way of understanding and thinking about DANGER has been transformed—and so nothing has been said to show that intentionality and phenomenology are in any deep sense linked.

Another way of seeing this is by considering the contingency or necessity of the connection between intentionality and phenomenology. If intentionality and phenomenology really are intrinsically linked, then we might expect a particular intentionality (for example, a

presentation of the intentional object as dangerous) to be necessarily associated with a particular affective phenomenology (a feeling of fear). For add-on theories the relationship between intentionality and phenomenology seems to be a contingent matter. It is merely a contingent fact about human psychology and physiology that fear combines thinking as dangerous with the affective phenomenology of fear. But on this sort of picture it seems as if intentional and phenomenological elements could always have been differently mixed. For example, so that fear involves the sort of affective phenomenology that is actually associated with shame, say. For the add-on theorist, the link between phenomenology and intentionality will always be contingent in this way.

The problem with Goldie's argument, considered as an argument that the intentionality and phenomenology of emotional experience are inextricably linked, is that it gives us no more reason than the add-on theories for rejecting this contingency. Because Goldie fails to show that Irene's new understanding of DANGER is really transformative, he gives us no reason to think that the connection between intentionality and phenomenology is not just as contingent as it is for the add-on theorist. Goldie's account would run exactly the same if fear had a different phenomenology. Irene's new understanding of DANGER would function in just the same way, only she would have discovered that the fear that dangerous things merit has this different affective phenomenology rather than its actual one. The affective phenomenology of fear seems on Goldie's account simply to be "plugged in" to Irene's understanding of danger as meriting fear. And this makes it too easy to conceive of a different phenomenology being "plugged in" in an equivalent manner. On the account Goldie has provided it seems perfectly conceivable that Irene should instead discover that fear feels like shame, and this different phenomenology would fit just as readily with her prior theoretical understanding of DANGER.

How might Goldie respond to this challenge? One way would be to say more about merit or appropriateness. Irene is supposed beforehand to know that dangerous things merit fear. But her understanding of how they merit fear may be in a sense abstract. Perhaps when Irene experiences fear for the first time she not only comes to know the phenomenology of fear, but also comes to understand in a more concrete way how dangerous things merit fear. Irene's understanding of danger in terms of meriting fear would then be transformed in the sense that her understanding of the meriting that is involved is transformed. I will explore something very like this argument in Chapter 4.

There are difficulties here, however. I have gestured in a general way at a shift from an abstract to a more concrete understanding of how the evaluative property merits the emotional experience in response. But much more would need to be said about this. There are ways of understanding this relationship that do not seem very helpful for Goldie's account. For example, before experiencing fear, Irene seems able to understand that fear is an aversive reaction and that dangerous things are those that are likely to do us harm. On some accounts, this might seem sufficient for her to have a perfectly adequate understanding of the way that dangerous things merit fear (see D'Arms and Jacobson 2000). Other philosophers have advanced accounts that may be more congenial to Goldie (for example, Johnston 2001). But Goldie does not say nearly enough himself for us to be able to see how such an account might work.

Goldie's argument seems to fail by its own lights then: it does not establish an inextricable link between intentionality and phenomenology and so establishes no transformative newness in the way of thinking about danger that emotional experience offers. All that emotional experience allows is the identification of the phenomenology of the particular emotional experience that dangerous things merit.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I drew two arguments for emotional experientialism from Goldie's discussion of Irene. Goldie seems right to claim that we can have some theoretical understanding of evaluative concepts without having experienced the corresponding emotion. But his conception of the "perceptual" understanding that we can only have with actual emotional experience seems problematic. Goldie introduces some important ideas, like the idea that intentionality and phenomenology of emotional experience are inextricably linked, but as we have seen, Goldie's argument seems to lead us into conflict with this idea. Part of the problem here may be that Goldie assumes too close an analogy between Irene and Mary's case. The colour analogy may be helpful, but it can also be misleading. We need to more carefully identify the role emotional experience plays in our understanding of evaluative concepts. This role seems more important than the role perceptual experience plays in our understanding of a concept like GOLD, but not quite so central a role as that of perceptual experience in our understanding of a colour concept like RED. This is a question that will be

further explored in subsequent chapters.

3. Zagzebski and the Thinning of Evaluative Judgement

In this chapter, I discuss Linda Zagzebski who, like Peter Goldie, defends a version of emotional experientialism. Like Goldie, Zagzebski links specific emotional experiences (pity) with our understanding of specific evaluative concepts (PITIFUL), and so defends a version *specific* emotional experientialism.

Zagzebski is interested in the link between evaluative concepts and emotional experience because she wants to explain how evaluative judgements are motivating. She thinks emotional experience can help here because she takes emotional experience to be motivating. According to Zagzebski, linking emotional experience with evaluative concepts thus promises to help explain the action-guiding nature of evaluative judgements. I think that this is an important idea and one that Zagzebski is right to explore. But I will argue in this chapter that Zagzebski's treatment of these issues is not ultimately successful.

Zagzebski provides a compliment to Goldie because she gives a usefully contrasting argument. Goldie discusses Irene, who has some understanding (a theoretical understanding) of an evaluative concept before having had any emotional experience, and then asks what Irene gains with her first emotional experience. Irene understands DANGER to some degree, and Goldie's question is what happens to this understanding once Irene first experiences fear. Zagzebski, by contrast, starts with a person who is supposed to be able to apply an evaluative concept such as PITIFUL only while feeling pity for the thing that is judged to be pitiful. She then asks how such a person comes to be able to apply that concept *without* undergoing the corresponding emotional experience.

This is a question that is particularly pressing because Zagzebski (like Goldie) seems to think that in emotional experience—and so connectedly in evaluative concepts—intentional and (affective) phenomenological aspects are inseparably linked. Applying evaluative concepts *without* any accompanying emotional experience is an entirely ordinary part of normal life. We often judge that something is terrifying without feeling terror, or that something is

delightful while feeling no delight. Being incapable of doing this can be pathological. A person with post-traumatic stress disorder may, for example, be unable to think about some awful event in her life without reliving all of the emotions she experienced at the time. Ordinarily, affect and evaluative judgement are not so closely tied as this. If there really is an inseparable link in evaluative judgements between the affective and the descriptive then there seems to be at least a prima facie puzzle here. How do we explain the way that we come to be able to apply evaluative concepts without experiencing any accompanying affective phenomenology, while still maintaining that in evaluative concepts there is an inseparable link between the affective and the descriptive?

In this chapter, I will argue that Zagzebski's answer to this question is unsatisfactory. But the question itself is an important one, and if we want to better understand the role of emotional experience in our understanding of evaluative concepts it is one that we should try to address. Examining Zagzebski's account will thus be helpful for pointing the way towards what I hope will be a more successful treatment of these issues in Chapters 5 and 6.

This chapter has six sections. To understand Zagzebski's account, we need first to understand how she thinks about evaluative concepts and about emotional experience. In Section 1, I therefore discuss the particular class of evaluative concepts that Zagzebski is interested in in the paper under discussion (Zagzebski 2003), which she calls "thick affective concepts" and which are concepts with inseparable cognitive and affective aspects. In Section 2, I examine Zagzebski's account of emotional experience and explain how it forms the basis for an argument that the cognitive and affective aspects of thick affective concepts are inseparable.

In Section 3, I turn to Zagzebski's hierarchical account of evaluative judgement. I introduce Zagzebski's distinction between "ground level" evaluative judgements, which are accompanied by emotional experience, and "Level 2" evaluative judgements, which are evaluative judgements that diverge from our emotional experience—judgements like "I am ashamed, but that is not shameful" or "that is fearsome, but I am not afraid". In this section, I also explain how this picture commits Zagzebski to emotional experientialism. The following three sections then criticise Zagzebski's attempt to justify this distinction between ground level and Level 2 judgements. Sections 4 and 5 consider and reject two arguments that Zagzebski gives based on a supposed analogy with colour experience. Section 6 then presents an argument based on the idea of merit or appropriateness that it is argued *might* give

Zagzebski some of what she wants, but at the expense of undermining her picture of emotional experience.

1. Thick Affective Concepts

Zagzebski's account of the relation between emotional experience and evaluative judgement is peculiar because she concentrates on judgements that employ a particular sort of evaluative concept that she calls "thick affective concepts".[27] Zagzebski (2003: 109) defines thick affective concepts as concepts that "have both cognitive and affective aspects that cannot be pulled apart". It is thus in her discussion of thick affective concepts that Zagzebski attempts to establish the link between the evaluative intentionality and affective phenomenology. In this section, I introduce thick affective concepts; I try to explain what Zagzebski means by talking about these concepts as "cognitive" and "affective"; and I explain her reasons for thinking that in such concepts these two aspects are linked inseparably.

Zagzebski's thick affective concepts are closely related to thick evaluative concepts. Thick evaluative concepts are normally thought of as concepts that are both evaluative and descriptive.[28] They include concepts like PITIFUL, RUDE, WISE, and KIND. Thick evaluative concepts are contrasted with thin evaluative concepts like GOOD and BAD, which are evaluative but not descriptive (or are at any rate much less descriptive than thick evaluative concepts). Some philosophers think that the evaluative and descriptive aspects of thick evaluative concepts are inseparably linked.[29] These philosophers deny that we can think of thick evaluative concepts as composite concepts, with separate evaluative and descriptive elements. Zagzebski's definition of thick affective concepts thus closely parallels this way of thinking about thick evaluative concepts: thick evaluative concepts are concepts with inseparable descriptive and evaluative aspects; thick affective concepts are concepts with

27 In the paper under discussion, Zagzebski talks specifically about *moral* judgement, rather than about evaluative judgement in general. She seems, however, to conceive her discussion as applying to evaluative judgement more generally (Zagzebski 2003: 109). For this reason, and because it is more in keeping with the focus of this thesis, I will frame the discussion in terms of the evaluative rather than the moral.

28 For a critical discussion of this way of defining thick ethical concepts, see Kirchin 2013, 2017.

29 In early discussions of thick concepts, Foot (1958) argues for inseparability against Hare (1952: 121ff), who assumes separability. For more recent arguments for separability see Blackburn 1992, Gibbard 1992, and Elstein and Hurka 2009. Williams 2011 / 1985 endorses inseparability. For a more extensive discussion of these issues, see Kirchin 2010.

inseparable cognitive and affective aspects.

Zagzebski never makes very clear how she conceives the relation between thick affective concepts and thick evaluative concepts. I said above that thick affective concepts are a particular sort of thick evaluative concept, and sometimes Zagzebski seems to talk in this way. But at other times she suggests the relation is closer than this and even hints that talking about thick affective concepts might be a more helpful replacement for talking about thick evaluative concepts (Zagzebski 2003: 112). Her examples of thick affective concepts all seem also to be thick evaluative concepts, and she seems to conceive of the class of thick affective concepts as coterminous in extension with thick evaluative concepts as traditionally conceived (Zagzebski 2003: 114).[30] If we wanted a comprehensive account of the relation between the two sorts of thick concepts, we would need to understand the relation between the two sets of terms: between descriptive and evaluative on the one hand and cognitive and affective on the other. But this is something Zagzebski never gives us. This question is not an idle one, since sometimes Zagzebski seems to present her account of thick affective concepts as an *explanation* of the action-guiding nature of thick evaluative concepts. I will put these questions to one side for the remainder of this chapter and continue using Zagzebski's term.

Matters are also somewhat confused exegetically because when Zagzebski tries to explain how concepts like RUDE and PITIFUL are examples of thick affective concepts she starts with an argument that these concepts have *descriptive* content. This despite defining thick affective concepts in terms of their being *cognitive*. Zagzebski (2003: passim) talks throughout her paper apparently indiscriminately about cognitive and descriptive. Although Zagzebski never explains this equivocation, it is a relatively commonplace one. For Zagzebski (2003: 111), the possibility of getting it wrong seems to be central to both the descriptive and the cognitive. The idea is that descriptive concepts describe the world in a way that can be wrong in the sense that things turn out not to be how they are described to be. When we apply a concept that has descriptive content, a concept like, for example, SQUARE, then things can be otherwise than how they are described as being: the object can turn out to be circular, say. To apply a concept with descriptive content is thus to be in a cognitive state, a state in which we attempt to grasp how things are in a way that can go wrong. The concept itself can thus also be thought to be "cognitive" in the derivative sense that when one applies

30 Zagzebski seems to be open to the possibility that thick evaluative and thick affective concepts might not be exactly coterminous. But she gives no examples of concepts that she thinks are one but not the other.

it one is in a cognitive state. In this sense, to say a concept is descriptive and to say that it is cognitive is equivalent and Zagzebski's equivocation between descriptive and cognitive is to this extent justified.

To understand what Zagzebski means by "thick affective concept" it is helpful to look at how Zagzebski differentiates thick affective concepts from concepts like NAUSEATING. According to Zagzebski, unlike thick affective concepts, concepts like NAUSEATING are not descriptive. NAUSEATING, Zagzebski (2003: 110) says,

> does not have any descriptive content other than whatever *causes a feeling of nausea*. Hence, there is no limit in principle on the kinds of thing that can be nauseating. Whatever a person finds nauseating *is* nauseating.

The idea is that once we have understood what nausea is, we cannot be wrong in what we take to be nauseating. We cannot be wrong because there is no particular feature the object need have in order to be nauseating. Anything that causes nausea will count as such. Someone could be wrong in saying "that's nauseating" if, for example, they had been taught that "nausea" is the word for the feeling of ticklishness or some other feeling.[31] But for anyone who has correctly identified the feeling of nausea, and so understood the meaning of "nauseating", there can be no possibility of error. A concept like NAUSEATING is therefore not descriptive, Zagzebski thinks, because we cannot be wrong in our applications of it.[32]

The example Zagzebski uses to illustrate thick affective concepts is RUDE. As NAUSEATING has to do with causing a feeling of nausea, so RUDE has to do with causing a feeling of offence, Zagzebski claims. But by contrast with NAUSEATING, RUDE does have descriptive content:

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31 There is another way of going wrong in the case of nausea that Zagzebski does not discuss. This arises because of the possibility of wrongly identifying the cause of nausea: You think that the sea swell is making you nauseous, but really it is the old sandwich you had for breakfast. This sort of case deserves more attention than Zagzebski gives it. It touches on issues we will return to more fully in Section 6.

32 I am not sure Zagzebski is right, even about NAUSEATING. Consider, for example, the lactose-intolerant person who feels nauseous after eating a prize-winning cake. I think there is a good case for claiming that they would be wrong to say "this cake is nauseating". Something descriptive seems to be involved here. We want to say: "that cake's not nauseating, it's delicious!" Perhaps Zagzebski could distinguish this, more descriptive, sense of "nauseating" from a different, non-descriptive, sense, but it is not clear how exactly this would work. In any case, I will drop this complaint, and assume Zagzebski's account of NAUSEATING is right, for the sake of argument.

> "rude" applies to only a certain range of behavior. A person can get it wrong. She may take offense at something even though it is not rude, and […] it may be rude even though she does not take offense. (Zagzebski 2003: 111)

Zagzebski (2003: 111) partially endorses Philippa Foot's account of RUDE, according to which "what makes rude behavior rude is that it gives offence *because* it indicates lack of respect."[33] A person who feels offended by how they have been treated will thus be wrong in saying "that is rude" if the behaviour that caused their offence does not really indicate a lack of respect. If there is no lack of respect indicated, then the behaviour is not rude, even if it causes offence. Unlike NAUSEATING then, RUDE is descriptive because it only applies to a certain sort of behaviour; not all behaviour that causes offence counts as rude.

Thick affective concepts are descriptive. But what does Zagzebski mean by saying that they are also affective? Zagzebski (2003: 112) says, in explaining the affective nature of RUDE:

> feeling offended *is* intrinsically connected to the meaning of "rude," just as feeling nauseated is intrinsically connected to the meaning of "nauseating."

This is how Zagzebski distinguishes RUDE from concepts like, for example, SQUARE, that are descriptive but not affective. No sort of affect is associated with purely descriptive concepts like SQUARE. Being square is just a matter of sides and angles, it has nothing to do with affect. By contrast, being rude has something to do with giving offence. This might then be one thing that is meant by calling a concept "affective": a concept is affective if an affective feeling is intrinsically connected to the meaning of that concept (or to the meaning of the word that names the concept).

The problem here is to understand what Zagzebski means by saying that affect is "intrinsically connected" to the meaning of the thick affective concept. Zagzebski says that RUDE has "something to do" with giving offence, but this raises the question of what *exactly* it has to do with giving offence. There are two main options here, both of which we can see at work in Zagzebski's (2003: 111) channelling of Foot, quoted above: "what makes rude behavior rude is that it gives offence *because* it indicates lack of respect." The first option is

33 Zagzebski's endorsement of Foot's account is partial because she thinks that there is *some* attitude that rude behaviour must display, but she is not sure Foot is right that the relevant attitude is a "lack of respect". This is not an issue that affects the general course of Zagzebski's argument, although the fact that the best example Zagzebski can find of a thick concept is contentious in this way illustrates the difficulty we face in giving convincing accounts of thick concepts.

to read the “because” causally: rude behaviour is rude because it *causes* offence. And we will need to add here some specification of “normal” conditions, to deal with cases like those of the irascible person who is so sensitive that even innocuous remarks cause them to take offence. The second option (the option favoured by the neo-sentimentalist) is to read the “because” as indication of some sort of rationalising relationship: the behaviour is rude because it gives us reason to feel offence, or merits offence, or makes offence appropriate. It is this option that I endorse in this thesis. But as we shall see in Section 6, Zagzebski fails to adequately address these issues.

This then is what Zagzebski means by calling thick affective concepts cognitive and affective. They are cognitive in that they have descriptive content: we can be wrong in our application of them. And they are affective in that they have something to do with affective feeling.

But Zagzebski, recall, also thinks that the cognitive and affective aspects of thick affective concepts “cannot be pulled apart”. And for all that has been said so far, these two aspects of thick affective concepts might be separable. We have not yet seen why we should not think of RUDE as a composite concept, that applies just to things that have both i) “the descriptive feature of being a remark that expresses disdain for me and is uncalled for” and ii) that produce the kind of feelings that are associated with offence (Zagzebski 2003: 118). Likewise, we might think of Zagzebski’s (2003: 118) other favourite example of a thick affective concept, PITIFUL, as applying where a situation: i) “has the descriptive feature of being one in which a person with whom I do not identify is suffering” and where ii) it produces the kind of feelings that are associated with pity. In both these cases it looks like the cognitive and the affective elements can be independently satisfied.[34]

Zagzebski’s answer is that satisfying these two independent conditions is not sufficient for a thick affective concept to apply. More is needed. To see what more, we need to look at how Zagzebski conceives of emotional experience, in which Zagzebski thinks that thick affective concepts play an essential role. This will be the subject of the next section.

34 In both cases there will also be room to disagree over whether the right “descriptive feature” has been identified. For example, we might wonder, as Zagzebski (2003: 118) does, whether to be pitiful a person must also be “beneath me in status”. For the sake of argument, I will simply accept that some such satisfactory feature can be found.

2. Emotions, Thick Affective Concepts, and Inseparability

Zagzebski argues that emotional experiences are states that are intrinsically connected to thick affective concepts. How, then, does Zagzebski conceive of emotional experience? Zagzebski (2003: 104) claims that:

> an emotion is a state of affectively perceiving its intentional object as falling under a "thick affective concept" A, a concept that combines cognitive and affective aspects in a way that cannot be pulled apart. For example, in a state of pity an object is seen *as pitiful*, where to see something as pitiful is to be in a state that is both cognitive and affective.

Zagzebski thinks of emotional experience in perceptual terms. She thus agrees with the plausible view discussed in Chapter 1 (and also endorsed by Goldie—see Chapter 2) that emotional experience is intentional, like other forms of perception. Emotional experiences have intentional objects, and Zagzebski believes that emotional experiences present their objects in a particular way, namely as falling under thick affective concepts: when we pity something we see it as pitiful; when we are offended at a remark we see it as rude; when we rejoice at an event we see it as joyful; and so on. Thick affective concepts are thus supposed by Zagzebski to play a key role in emotional experience.

We should note at this point that the claim that emotional experience is perceptual is not one that Zagzebski argues for.[35] It is a contentious claim and one that, as we shall see, plays a key role in Zagzebski's account of how emotional experience forms the basis for understanding thick affective concepts. At this point I want only to flag this, however, as an issue that I will return to when discussing Zagzebski's account of how we come to acquire an understanding of thick affective concepts.

What I want to do in the remainder of this section is explain how Zagzebski conceives of emotional experiences as states in which affective and cognitive aspects are inseparably linked. Zagzebski's view seems to be that an emotional experience has the cognitive aspect it does in virtue of its affective aspect. It is the distinctive affective feel that the emotional experience possesses that allows it to represent its intentional object as falling under the particular thick affective concept that it does. So, for example, it is because pity feels the

35 For one argument to this conclusion, see Tappolet (2016).

particular affective way that it does that represents its object as pitiful.[36] Zagzebski never explicitly says as much, but this seems to me to be her view. The closest I am aware of her getting to saying this is in the following passage:

> My position is that the feelings that are aspects of emotions have a different "feel" than those that are similar but are not components of emotion. For example, I have suggested that it is possible to feel offended when the offense is not directed at an intentional object. In that case the feeling of offense is a "mere" feeling. The feeling of offense that is directed at an object seen as rude is a distinctive way of feeling offended. I propose that no one can feel *that* way without seeing something as rude, […] (Zagzebski 2003: 115)

If we have an experience with a certain affective feel, then we *must*, Zagzebski suggests, also cognise (see) things as being a certain way, namely as falling under the corresponding thick affective concept. If this way of thinking about emotional experience is right, then the affective aspect of an emotional experience cannot exist without its cognitive aspect. In this sense, the affective and the cognitive are inseparably linked in emotional experience.

With this picture of emotional experience in mind we can now review the account of the affective and cognitive aspects of thick affective concepts that I presented at the end of Section 1 and give some sort of argument that we cannot have the cognitive aspect of a thick affective concept without involving the affective. In giving this argument I am providing an argument that Zagzebski does not herself explicitly give, but it seems to be one that she might have given.

I said at the end of Section 1 that we had not yet seen why we should not think of RUDE as a composite concept that applies just to things that have both i) "the descriptive feature of being a remark that expresses disdain for me and is uncalled for" and ii) that produce offence. We can now see what Zagzebski thinks is wrong with taking these to be two independent conditions. The problem is that i) does not adequately specify the cognitive aspect of RUDE. These are descriptive features the nature of which Zagzebski supposes can be specified without any reference to offence. But Zagzebski seems to think that a remark can express disdain and be uncalled for without being rude. This means that there is more to the cognitive

36 This idea that the representational character of a state should be grounded in the phenomenal (here affective) character of the state has been discussed outside the context of emotions by defenders of "phenomenal intentionality". See, for example, Kriegel 2013.

aspect of RUDE than just this descriptive feature.

When I feel offended in the characteristic way associated with rudeness, and so have an emotional experience in which a remark is presented as rude, I am not merely construing that remark as expressing disdain for me and being uncalled for, according to Zagzebski. To present the remark in this way—as expressing disdain for me and as being uncalled for—is not yet to present it as *rude*. And the idea seems to be that we cannot further specify the nature of this cognitive aspect without appealing to the affective phenomenology of the emotional experience itself, without appealing to how that emotional experience presents the remark. There are no further (purely) descriptive features to appeal to. This means that the cognitive aspect of RUDE is not separable from the affective: we cannot specify the cognitive aspect of rude without appealing to how rude remarks are presented in the emotional experience of offence. To be rude is not just to express disdain and be uncalled for, it is to be as something is presented to be in an experience of offence.

If the above arguments are correct, then they would establish that the cognitive and affective aspects of thick affective concepts are inseparable. We cannot have the affective aspect without the cognitive because the affective aspect of emotional experience involves presenting the intentional object of that experience as falling under the thick affective concept. And we cannot have the cognitive aspect without the affective because there is no purely descriptive way of specifying the cognitive aspect of thick affective concepts. We have to appeal to the affective nature of emotional experience and to how it presents its intentional object.

3. "Ground Level" Evaluative Judgements

In Sections 1 and 2, we have seen what Zagzebski means by thick affective concepts and I have explained how she conceives of emotional experience. We are now in a position to put these two things together and start to describe the role that she thinks emotional experience plays in our understanding of thick affective concepts. We need to be careful here, because Zagzebski does not explicitly talk about understanding, but rather about our ability to make evaluative judgements. There is, I take it, a connection here, however, in that the range of evaluative judgements we are capable of making depends on our understanding of the evaluative concepts that we deploy in those judgements. Zagzebski's claims about our

acquisition of an ability to make certain sorts of evaluative judgement thus entail that we acquire an understanding of the evaluative concepts these judgements involve.

Zagzebski discusses the different sort of judgements we might make using thick affective concepts as part of a process that she calls “the thinning of moral judgement”. This process of thinning results in an ability to employ thick affective concepts in different contexts and so in a deepening of our understanding of these concepts. Zagzebski (2003) presents this thinning process as producing a three-tiered account of evaluative judgement. Ground level judgements are judgements that are made while experiencing the relevant emotion. An example of a ground level judgement would thus be the judgement “that person is pitiful” made while feeling pity for the person. The first stage in the thinning gets us “Level 2” judgements. These are judgements that apply thick affective concepts in the absence of the corresponding emotional experience. So the judgement “that person is pitiful”, if made without feeling pity, would be an example of a Level 2 judgement. Zagzebski then supposes there is a further stage in the process of thinning that leads to Level 3 judgements. These employ thin evaluative concepts like GOOD and BAD. Because Level 3 judgements do not employ thick affective concepts, my focus here will be on ground level and Level 2 judgements and on how we come to be able to make judgements of each sort.

At this point there is, however, a question to which Zagzebski pays too little attention: the question of how we come to be able to make ground level judgements in the first place. The question of how evaluative judgement is “thinned”, of how we come to be able to make Level 2 judgements is one about which Zagzebski has much to say—and it is an important question to which we will return. But the question of how evaluative judgement gets started, as Zagzebski supposes it does with ground level judgements, is equally important. What is more, it seems to be Zagzebski’s answer to this question, so far as she has one, that commits her to emotional experientialism.

Zagzebski is committed to emotional experientialism because she makes all evaluative judgements depend on ground level evaluative judgements; and ground level evaluative judgements are judgements accompanied by emotional experience and so judgements in which emotional experience plays an essential role. Zagzebski (2003: 104, 122) claims that ground level judgements are the most “basic” sort of evaluative judgement. She claims that we cannot go on to make higher level evaluative judgements without first having made

ground level judgements. Ground level judgements thus serve as "foundation" (Zagzebski 2003: 109) for all other evaluative judgements. And since ground level judgements are made with emotional experience, we will be unable to make judgements involving a particular thick affective concept without first having had the corresponding emotional experience.

This means that Zagzebski defends a form of what I called in Chapter 1 *specific* emotional experientialism: we must experience offence and make the corresponding ground level judgement of rudeness in order to start to understand RUDE; we must experience pity and make the corresponding ground level judgement in order to start to understand PITIFUL; and so on. Her emotional experientialism seems to connect specific types of emotional experience with our understanding of specific evaluative concepts.

But there is a gap here. Ground level judgements are (by definition) accompanied by emotional experience, but exactly what role does Zagzebski suppose emotional experience plays in them and, more specifically, what role does it play in our acquiring the ability to make such judgements? Zagzebski's idea seems to be that emotional experience is basic in the sense that we can have a particular emotional experience without the need for any prior understanding of the evaluative concepts involved. We can feel offended, for example, without any prior understanding of RUDE. The ground level judgement is then made by picking up on this element of our experience and expressing it, in our example by saying "that is rude" (there will presumably be a question in novel cases how the maker of the judgement comes to know the right word).[37] It seems to me to be only in some such way that we can do justice to Zagzebski's claims that ground level judgements are basic or foundational.

This sort of picture of how we come to make evaluative judgements seems to me to be implausible. One problem is that it is doubtful in many cases whether we can experience an emotion without *already* possessing a great deal of understanding of the evaluative issues that are in play. In the case of RUDE, for example, it seems implausible that we can be offended in the characteristic way unless we already understand much about social expectations and the possibility of losing or gaining in standing amongst our peers. Emotional experience just

37 On this picture, the evaluative concept seems to be *derived* from emotional experience. This would make Zagzebski an emotional empiricist as well as an emotional experientialist (in the terminology of Chapter 1).

does not seem to be basic in the way Zagzebski requires.[38] It is implausible to think of emotional experience in this way as foundational material on which our evaluative understanding can be built. It seems much more plausible to think that our capacity for emotional experience and our understanding of evaluative concepts develop in check with each other. We will return to these issues in Section 6 below.

In the next two sections, I turn to Zagzebski's description of the thinning of evaluative judgement and reconstruct two different ways the process might be supposed to work.

4. Direct and Indirect Evaluative Judgements

How then does Zagzebski think the thinning of evaluative judgement comes about? How are we supposed to get from only making (ground level) evaluative judgements that are accompanied by emotional experience to making (level 2) evaluative judgements without feeling the corresponding emotion? I will start in this section with an argument Zagzebski gives concerning concept employment, but I will argue that this argument does not work. I will therefore attempt to reconstruct a different argument, one in terms of concept acquisition, in Section 5.

Before looking in detail at Zagzebski's argument, we need to note a problem with her presentation that applies both to the argument I will consider in this section and to the alternative argument of the next. The problem is that Zagzebski, like Goldie (see Chapter 2), fails to properly distinguish questions of concept acquisition from questions of concept employment. One way of telling Zagzebski's story of the thinning of evaluative judgement (here concentrating only on the first two levels) would be as a story about the acquisition of understanding. We first have emotional experiences (feel pity) and express these by attributing evaluative concepts (we say "that's pitiful"). At this point Zagzebski thinks that we do not yet understand these evaluative concepts (PITIFUL) in such a way as to allow for the concept to apply to things that we do not feel the emotion toward: we do not yet grasp that PITIFUL can apply to things without our feeling pity for them. Then we come to grasp this fact (by some process, as yet to be explained). We thus come to acquire a better understanding of the concept. Once we have this understanding, however, there seems no reason to think it should not be able to apply generally. Now, when we make an evaluative

38 There may be some types of emotional experience where it looks more likely, for example fear.

judgement while experiencing the corresponding emotion (when we feel pity and say "that is pitiful") there seems no reason to think that in making this judgement we are not employing our new understanding of the evaluative concept. On this way of looking at things, Zagzebski's levels of judgement would be *phases* that we pass through as our understanding of an evaluative concept deepens. First we make ground level judgements of evaluative properties, then, as we acquire further understanding, we "level up" and our judgements from then on are made at Level 2.

The other option is to claim that there is some difference in how the evaluative concept is employed in the two sorts of judgement—some important difference between the judgement "that is pitiful" when it is made while feeling pity (the ground level judgement) versus the judgement "that is pitiful" when made without emotion (the Level 2 judgement)—and that this difference persists even after our understanding of the evaluative concept has deepened. We will continue, then, to make both ground level and Level 2 judgements depending on whether or not our judgement is accompanied by the relevant emotional experience. If this is the argument, then the nature of the ground level judgement is not changed by the acquisition of new understanding and new ability to make Level 2 judgements. Zagzebski often encourages this understanding of her argument, and indeed, if ground level and Level 2 judgements are defined, as they were above, in terms of whether or not there is an accompanying emotional experience it looks like they must be understood in this way.

I think that the first of these two approaches is most plausible. It seems strange to insist on there being a difference between the judgement "that is pitiful" made with and without pity.[39] The interesting way of interpreting Zagzebski's question is as a question about how we come to be able to make such a judgement without feeling pity. But once we have acquired this ability, and so deepened our understanding of PITIFUL, it is plausible to think that this new understanding will be in play in *all* our judgements of pitifulness, whether or not these judgements are accompanied by pity. The difficulty here is that, when we turn to Zagzebski's arguments, these issues remain confused. She offers one argument which is most naturally understood as concerning the issue of employment and another which is more naturally understood as concerning acquisition. The first argument is the subject of the remainder of this section. I will return to the second argument in the next section, Section 5.

39 This was also the point of Michael Brady's argument against Peter Goldie, discussed in Chapter 2.

When Zagzebski distinguishes between ground level and Level 2 judgments she does so not on the basis that Level 2 judgements involve a more developed understanding of the evaluative concepts they employ. She does so rather on the basis of the condition the subject is in when they employ the evaluative concept. Her argument is thus about concept employment, not concept acquisition. The defining difference between the two sorts of judgement is that in ground level judgements the evaluative concept is applied while undergoing an emotional experience which presents its intentional object as falling under that evaluative concept. Whereas in Level 2 judgements the evaluative concept is applied while undergoing no such emotional experience. "This is pitiful" would be a ground level judgement if made while feeling pity for the thing, a Level 2 judgement if not.

We should note at this point that Zagzebski's confusion of concept acquisition and concept employment is associated with a tendency to unhelpfully blur the lines between concepts and the mental state of a subject who employs the concept. This tendency makes her discussion somewhat confused here. The natural thing to say about the two judgements discussed in the previous paragraph is that we have two different acts of judgement (two separate mental states) in which the same judgement (i.e. the judgement "that person is pitiful") is made. In both cases it is also natural to say that the same concept, PITIFUL, is applied. But Zagzebski avoids saying either of these things. Indeed, because the mental states of the subjects making the judgement are different, Zagzebski might be inclined to say that we have two different concepts, PITIFUL (GROUND LEVEL) and PITIFUL (LEVEL 2). Zagzebski never does say as much, and I take it that such a claim would be deeply unattractive. More attractive would be the idea that we have two different understandings of the same concept, PITIFUL. But here again we again run up against Zagzebski's confusion between concept acquisition and employment. Once one has acquired the understanding of PITIFUL associated with Level 2 judgements it is difficult to see why this understanding should not then be employed also in judgements made when there is an accompanying emotional experience. I will assume, then, in what follows, that it is the same judgement made in each case, employing the same concept.

The question, then, is whether we can identify any important differences between ground level and Level 2 judgements, other than the defining difference that one is made with and one without an accompanying emotional experience: what difference does it make whether the judgement is made with or without an accompanying emotional experience?

The main distinction Zagzebski (2003: 119-121) draws between ground level and Level 2 judgements is that ground level judgements are "direct", whereas Level 2 judgements are "indirect". Zagzebski explains what she means by this by analogy with colour experience. When we perceive the colour of a thing we are then in a position to make what she calls a "direct" judgement of colour. But even when we do not perceive a thing's colour we can often make judgement as to what colour it is. Zagzebski calls these judgements "indirect". With a red thing, Zagzebski (2003: 119) suggests we can make indirect judgements of its redness if we "see signs of its redness." Her example is judging that a sign is red on the basis of seeing that it had the characteristic shape of a stop sign. But Zagzebski's emphasis on seeing signs is probably a red herring, unless seeing is understood very broadly. We often judge the colours of things on the basis of testimony, for example, and although it is plausible to say that this judgement is indirect in the sense that it is not perceptual it seems wrong to say that it is made on the basis of "seeing signs" of the colour. The idea of a judgement's being direct or indirect would seem thus to depend rather on the idea that perception is the direct (and in this sense privileged) mode of access to what we are judging. Any judgement that is non-perceptual is considered to be not direct. This idea has a great deal of plausibility in the case of sensory perception.

The problem, however, is that it is by no means obvious that we can talk in the same way about the directness or indirectness of evaluative judgements. In talking in this way, Zagzebski seems to be taking it for granted that the perceptual analogy holds. Zagzebski has given us no argument that emotional experience really does constitute a privileged mode of access to evaluative properties, as sensory experience gives us a privileged mode of access to sensory properties. So her claim that ground level judgements are "direct" seems simply to be begging the question.

Perhaps Zagzebski might claim that ground level judgements are direct because they are accompanied by emotional experience and that Level 2 judgements are indirect in the sense that they are not accompanied by any actual emotional experience but rather indicate that an emotional experience ought to or would normally be produced. The Level 2 judgement "that is pitiful" would thus be indirect because it would not be made while actually feeling pity for the pitiful person, but would register that the person was deserving of pity. The problem with this way of thinking about indirectness is that the ways we have been gesturing towards a

definition—in terms of "ought", "normal production", and "deservingness" of pity—are all quite different and more would need to be said to specify in exactly what way we should understand these notions to be connected to the evaluative concept. Zagzebski does not give us any of this and this failure, as we shall see in Section 6, constitutes a major failing of her account and raises questions about whether her ground level judgements genuinely deserve to be called evaluative.

This argument fails, then, to provide us with any good reasons for thinking that there are important differences between evaluative judgements that are made with and without accompanying emotional experience.

5. Memory Traces

We can now turn to Zagzebski's second way of specifying the difference between ground level and Level 2 judgements, the argument that seems more naturally understood in terms of concept acquisition.

Although I am claiming this argument is more naturally understood in terms of concept acquisition, Zagzebski's exposition begins with a point about concept employment. She claims that whenever we judge that a thick affective concept applies we must somehow bear in mind the corresponding emotional experience: either because we are now having that experience (as in a ground level judgement) or because we bring to mind a "memory trace" of it. This latter is what Zagzebski (2003: 119) suggests we must do when making a Level 2 judgement:

> In an indirect [i.e. Level 2] judgment it is likely that I must still be able to imagine seeing something as pitiful or as red, but even imagining requires a faint copy of the pity feeling and the red sensation in my mind. (Here I think Hume probably had it right). We need to be able to do this to even understand what is said when someone judges that something is red or pitiful. Without a memory trace of the sensation or feeling we cannot understand the judgment at all.

The idea here might be that to possess the concept we must be acquainted with the referent of the concept and this we cannot be without having the relevant experience. But in Zagzebski's hands the idea becomes very strong indeed, because not only do we need to have had the

relevant experience at some point in the past to possess the concept. Rather, any time we want to apply the concept we need to relive that experience, either by actually undergoing the experience again (as in ground level judgement) or by reliving it in imagination. This "flashcard" notion of concept employment seems quite implausible. But taken as an argument about *acquisition* of our understanding of evaluative concepts, there might be a more promising argument here. This alternative idea would be that we derive the ability to make Level 2 judgements from ground level judgements because we cannot make Level 2 judgements without knowledge of what the thick affective concept refers to, and this we cannot have without a "memory trace" of the corresponding emotional experience and so without having had that experience at some point in the past.

Before considering particular problems with this account, we should note that we have already seen in Chapter 2 of this thesis one reason for thinking Zagzebski's claims implausible. This is Goldie's Irene. She seems to be capable of making evaluative judgements without having had any emotional experience that might produce the correct "memory trace": Irene can make judgements of DANGER before she has ever experienced fear. Irene does not necessarily present a fatal objection to Zagzebski, because it may be possible to argue that Irene's pre-experience understanding is in some sense deficient. What we would need to argue here is that Irene's theoretical understanding of DANGER is merely a pseudo-understanding. But Zagzebski presents us with no such argument, and I am sceptical about the prospects of making such an argument successfully.

Another problem with Zagzebski's account of how we acquire the ability to make Level 2 judgements is that it is incomplete. If all we have to do to make a Level 2 judgement of PITIFUL is to remember a past emotional experience of pity, then this seems like something we should be able to do as soon as we have experienced pity for the first time. There does not seem to be any real development in our understanding of PITIFUL here. And yet, for Zagzebski, the ability to make Level 2 judgements was supposed to be associated with an understanding of the possible ways in which the application conditions of PITIFUL come apart from our emotional experience. Before, we can only make ground level judgements, only judge that something is pitiful when we feel pity for it. After, we can make Level 2 judgements like "that is pitiful (but I do not pity it)" and "that is not pitiful (but I feel pity)". Zagzebski gives us no explanation of how we come to develop this understanding of the dissociation of thick affective concept from emotional experience. Zagzebski (2003: 120)

says:

> A statement like "I pity her, but she is not pitiful" is like "I have a red sensation, but that object is not red." We understand how it is possible to make such judgments because we also understand how they are descendants of the ground level uses of the concepts *red* and *pity*.

But this is just what we do not yet understand. Although the idea of a "memory trace" suggests how Level 2 judgements are derived from ground level judgements, we have as yet no explanation of how we should come to make Level 2 judgements in the first place: no explanation of why we should ever start to apply thick affective concepts outside of ground level judgements.

There are reasons why Zagzebski should find it difficult to say more to explain how the dissociation of thick affective concept from emotional experience comes about. As we shall see in the next section, thinking more carefully about how thick affective concept and emotional experience can come apart puts pressure on Zagzebski's picture of evaluative judgement. Emotional experience cannot be all that Zagzebski claims: it cannot both play the foundational role that Zagzebski supposes it does, and at the same time represent its intentional object as falling under a genuinely evaluative concept.

6. How to Get It Wrong Revisited

What we are looking for is an explanation of how we come to acquire the ability to make Level 2 judgements: judgements like "that is pitiful" made while feeling no pity and "that is not pitiful" made while pitying the thing. The idea is that to acquire this ability we need to understand how the emotional experience and thick affective concept can sometimes come apart. Zagzebski's idea is that ground level judgements are expressions of emotional experience; and emotional experience presents its intentional object as falling under a thick affective concept. Acquiring the ability to make Level 2 judgements will thus involve acquiring an understanding of *how* emotional experience goes wrong: of how PITIFUL can sometimes apply even to objects that do not make us feel pity and inversely of how PITIFUL can sometimes fail to apply even when our emotional experience presents it as doing so. Zagzebski does not really explain this in any explicit way, so I will attempt to provide an explanation for her.

One possible explanation would appeal back to Zagzebski's argument that thick affective concepts have descriptive (cognitive) content, the argument that I discussed in Section 1 of this chapter. Recall that the argument there was that the thick affective concept only applied if certain descriptive features were present. And this meant that we could go wrong in applying a thick affective concept if the descriptive features in question were not really present. So, for example, PITIFUL only applies where "a situation has the descriptive feature of being one in which a person with whom I do not identify is suffering". This, then, is one way in which emotional experience and thick affective concept can come apart. You see someone and they appear to be doubled up in suffering; you feel pity; you make the explicit ground level judgement "that is pitiful". But really the person is doubled up in silent laughter and is not suffering at all. The relevant descriptive features of PITIFUL are thus not really present and so the concept does not really apply. Your ground level judgement that the person is pitiful is wrong.

In this case the error seems located in the cognitive basis of the emotional experience. You take yourself to be seeing someone who suffers and it is this that causes your pity. This belief is the cognitive basis for your emotional experience. When the cognitive basis is removed, it is therefore plausible to think that you will cease to feel pity. Once you realise that the person is not really suffering, in normal cases you will stop feeling pity (there may be some "affective lag" while the emotion dissipates).[40]

Could understanding this possibility of wrongly applying thick affective concepts be associated with acquiring the ability to make Level 2 judgements? I do not think so. This possibility of being wrong does not really capture the way Level 2 judgements diverge from emotional experience. Start by considering the Level 2 judgement "I pity that, but it is not pitiful". This does not seem to be a judgement that we could make on the above basis. When we realise that there is some error in the cognitive basis of an emotion, this realisation seems to go along with a cessation of pity. It does not, then, describe the situation of this sort of Level 2 judgement, in which the emotional experience is supposed to be ongoing, and yet the thick affective concept is still judged not to apply.

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40 Sometimes the emotion will not cease, even when we realise that it is not appropriate. We are still afraid of the mouse, even though we know it poses no danger. This is the problem of recalcitrant emotions. Recalcitrant emotions have been the focus of interest because of questions about their rationality. See: D'Arms and Jacobson 2003, Brady 2009, Döring 2014, 2015.

Nor does this possibility of being wrong really capture the way the other sort of Level 2 judgement diverges from emotional experience. This second sort of Level 2 judgement is a judgement like "That is pitiful, but I do not pity it." If the above considerations were to justify such a judgement, they would presumably do so because we feel no emotion and yet we recognise that the relevant descriptive features are present. We feel no pity for a person, while recognising that they are a person who is suffering and with whom we do not identify. The problem here is that, as we saw at the end of Section 2, the fact that these purely descriptive features apply is not a sufficient condition for the application of the thick affective concept. There is more to being pitiful than just being a person who is suffering and with whom we do not identify. (This was a claim that Zagzebski needed in order to make good her argument that the affective and cognitive aspects of thick affective concepts are inseparable.) This means that recognising that the relevant descriptive features are present does not provide sufficient grounds for claiming that the corresponding thick affective concept applies.

Recall what more Zagzebski thinks is needed. Zagzebski thinks that for a situation to be pitiful is for it to be construed as it is in an emotional experience of pity. And Zagzebski thinks that in this emotional experience, the remark is seen as falling under the thick affective concept, PITIFUL. What we seem to need to understand, in order to be able to make Level 2 judgements, is how the relevant descriptive features can be in place, and yet the thick affective concept not apply.

Here is where it seems helpful to appeal to the idea of appropriateness.[41] The claim is that for PITIFUL to apply, pity must be appropriate. This allows us to make Level 2 judgements where we recognise some disconnect between the emotional experience we are having and the emotional experience we take to be appropriate. This might happen if, for example, we know that we are in an emotionally overwrought state and are liable to be set off by the slightest signs of suffering. We may then feel pity, but take pity not to be appropriate. We might therefore make the Level 2 judgement: "I pity that, but it is not pitiful". Alternately we might find ourselves too focused on our own concerns to feel much for others. We pass someone who genuinely does deserve our pity, but cannot bring ourselves to feel anything and so make the Level 2 judgement: "that is pitiful, but I do not pity it."

41 As does neo-sentimentalism. See Chapter 1.

A key point here for anyone, like Zagzebski, who wants to maintain the inseparability of the affective and the cognitive will be to insist that whether or not an emotional response is appropriate is not reducible to questions of purely descriptive features. For example, in the previous paragraph I said that we might sometimes judge "I pity that, but it is not pitiful" where we are emotionally overwrought and so are set off by the slightest signs of suffering. One response to this observation might be to revise the specification of the descriptive features that are relevant for PITIFUL, and claim that PITIFUL only applies in situations where the suffering fails to pass a certain threshold. The claim would then be that it is this descriptive feature of the situation (and not, or not directly, whether or not the situation makes pity appropriate) that we are recognising when we judge that the situation is not pitiful. The right response to this objection, for someone who wants to insist on inseparability, seems to be to allow that judgements of appropriateness supervene on judgements of descriptive features, but to deny that there is any satisfactory way to specify purely descriptive conditions for the application of thick concepts like PITIFUL. We thus have to appeal to the idea of appropriateness (or to a similar notion like merit).

This then seems to be the most fruitful suggestion as to what we are coming to understand when we acquire the ability to make Level 2 judgement: we are acquiring an understanding of how emotional experiences are or are not appropriate. It is this notion of appropriateness that allows us to understand how our actual emotional experience can come apart from the evaluative properties of the object, as it does in Level 2 judgements. Of course, there is a great deal more that would need to be said to adequately explain how this understanding is acquired—how we come to think of some emotional experiences as appropriate and others as not.[42] For now we need only observe the pressure that this puts on Zagzebski's claims about the hierarchy of evaluative judgements, and about the nature of emotional experience.

The main problem is that the idea of appropriateness seems to be an essential feature of evaluative judgements (as neo-sentimentalists claim). When we say "that is pitiful", we are registering that pity is appropriate. But if this is right, then it should make us doubt whether the original ground level judgement is genuinely evaluative. This is because Zagzebski's hierarchical picture seems to require that ground level judgements do not involve any understanding of this notion of appropriateness. Zagzebski wants to claim both that emotional

42 This is related to the point observed in Chapter 2, that we seem to learn something when we learn about the neo-sentimentalist biconditional, even without having had the relevant emotional experience.

experience is basic in the sense that it is foundational *and* that it presents its object as falling under a genuinely evaluative, thick affective concept. It seems impossible for both these claims to be true.

The problem is that if Zagzebski is right that emotional experiences present their intentional objects as falling under thick affective concepts like RUDE and PITIFUL, then this seems to involve presenting their intentional objects as making the relevant emotional experiences appropriate. But if this is so, then emotional experience would already involve the notion of appropriateness that was supposed to come in only at Level 2 of Zagzebski's hierarchy of evaluative judgement. We would seem to already need some understanding of appropriateness in order for emotional experience to present things in terms of appropriateness.[43] And emotional experience looks therefore like a much less plausible basis for a foundational account of evaluative judgement.

We can now also see what is questionable about Zagzebski's claim that there are expressions of emotion that count as ground level evaluative judgements. Zagzebski (2003: 116) claims:

> One way an emotion can be expressed is by asserting that the intentional object of the emotion falls under the thick concept. So in saying "That remark is rude," or "He is contemptible," or "She is pitiful," I can be expressing the emotions of offense, contempt, or pity, respectively. Not all uses of these sentences express emotions, and we will get to that presently, but I propose that the ground level use of these sentences, the one we use in learning thick concepts, and the one we continue to use as the point of reference for all other uses, is the expression of emotion.

The problem with this proposal is that there are many ways of expressing emotions that have no claim to be "ground level". For example, one way of expressing my pity at seeing a person living on the streets might be to say "it is shameful what the government has done to social housing". This expression of pity obviously involves a great deal of understanding extraneous to the immediate emotional experience, of the suffering and its potential causes. But if what we have been arguing in this section is right, then expressing one's pity by saying "she is

43 One possible line of response to this objection would claim that emotional experience presents its objects as having (particular, thick) evaluative properties, but it does so non-conceptually. Christine Tappolet (2016, 16-17) argues this. The problem with this line of response is that it is not clear the idea of a non-conceptual presentation of evaluative properties really makes sense, but the details of the argument are too complex to go into here.

pitiful" may also involve a sort of understanding, namely of the way she makes our pity appropriate. The proposal that in expressing our emotion in this way we are at a "ground level use of these sentences" is thus contentious. The most plausibly "ground level" way to express our pity would simply be to say "I pity that". But to say this is not yet to make an evaluative judgement of any sort. Perhaps we could build a foundational account of evaluative judgement on such a basis, but it would be a different account to Zagzebski's.

Conclusion

Zagzebski's account of the relationship between emotional experience and evaluative judgement held out hope of explaining the motivational character of evaluative judgement. But I have argued that her account is unclear and faces serious objections. A major difficulty is that she never adequately explains how we are supposed to get from ground level judgements of thick affective concepts, that are expressions of currently felt emotional experience, to Level 2 judgements in which we are able to recognise some disconnect between our current emotional experience and the thick affective concept that genuinely applies. I have argued that the most plausible way to make sense of this disconnect is in terms of the idea of appropriateness.

The problem for Zagzebski's account is that if emotional experience presents its object as falling under a thick affective concept, as Zagzebski claims it does, then emotional experience seems to already involve the idea of appropriateness. For something to be rude is not just for it to cause offence (of the relevant sort). If it is genuinely rude, then the offence must be appropriate. But the consequence of this seems to be that if emotional experience is to present a remark as rude, it must present it as making offence appropriate. And then the notion of appropriateness that might have been supposed to only come in at Level 2 of Zagzebski's hierarchy actually seems to need to be present at the ground level, in emotional experience itself.

The problem is therefore that it seems inconsistent to claim both that emotional experience forms the foundation for a hierarchy of evaluative judgement *and* that emotional experience presents its object as falling under an evaluative concept. Zagzebski might perhaps be able to salvage elements of either claim if she were to abandon the other, but this would involve substantial revision to the picture she presents of both emotional experience and the

acquisition of understanding of evaluative concepts.

Zagzebski is right to emphasise the connection between evaluative concepts and motivation, and there is promise in the idea that appealing to emotional experience can help elucidate this connection. But Zagzebski does not do so successfully, I have argued in this chapter. In the final three chapters of this thesis I will present an alternative account of the role of emotional experience in our understanding of evaluative concepts that I think better explains these issues.

4. Valuing, Emotional Experience, and Understanding of Value

In this chapter, I want to consider a different argument for emotional experientialism, one based on the idea of valuing. We should endorse this argument, I will argue, but it only secures emotional experientialism in its general form and it does not support specific forms of emotional experientialism.

In Section 1, I introduce the notion of valuing, making use of an account given by Samuel Scheffler (2013). On this account, valuing something involves being emotionally vulnerable to that thing. This allows us to distinguish between valuing something and merely believing it to be valuable. The connection between value and emotional experience offers some promise for an argument for emotional experientialism, but as we shall see, this is ruled out on Scheffler's own account, because he seems to think that there is no distinctive cognitive achievement involved in valuing.

In the rest of the chapter, I turn to the work of Julien A. Deonna and Fabrice Teroni (2012). There, I find a different view of valuing, according to which valuing *does* involve a distinctive cognitive achievement. I use this view to reconstruct an argument for emotional experientialism. The remainder of the chapter is devoted to this argument.[44] Section 2 clarifies Deonna and Teroni's remarks and reconstructs an argument from them. Section 3 argues that the best way of understanding this argument is in terms of valuing, a notion to which Deonna and Teroni do not themselves explicitly appeal. Section 4 concludes the development of the argument by discussing a key idea in Deonna and Teroni's remarks, the idea of "the point of our evaluative practices", an understanding of which they suppose a creature without emotional experience must lack. This is not an idea that Deonna and Teroni themselves elaborate on, so this section develops the idea in terms of our understanding of what it is like to value something. In turn, I argue that by acquiring this understanding of

44 This argument is closely related to, and in broad agreement with, an argument given in Vanello (2020). Vanello agrees that acquiring an understanding of evaluative concepts involves emotional experience, and argues that this is so because emotional experience involves the formation of rationally intelligible motivational states.

what it is like to value, one acquires an understanding of why a given emotional experience is appropriate in given circumstances. Section 5 explains the type of emotional experientialism that we get from this argument, claiming that it can be interpreted as an argument for either its general or more specific form.

Section 6 identifies a problem with the argument: we sometimes seem able to have the relevant understanding on the basis of imagination and without needing to actually experience the emotion for ourselves, an idea that will be explored more fully in Chapters 5 and 6. Here I argue that this means that the reconstructed argument can support a general sort of emotional experientialism, but it does not support more specific forms of emotional experientialism.

1. Valuing, Believing to be Valuable, and Emotional Experience

In this section, I consider an account of valuing recently given by Scheffler (2013). I do not endorse Scheffler's account in its entirety, but I think it provides a helpful starting point for discussing valuing and the role it might play in our understanding of evaluative concepts. As we shall see, two features of the account hold promise for a defender of emotional experientialism. First, Scheffler distinguishes between valuing something and believing it to be of value. For example, I might believe gardening to be of value, without it being an activity that I myself value. We believe all sorts of things to be of value, but we only value a subset of those things. Second, Scheffler claims that valuing involves emotional experience. Were I to value gardening, then I would be emotionally responsive to a whole range of gardening-related issues that, not valuing gardening, I am not now emotionally responsive to.

These two claims can be combined with a third to give the basis for an argument for emotional experientialism: the claim that emotional experience has an essential role to play in our understanding of evaluative concepts. This third claim is the claim that when we value things we cognise their value in a way that we do not when we merely believe them to be valuable. There is then a distinctive cognitive achievement to valuing and an associated distinctive form of understanding of the related evaluative concepts. This is an understanding of evaluative concepts that we can only have if we have valued things in the relevant way. There is thus an essential role for valuing to play in this understanding of evaluative concepts, and so also—since valuing involves emotional experience—an essential role for emotional

experience.

As we shall see at the end of this section, however, this does not seem to be an argument that is open to Scheffler himself to make because although he distinguishes between valuing and believing to be of value he seems to deny that there is any distinctive cognitive achievement involved in valuing. In subsequent sections, I will therefore move beyond Scheffler's account and consider some revisions of this aspect of it. I begin, however, with an explanation of Scheffler's account.

Why think that there is a distinction to be made between valuing and believing to be valuable? This is not an idle question, because there have been defences of the claim that to value something *is* just to believe it to be valuable (for example, Smith 1992). But as Scheffler (2013: 26-27) points out:

> [it is] commonplace to believe that something is valuable without valuing it oneself. There are, for example, many activities that I regard as valuable but which I myself do not value, including, say, folk dancing, bird-watching, and studying Bulgarian history. Indeed, I value only a tiny fraction of the activities that I take to be valuable.

There seem, in other words, to be many things that we believe to be valuable without ourselves valuing them. And if this is right, then valuing cannot be explained simply in terms of believing to be valuable.

There is a possible misconception that needs to be avoided here. Scheffler's commonplace is not the relativist commonplace that different people believe different things to be of value. Scheffler does not just think that there are some people who *believe* that folk dancing, bird-watching, and studying Bulgarian history are of value, and other people who believe different things to be valuable. This claim would of course be compatible with him not believing them to be of value himself. Scheffler's claim is that he genuinely believes these things to be of value. It is just that he does not himself value them; they do not personally matter to him in the way that the things he values do.

The immediate question that this raises is: what exactly is involved in valuing that distinguishes it from merely believing something to be valuable? What is it for something to matter or be important in the way that is characteristic of valuing? Like a number of other philosophers, Scheffler is attracted to the idea that valuing something involves being

emotionally vulnerable to that thing (Anderson 1993: ch. 1, Kolodny 2003, Scheffler 2013). To value something is for it to matter to us. And the general idea is that the things that matter or are of personal importance to us are the things that we are emotionally vulnerable to.

For example, if you have a cat whose friendship you value, then you will be pleased when your cat shows you affection, anxious when your cat is unwell, upset when you find out that your cat is actually spending most of his time with your next-door neighbour. Indeed, this sort of affective engagement looks like it can even serve as a *test* of whether something really matters to a person. I may say that I value being outdoors, but if I show no interest in leaving the house, even when the weather is fine, and show no distress at being kept always indoors, then my claim to value being outdoors looks doubtful. So the claim seems plausible: valuing a thing seems to involve having a range of emotional responses to it.

Scheffler (2013: 32) develops this idea into a composite view of valuing, according to which to value X consists in satisfying four conditions:

1. A belief that X is good or valuable or worthy,
2. A susceptibility to experience a range of context-dependent emotions regarding X,
3. A disposition to experience these emotions as being merited or appropriate,
4. A disposition to treat certain kinds of X-related considerations as reasons for action in relevant deliberative contexts.

It is the first two conditions that are most relevant for the purposes of our discussion. I will briefly return to the latter two at the end of this section. But the second condition alone suffices to explain what distinguishes valuing from believing to be valuable. It is emotional vulnerability: it is being susceptible to have a range of emotional experiences in response to the valued thing. The fact that Scheffler does not value bird-watching (despite believing it to be valuable), is partly a matter of his not being susceptible to have any of the emotional experiences that would be had by a person who valued bird-watching. He does not get excited at the prospect of seeing a rare bird, nor is he particularly disappointed to be told that he has just missed seeing some peculiar ornithological behaviour. On Scheffler's account, then, valuing can be distinguished from believing to be valuable because valuing involves us being disposed to have a range of emotional experiences towards the things we value.

What does this have to do with emotional experientialism: the claim that emotional experience has an essential role to play in our understanding of evaluative concepts? If

Scheffler is right, then emotional experience plays an essential role in valuing. This seems to follow from Scheffler's second condition: that if we value X we have a "susceptibility to experience a range of context-dependent emotions regarding X". Emotional experientialism would follow from this if it could be shown that valuing had an essential role to play in our understanding of evaluative concepts. Emotional experience would then have an essential role to play in our understanding of evaluative concepts through the role it plays in valuing. But why should we think that valuing has an essential role to play in our understanding of evaluative concepts? One idea would be that when things matter to us, as they do when we value them, we cognise the value of these things in a distinctive way, and this contributes to a distinctive sort of understanding of the related evaluative concepts.

Before we further develop this proposal, however, it is important to recognise that this argument ultimately is not available on Scheffler's account of valuing. The problem is that, for Scheffler, the difference between valuing something and merely believing it to be valuable is just whether or not one has the right emotional dispositions. Scheffler's composite account of valuing seems to separate out a cognitive element: belief that something is valuable, and a non-cognitive, affective element: having the right emotional dispositions. So Scheffler does not seem to attribute any particular cognitive achievement to the emotional experiences that are distinctive of valuing: valuing involves the same cognitive elements as mere belief that something is of value. What distinguishes valuing from this is that it combines belief that something is of value with other *non-cognitive* elements, namely, the emotions. The sort of argument for emotional experientialism that I mooted at the end of the previous paragraph is therefore not open to someone who endorses Scheffler's account of valuing.

We also need to rephrase Scheffler's distinction slightly, to make it more directly relevant to the discussion of our understanding of evaluative concepts as I have been framing it in this thesis. Scheffler talks about valuing *things* (a friend, bird-watching, Bulgarian history), but I have mostly talked about evaluative concepts like KIND, SHAMEFUL, or JOYOUS, which correspond to evaluative properties. Directly applying Scheffler's distinction between valuing something and merely believing it to be valuable might give us a distinction between valuing kindness, for example, and merely believing kindness to be of value. But it is not clear that this distinction works in the same way as Scheffler's. It is not clear, for example, whether it makes sense to say that someone believes kindness to be of value but that they do not

themselves value it, in the same way that it makes sense to say of Scheffler that he believes Bulgarian history to be of value but does not himself value it.

It does, however, seem to make better sense to say of someone that they believe various acts to be kind (believe that it was kind for Sue to help Sarah, and so on), but that they do not themselves value kindness. This would be true of someone who had *never* valued kindness, and so never been susceptible to any emotional experiences towards kind acts or persons. Such a person could still, however, be capable of believing things to be kind on the basis of what I called in Chapter 2 a *theoretical* understanding of KIND. They would be able to (accurately, we can assume) identify things as kind, but would never have themselves been moved by such things. The question I want to explore in the remainder of this chapter is what additional understanding of, for example, KIND does such a person acquire in coming to value kindness for themselves, over and above merely believing things to be kind. This would constitute the new way of cognising kindness that Scheffler seemed to deny was part of emotional experience.

In this section, I have drawn two important observations from Scheffler's account of value. First, we can believe something to be valuable without ourselves valuing it. Second, valuing involves being susceptible to have a range of emotional experiences. I claimed that this might form the basis for an argument for emotional experientialism, but showed how this argument does not work if we deny (as Scheffler seems to do) that there is any distinctive cognitive achievement to valuing. In the next section, we will see how we might to start to fill in the gaps of this argument for emotional experientialism and identify the particular sort of understanding that comes with actually valuing things for ourselves.

2. An Argument from Deonna and Teroni

In this and the following sections, I want to turn to the work of Julien A. Deonna and Fabrice Teroni. Of particular interest for the purposes of this thesis is a suggestive passage at the end of their book, *The Emotions*, in which they seem to be gesturing towards a position very much like emotional experientialism (Deonna and Teroni 2012: 122-124). Deonna and Teroni's remarks are brief and they do not explicitly refer to valuing, but I will argue that we can reconstruct an argument for their position, and this argument is best understood in these terms. As we shall see, this reconstruction provides us with an example of the sort of

argument for emotional experientialism that I discussed in general terms at the end of the previous section: an argument based on the idea that there is an understanding of evaluative concepts that essentially depends on valuing. Moreover, because of how Deonna and Teroni think about emotional experience, the conception of valuing that results is one on which valuing *does* seem to involve some form of cognitive achievement, contra Scheffler. Developing these ideas thus promises to take us closer to emotional experientialism than we can get by following Scheffler alone.

What, then, are the relevant remarks? Deonna and Teroni (2012: 122-123) suggest that:

> being a competent user of evaluative concepts may after all require more than the mere ability to apply them in the correct circumstances. Categorizing an object as funny or shameful is indeed hardly detachable from the understanding that its properties give one reasons to favor or reject it. And we might wonder what sort of understanding of there being reasons to favor or reject an object we would preserve, were we deprived of the relevant emotions.

The question, then, is basically the question of this thesis: what sort of understanding of evaluative concepts can we have, if we lack the relevant emotions? And for Deonna and Teroni this question is connected to the idea of having "reasons to favour or reject" the object to which those evaluative concepts apply.

In attempting to answer their question, Deonna and Teroni (2012: 123) imagine "a creature deprived of emotional responses who has been able to get a handle on our evaluative practices because, say, she has learned to recognize the responses of others." What Deonna and Teroni mean by saying that an entirely emotionless creature "gets a handle on our evaluative practices" seems to be just that she comes to be able to make statements that match our own (correct) evaluative judgements: she has "the mere ability to apply [evaluative concepts] in the correct circumstances" (Deonna and Teroni 2012: 122-123). She can tell that this piece of clothing is "lewd", that this film is "terrifying", and that this action is "brave". I use scare quotes here because it is—and Deonna and Teroni seem to suppose it to be—an open question whether the statements that this creature can make really count as evaluative judgements like our own. What this emotionless creature is doing when she says "this film is terrifying" is far from clear and indeed the whole point of the thought experiment is to try to find out what sort of an understanding of such statements this emotionless creature could have. Can she make these statements with full understanding of the evaluative concepts that

are apparently involved? Deonna and Teroni's initial supposition is only that she can make such statements and that these statements accurately match our own evaluative judgements.

We should note, before even getting on to what use Deonna and Teroni make of this example, that it is unclear how exactly this emotionless creature should have acquired this ability. The very idea that a creature devoid of emotional experience should be able to come up with statements that exactly (or even for the most part) match our evaluative judgements is contentious. Deonna and Teroni suggest that she learns this capacity by observing the emotional responses and evaluative judgements of ordinary human beings. But as I have claimed in the previous paragraph, she is presumably subsequently able to make these (pseudo) judgements without directly relying on others' responses. That is to say, she can say of a lion: "that lion is terrifying" without having to see other people who are terrified of the lion and can, in this way, apply the concept to new situations, different from those in which she learnt it. The operation of her "evaluative judgement" is in this sense supposed to be independent of the responses of others, even if her development of the capacity is not. But there seems plenty of room to doubt that an emotionless creature could require such an ability in this way. She has what I called in Chapter 2 (following Goldie) a *theoretical* understanding of the relevant evaluative concepts: an understanding not based on emotional experience that yet allows her to apply the concept correctly. Notwithstanding the concerns of this paragraph, I will assume in what follows, as I have elsewhere in this thesis, that it is possible to have such a theoretical understanding of evaluative concepts.

There are other issues with a thought experiment based on a creature totally devoid of emotions. Such a creature would be totally devoid of interests. She would lack curiosity about the world around her, which seems to be a form of affective engagement. It is difficult therefore to imagine such a creature being anything but catatonic (both mentally and physically). She would thus lack the interest necessary to engage with our evaluative practices even sufficiently to ultimately enable her to match our evaluative judgements. What I am claiming here may contradict some science fiction examples. For example, Michelle Montague (2016: 231) appeals to the Star Trek character Data, who is an android supposedly without emotions. Such characters are certainly not catatonic and they seem to engage with their human companions with a greater or lesser degree of understanding. But to my mind these sorts of creature are not truly emotionless: they have interests and concerns that they

pursue.[45] They are rather stoic fantasies of human-type creatures from which the more extreme emotions (fear, shame, joy) have been abstracted away. It seems difficult, therefore, to imagine a *truly* emotionless creature who would behave as a character like Data does. Nevertheless, for the sake of argument, I will grant that we can imagine an emotionless creature such as Deonna and Teroni describe.

The question, then, is: what is lacking in such a creature's understanding of evaluative concepts? Deonna and Teroni (2012: 123) claim:

> She no doubt understands something, but not, we may think, the point of our evaluative practices. Her lack of emotional responses means that she cannot experience objects as giving her reasons to act in various and distinctive ways. Being deprived of the capacity to experience situations as offensive, shameful, or amusing for herself, the sense in which we may think of her as animated by concerns, such as staying decent, acting honorably, or cultivating her sense of humor, is elusive to say the least. She does not have any personal concern for staying decent, behaving honorably, or cultivating her sense of humor. Although she might succeed in blending in, as it were, such concerns could only be those of the people on whose responses she models her evaluative competence. If there is any point for her in making evaluative judgments, it is simply not the same as ours.

I think a key idea here is the idea of "the point of our evaluative practices". Deonna and Teroni appeal to this idea, but not, I think, in such a way as to make clear the role that it is playing. But we can reconstruct from Deonna and Teroni's remarks an argument in which it plays a central part. The general shape of the argument is as follows: if someone is deprived of emotional experience, then she lacks "any personal concern" for values such as decency, honour, or humour; without such a personal concern, she cannot understand the point of the evaluative practices in which these values are involved; and without such an understanding of the point of our evaluative practices, she lacks an understanding of the relevant evaluative concepts. In what follows, I will appeal to the concept of valuing to reconstruct this argument.

45 One reply here might be: "they do not have interests, that is just how they are programmed". Adequately answering this would take us into very complicated questions about differences between consciousness and artificial consciousness, questions that lie well outside the scope of the thesis.

3. The Role of Valuing in this Argument

Although Deonna and Teroni do not mention valuing, I want to claim that the best way to understand this reconstructed argument is in terms of valuing. Deonna and Teroni do not say that their creature values nothing, but they do claim that she does not have "personal concerns". In their discussion, they mention only three specific personal concerns she lacks (concerns "for staying decent, behaving honorably, [and] cultivating her sense of humor") but these seem to be meant as examples of a lack that is general. A creature with no emotions would have no personal concerns—this seems to be Deonna and Teroni's claim.

"Concern" is not a term that Deonna and Teroni explicitly define. But among authors, both in philosophy and cognitive psychology, who have discussed concerns at greater length (for example: Roberts 2003: 141-151, Frijda 2007: ch. 5), there is agreement that our concerns determine our emotional dispositions: we are disposed to have emotional responses towards things we are concerned about. There is thus a very close connection between having a concern for a thing and valuing it, enough to justify framing Deonna and Teroni's argument in these terms. To say that their emotionless creature has no concern for decency, honour, or her sense of humour is to say that she does not value these things. For the purposes of their argument I think this change in terminology makes no difference. And it fits well with the connection that Deonna and Teroni draw between personal concerns and emotions, which seems to mirror the connection drawn in the previous section between valuing and emotional vulnerability.

We can thus replace appeals to personal concern in the above reconstructed argument from Deonna and Teroni with appeals to valuing: if someone is deprived of emotional experience, then she cannot value; without being able to value, she cannot understand the point of our evaluative practices; and without such an understanding of the point of our evaluative practices, she lacks an understanding of our evaluative concepts. The argument thus appeals to the inability to value to explain a supposed lack of understanding of evaluative concepts. It is because a creature devoid of emotional experiences cannot value that they cannot have the relevant understanding of evaluative concepts.

But as we saw in the case of Scheffler, this claim is not compelling in the absence of further argument. It could be denied by anyone who thought (as Scheffler seemed to do) that there is

no distinctive cognitive achievement involved in valuing something, over and above merely believing it to be valuable. What we need is some argument as to why valuing things involves a new and distinct understanding of the relevant evaluative concepts. To give such an argument, we need to say a little more about the emotional experiences that are involved in valuing. We have already encountered some accounts of (some aspects of) emotional experience in the previous two chapters, Chapters 2 and 3. Here, I want to look in more detail at Deonna and Teroni's account of emotional experience, because it promises to contribute to a picture of valuing according to which valuing does constitute a distinctive cognitive achievement.

Deonna and Teroni (2012: 123) think that emotions:

> are experiential attitudes that consist in one's readiness to act in various and distinctive ways vis-à-vis given objects or situations. And, if they are justified [i.e. appropriate], then they allow us to experience the attitudes these objects or situations make appropriate.[46]

They give a number of helpful examples:

> In fear, the relevant action readiness should be described as follows: we feel the way our body is poised to act in a way that will contribute to the neutralization of what provokes the fear. In anger, we feel the way our body is prepared for active hostility to whatever causes the anger. In shame, we feel the way our body is poised to hide from the gaze of others that typically causes the shame. In an episode of loving affection, we feel the way our body is prepared to move towards cuddling the object of one's affection. In disgust, we feel the way our body is poised to prevent the object from entering into contact with it. And in sadness, our body is given to us as though prevented from entering into interaction with a certain object. (Deonna and Teroni 2012: 80)

Emotional experiences can thus be thought of as felt action-tendencies. As such, they are intentional, they are directed towards their objects. It should be noted that this makes them more than mere bodily feelings, which would on many accounts be conceived to be non-intentional. Deonna and Teroni think that emotions involve bodily feelings, but in emotional experience these are interpreted holistically as action tendencies that are intentional: we feel ourselves ready to act in various ways towards the object of our emotion.[47]

46 See also: Deonna and Teroni 2015. Deonna and Teroni develop ideas of Nico Frijda (1986, 2007).

47 We should also note that Deonna and Teroni (2012: 78-82) interpret their account of emotions as felt action-

If this is the nature of emotional experience, why think that it involves any distinctive cognitive achievement? The general idea would be that in having the emotional experience we are experiencing the action-tendencies that the object of the emotion makes appropriate. The emotional experience is not merely a tendency to act in certain ways; the action-tendency is felt: it is experienced. And it is our experience of this action-tendency that we might think constitutes the distinctive cognitive achievement of emotional experience, and so of valuing. If we had not had the emotional experience we would not be aware of the distinctive character of the felt action-tendency: we would not know what it is like to be moved by the emotional experience.

In arguing that emotional experience constitutes a distinctive cognitive achievement in this way, one feature of Deonna and Teroni's (2012: 71, 85-87) account that is particularly helpful is their ability to explain what they call the "phenomenological constraint". We met something very like Deonna and Teroni's phenomenological constraint in Chapter 2, in Goldie's claim that the intentionality and phenomenology of emotional experience is inextricably interlinked, and again in Chapter 3 in Zagzebski's discussion of the inseparability of thick affective concepts. Deonna and Teroni's (2012: 85) phenomenological constraint is the idea that "emotions are essentially phenomenological states and stand in relation to values in virtue of being the phenomenological states they are". The intuition here is that fear, for example, relates to the fearsome in virtue of what it is like to feel fear, whereas shame, in virtue of its different phenomenology, relates to the shameful. But the challenge is to explain why this should be the case: why an emotion that feels like shame could relate to no other value than the shameful. In the process, we would explain why the connection between affective phenomenology and evaluative intentionality cannot be arbitrary (as it seemed to be for Goldie's add-on theorist—see Chapter 2).

The link between evaluative property and emotional phenomenology is secured on Deonna and Teroni's (2012: 87) account because they claim that the particular felt bodily attitude that

tendencies in bodily terms, claiming that emotions are "felt bodily attitudes". But the idea of an action-tendency or of felt action-readiness *need* not be understood in this way, as Deonna and Teroni (2012: 81) themselves acknowledge. The idea of a purely psychic action-tendency does not seem obviously self-contradictory. Conversely, for some emotions (regret and pride are Deonna and Teroni's suggestions) the bodily aspect of the emotional experience seems elusive. In any case, for the purposes of our argument we can remain neutral on this issue.

constitutes each emotional experience is necessarily connected to its corresponding evaluative property. This seems plausible for at least some emotions. Deonna and Teroni's account explains the phenomenology of fear as a felt tendency to neutralise the object of the emotion; and we can see how this sort of phenomenology is necessarily associated with the presentation of an object as fearsome, rather than as joyful, say. This is because it would not be appropriate to have a felt tendency to neutralise an object where the evaluative concept JOYOUS applies. Rather, this sort of felt action-tendency is appropriate when FEARSOME applies.

In this section we have seen, then, that the reconstructed argument considered in the previous section is best understood as an argument that appeals to the idea of valuing; and I have argued that Deonna and Teroni's account of emotions can be combined with an account of valuing so as to give us an account on which valuing involves a certain sort of cognitive achievement, a cognitive achievement that comes out because Deonna and Teroni secure the inseparability of evaluative intentionality and affective phenomenology in emotional experience. To reiterate: they claim that the affective phenomenology of emotional experience is characterised in terms of felt action-tendencies, and a particular action-tendency can only be linked to a particular evaluative concept—and so evaluative intentionality. In the next section, I conclude my reconstruction of the argument by giving an interpretation of "the point of our evaluative practices".

4. The Point of Evaluative Practices and the Intelligibility of the Appropriateness of Emotional Experience

It is now time to complete the reconstruction of the argument for emotional experientialism begun in Section 2, by investigating in more detail and expanding upon Deonna and Teroni's idea of "the point of our evaluative practices". Recall that the idea of "the point of our evaluative practices" was appealed to by the argument I reconstructed in Section 2, but at that point I left this idea undeveloped. I have since claimed that this argument is best interpreted in terms of valuing (Section 3). Seen in this way, the argument runs as follows: 1) if someone is deprived of emotional experience, then they are deprived of the ability to value; 2) being unable to value, they cannot understand the point of our evaluative practices; and 3) without such an understanding of the point of our evaluative practices, they lack a certain sort of understanding of our evaluative concepts. The first claim has already been argued for in

Section 1, so the goal in this section is to consider why we might believe the second and third claims.

Before we say anything about either claim, we need to say something about what evaluative practices are, what their point might be, and what understanding the point of an evaluative practice might consist in. The idea of "the point of our evaluative practices" plays a key role in Deonna and Teroni remarks; but they do not, I think, make very clear what they mean by it.

The first question is: what exactly is an evaluative practice? I assume that what Deonna and Teroni mean by "evaluative practices"—and what I will understand by the term here—is the ways we have of evaluating things: we praise and blame, criticise and approve of things, and we do so in a number of different ways. Sometimes we may praise or blame by simply *describing* things in terms of evaluative concepts: for example, we praise an action by saying "that was kind". So our evaluative practices will in part involve the application of evaluative concepts. But we also applaud and chastise in ways that seem different from this: we give out prizes, we administer punishment, we act in such a way as we hope others to follow, and so on. So, for example, when a person does something that is unacceptable to their community they may be shamed, which may involve being told: "that was a shameful thing to do" (in more or less polite terms), but they may also be subject to various actions such as shunning. The employment of the evaluative concept, SHAMEFUL, is thus part of this evaluative practice, which is something we *do* and so involves more than just the evaluative description of the world.

If we are interested primarily in our understanding of evaluative concepts, why do we need to appeal to the idea of evaluative practices at all? The reason, I take it, to talk about evaluative practices, rather than simply to talk about the application of evaluative concepts, is that evaluative concepts seem to have the roles that they do in virtue of the places they hold within the evaluative practices of which they are part.

If this is what is meant by talking about an evaluative practice, what is meant by talking about its point? We need to be careful to distinguish the sort of understanding of the point of an evaluative practice that is relevant for the purposes of this argument from other things that might be meant by talking about the point of a practice. In particular, an onlooking

theoretician may often understand the point of a practice differently from a participant. What, for example, is the point of football? An economist may see it as a form of economic activity, or as a form of recreation that allows workers to recuperate and so maintain or increase productivity. An anthropologist may identify a different point, to do with bonding or other social dynamics. These two ways of thinking about football are not mutually exclusive, and there are of course many more such possibilities. But in what follows I will set aside the theoretician's understanding of these different possible points of practices and focus on the point of evaluative practices for fully-engaged participants.

Why, then, should we think that a creature who is incapable of valuing could not understand the point of our evaluative practices? I want to argue that to understand the point of an evaluative practice means to possess an understanding that renders intelligible why certain emotional responses are appropriate in the relevant practice, from the point of view of fully-engaged participants. This is something that we can only understand, I want to claim, if we understand *what it is like* to experience the relevant emotion, and this is something that an emotionless creature cannot do. Let me explain.

I have appealed, throughout this thesis, to the idea that evaluative concepts are concepts of appropriate emotional response. And I think it is plausible to claim that the point of our evaluative practices is also intimately connected to the various emotional responses we have to things and to the idea that these responses may or may not be appropriate. Evaluative practices like praising and blaming would not have the point that they do without some notion that emotional responses like resenting and feeling grateful might be appropriate.[48] So I think that we can connect the point of our evaluative practices with the emotional responses we have to things and more specifically to the idea that these responses may be appropriate or inappropriate.

It is not enough, however, to understand the point of these evaluative practices to understand merely *that* certain emotional responses may be appropriate. What I mean by this is that I think there can be a sort of theoretical understanding *that* this emotional response is the appropriate one in the given circumstances. And an emotionless creature may be able to have such an understanding. For example, someone with a merely theoretical understanding of SHAMEFUL may believe certain actions to be shameful, in the sense that they can accurately

48 See P. F. Strawson's (1962) seminal argument about reactive attitudes.

identify them as actions to which the concept applies. And I think in doing this they can also grasp *that* it is appropriate to feel shame for an action that is SHAMEFUL. But this is not enough to understand the point of our evaluative practices of shaming. We need also to (dis)value shamefulness for ourselves, and need also to find shame's appropriateness intelligible.

What I think a person must lack, if they have not themselves experienced shame, is an understanding of the appropriateness of shame. More specifically, the appropriateness of shame is not *intelligible* to them. What makes appropriateness intelligible is being *actually* moved by shame for ourselves, actually feeling the particular sort of affective attitude (whether bodily, as Deonna and Teroni would have it, or otherwise) that shame is. Feeling this for ourselves makes intelligible, I am claiming, shame's appropriateness as a response to shameful actions. It makes this appropriateness intelligible to us in a way that it cannot be if it is merely learned to be appropriate as brute fact, observed from the behaviour of others. This latter kind of understanding is the sort of theoretical understanding of SHAMEFUL that I think it plausible to claim that an emotionless creature who had never experienced shame would be limited to.

What we need to advance beyond the theoretical understanding of SHAMEFUL is thus an understanding of *what it is like* to feel shame. It is this that I am claiming makes the appropriateness of shame intelligible from the perspective of an engaged participant in an evaluative practice. And it does so, I think, because of the way that in emotional experience intentionality and phenomenology are inseparably linked, as we saw Deonna and Teroni argued at the end of Section 3. It is this that connects the evaluative intentionality with the particular phenomenology of the emotional experience. When we actually value something for ourselves, this connection becomes intelligible to us. Valuing can thus give us an understanding of why this particular emotional experience (shame) is appropriate in response to things to which this particular evaluative concept (SHAMEFUL) applies. And this, in turn, gives us an understanding of the point of the evaluative practice in which shame is involved. The further question is whether actually having the emotional experience is the *only* way of doing this, the only way to understand what it is like to feel shame. This is a question I will return to in Section 6, and further explore in Chapters 5 and 6.

To sum up my argument so far:

1. emotional experience and valuing are intimately linked, valuing something involves being emotionally vulnerable to that thing and vice versa.

It follows from this that,

2. in having an emotional experience, we acquire an understanding of what it is like to value something in the relevant way.

In this section I have further argued that:

3. in acquiring an understanding of what it is like to value something, we acquire an understanding that renders intelligible why a given emotional experience is appropriate in the given circumstances.

This understanding that renders intelligible from the point of view of a fully-engaged participant in the evaluative practice is how I think we should interpret Deonna and Teroni's idea of an understanding of the point of our evaluative practices. And it is this sort of understanding that I think the emotionless creature must lack.

5. The Argument as Argument for Emotional Experientialism

The reconstructed argument, as I have presented it so far, is an argument for emotional experientialism. It argues that a creature without emotional experience must lack an understanding of evaluative concepts. This is a claim that Deonna and Teroni themselves all but explicitly endorse. They suggest that a person who was "deprived of the relevant emotions" could not be a "competent user of [the corresponding] evaluative concepts" (Deonna and Teroni 2012: 123, 122). To say this is to endorse a form of emotional experientialism in its negative corollary, to claim that there is an understanding of evaluative concepts that we cannot have without the relevant emotional experience. In endorsing this negative corollary, they thus also implicitly endorse the corresponding positive form of emotional experientialism, the claim that emotional experience plays an essential role in this understanding of evaluative concepts.

There remain questions, however, about the form of emotional experientialism that is being endorsed here. According to my distinction of different forms of emotional experience in Chapter 1, there are two questions to answer. First, is this an argument for strong or weak emotional experientialism? Second, is it an argument for specific or general emotional experientialism? These are the questions that I attempt to clarify in this section.

In Chapter 1, I said that emotional experientialism comes in stronger or weaker versions, depending on whether emotional experience is supposed to play an essential role in *all* understanding of evaluative concepts (the strong version) or only in *a certain sort* of understanding of these concepts (the weaker version). The weak version thus allows that a person lacking the relevant emotional experience might have *some* form of understanding of evaluative concepts, while the strong version denies understanding in any sense.

It is unclear how strong a version of emotional experientialism Deonna and Teroni favour. The stronger reading seems to me to be implied in Deonna and Teroni's suggestion, quoted above, that a being that lacked the relevant emotional experience could not be a "competent user" of the corresponding evaluative concepts. But for reasons we have already considered, the strong reading is probably too strong. We can have what I called in Chapter 2, following Goldie, a "theoretical" understanding of evaluative concepts *without* emotional experience. And this theoretical understanding may allow us to apply the concept correctly and so be in this sense a "competent user". I have therefore put the stronger reading of emotional experientialism to one side, in the reconstruction of the previous sections, and I assume that Deonna and Teroni's argument is meant to support the claim in its weaker form.

I also distinguished, in Chapter 1, between *general* and *specific* forms of emotional experientialism. The fact that the creature Deonna and Teroni use to motivate their claims is *entirely* emotionless tends to suggest that they are offering an argument for *general* emotional experientialism, the claim that there is a general understanding evaluative concepts that can be acquired by experiencing any emotional experience, an understanding that I have connected in this chapter with understanding what it is like to value. In this respect Deonna and Teroni's thought experiment differs from Goldie's, which I discussed in Chapter 2, and which tried to argue that a person (Irene the "icy-cool ice-scientist") who had never had a specific sort of emotional experience (fear) must lack an understanding of the corresponding specific evaluative concept (DANGER).

In discussing their emotionless creature, however, Deonna and Teroni link specific emotional experiences with specific evaluative concepts (namely: offence, shame, and amusement with DECENCY, HONOUR, AMUSING—some of these particular examples may be contentious). This suggests that they endorse a more specific form of emotional experientialism. And as I reconstructed their argument in Section 4, I also linked specific

emotional experiences (shame) with specific evaluative concepts (SHAMEFUL). So, again, this would seem to suggest that the argument can be read as an argument for specific emotional experientialism.

We have seen, then, that Deonna and Teroni appear to endorse some form of emotional experientialism; and I claimed that they should (or the reconstructed version of their argument should) be understood as endorsing what I have called "weak" emotional experientialism. In the next and final section, I aim to show why the argument does not work as an argument for specific emotional experientialism. In the process, however, I will argue that it does work as an argument for general emotional experientialism.

6. Imagination and What It Is Like to Value

In this section, I want to point out a problem with the reconstructed argument I have been laying out in this chapter, if it is interpreted as an argument for specific emotional experientialism. The problem is that the argument assumes that someone who has never had a specific sort of emotional experience (shame) cannot have any understanding of what that experience is like. I want to claim, however, that it is *sometimes* possible to have such an understanding, on the basis of imagination. We can imagine what it is like to have experiences we have not actually experienced for ourselves. This is an idea that I introduce here and explore at much greater length in the next two chapters, Chapters 5 and 6. Its importance for this chapter is that it seems to undermine the argument presented in Section 4 as an argument for specific emotional experientialism. But the argument still works, I claim, as an argument for general emotional experientialism. This is because our capacity to imagine novel emotional experiences depends in part on our previous emotional experience. And I want to claim that a creature entirely without emotional experience would lack the imaginative resources to come to understand through imagination what it is like to have any sort of emotional experience and so cannot understand what it is like to value.

If we do not understand what it might be like for things to matter as they do when a particular evaluative concept applies, then we cannot understand why particular emotional responses are appropriate when that evaluative concept applies. This is a claim that I think we should endorse. There is thus a certain sort of understanding of an evaluative concept that we must lack if we do not understand what it is like to value things in the corresponding way: an

understanding of SHAMEFUL we must lack if we do not understand what it is like to feel shame; an understanding of JOYOUS we must lack if we do not understand what it is like to feel joy; and so on. The question, however, is whether the *only* possible way to understand what it is like to feel joy or shame is to experience these emotions for ourselves.

I do not believe that we must always actually have ourselves had a particular emotional experience in order to understand that experience's phenomenology—in order for us to understand what it is like to have that experience. These are issues that will be explored in greater detail in Chapter 5. But the general idea is that if we have sufficient resources of imagination and prior experience, then we can understand the phenomenology of emotional experiences that we have not ourselves had. And we can in this way proceed by a sort of projection from or elaboration of our prior experience.

The case seems strongest for the most specific forms of valuing. Can we know what it is like to value playing football, for example, if we do not ourselves value football? I think that this is possible, on the basis of one's own experience of valuing such things as other sports and other communal activities. We imagine what it would be like to value football, which includes imagining the sort of affective experiences that would be involved, which we do on the basis of our own experience of what it is like to value other, similar, things. To suggest that we can only understand the value of any particular individual thing by ourselves affectively engaging with that thing is thus to go too far.[49] We can understand the value of these things by imagining what it would be like to value them, without ourselves emotionally engaging with them. We should for this reason, I think, reject the most specific forms of emotional experientialism.

Deonna and Teroni's creature lies at the other extreme from this sort of case. She has had no emotional experience whatsoever and so never valued anything. Such a creature would never have experienced what it is like for something to matter to them in any sort of way and so, I think, would lack any resources on the basis of which to imagine how things might matter to others. She could not know what it is like to value football—or anything else. Such a creature could thus not have any but the most abstract grasp of what it is for something to matter to someone. She lacks the understanding of the phenomenology of valuing that I have been

49 See, for example, Johnston (2001: 181) for an argument that we can only understand the value of any particular individual thing by ourselves affectively engaging with that thing.

arguing is essential to make intelligible the appropriateness of that emotional response and so can at best only understand, in the theoretical way, *that* these responses are appropriate. In this way, we get an argument for general emotional experientialism—the claim that without *any* emotional experience we must lack a certain sort of understanding of evaluative concepts in general.

There is, of course, a range of cases between these two extremes. Could a person know what it is like to feel love or grief, say, without having experienced these emotions first hand? And would they therefore lack an understanding of evaluative concepts like GRIEVOUS? If the above is correct, then the answer we give will depend on whether someone can have the imaginative resources to imagine what it is like to love or grieve, before having experienced these emotions for themselves. This is a complex question, one I will return to in Chapter 6 where I want to explore the limitations of our imaginative capacities in this respect. For all that has been said so far, once we have had emotional experience of *some* form we might still be able to understand *all* evaluative concepts. There need be no ongoing role for emotional experience in the continuing development of our understanding of evaluative concepts. And so I think we should reject, or at least reserve judgement on, specific emotional experientialism.

Conclusion

In this chapter I introduced the idea of valuing and distinguished valuing something from believing it to be valuable. I argued that valuing involved emotional vulnerability and this opened the possibility of an argument for emotional experientialism that appealed to the idea of valuing. I reconstructed such an argument from the work of Deonna and Teroni. The best prospects for this argument depend on the idea that if we have not valued things, then we cannot find intelligible why certain emotional responses are appropriate when certain evaluative concepts apply. But I argued that this argument only supports a very general sort of emotional experientialism. To understand the relationship between emotional experience and understanding of evaluative concepts in more real world cases than Deonna and Teroni's entirely emotionless creature we need, I suggested, to consider the relationship between emotional experience and imagination, which I will do in Chapter 5.

5. Imagination, Valuing, and Our Understanding of Evaluative Concepts

We saw in the last chapter that emotional experientialism was most plausible in its general form: if we lack *all* emotional experience, then we must lack a certain sort of understanding of evaluative concepts, an understanding that renders *intelligible* why a certain emotional experience is appropriate in a given circumstance. In this chapter, I want to explore how we can build on emotional experience and expand our evaluative understanding beyond the limits of our immediate experience. Imagination, I will argue, allows us to extend our pre-existing evaluative understanding to evaluative concepts the corresponding emotional experiences to which we have never ourselves experienced. It can do this because through imagining what it is like to value things in ways that lie beyond our immediate experience, we can gain an understanding that renders intelligible to us why a given emotional experience should be appropriate.

In Section 1, I recap some of the conclusions from the previous chapter and point the way towards the account I will give in this chapter of the relation between imagination and emotional experientialism. In Section 2, I identify the cases that will be most relevant to my argument. In Section 3, I introduce the idea of dramatic imagination, and explain how it is this sort of imagination that might help us expand our evaluative understanding. In Section 4, I consider an objection to the argument of the chapter so far, and use a discussion of that objection to further elaborate my positive account.

1. Emotional Experientialism and Imagination

In the previous four chapters, we have seen that emotional experientialism has the best prospects when it is at its most *general*, as the claim that emotional experience in general has an essential role to play in our understanding of evaluative concepts. We saw arguments in Chapters 2 and 3 that tried to establish more specific forms of emotional experientialism. This *specific* emotional experientialism claimed that specific types of emotional experience have an essential role to play in our understanding of corresponding specific evaluative concepts: that experience of shame is necessary to understand SHAMEFUL, experience of

joy necessary to understand JOYOUS, and so on. My claim in those earlier chapters was that these arguments did not convince: they did not successfully establish specific emotional experientialism.

We saw this, for example, in Chapter 2, in Goldie's discussion of Irene, who Goldie claims needs to have experienced fear in order to have a certain sort of understanding of DANGER. Goldie claims that before experiencing fear, it is possible to have what he calls a "theoretical" understanding of DANGER, but he argues that there is also a "perceptual" understanding of DANGER, which is possible only for someone who has experienced fear. Goldie thus endorses a form of specific emotional experientialism: there is an understanding of evaluative concepts (DANGER, SHAMEFUL, JOYOUS) that is only possible for someone who has had the corresponding emotional experiences (fear, shame, joy).

As I argued in Chapter 2, Goldie's account is plausible in not endorsing too strong a version of (specific) emotional experientialism. He rejects what I called in Chapter 1 "strong emotional experientialism", the claim that *no* understanding of a specific evaluative concept is possible without the corresponding emotional experience. He allows that it is possible to have *some* understanding (namely, a theoretical understanding) of evaluative concepts like DANGER without ever having had the corresponding emotional experience. I think that Goldie is right to focus on this weaker form of emotional experientialism, and that is what I will continue to do in this chapter. When I discuss the role that imagination can play in our understanding of evaluative concepts I will be assuming that we can still have *some* understanding of these concepts without imagination. The question will be whether imagination can give us the understanding of evaluative concepts for which emotional experience would otherwise be necessary.

The problem with Goldie's account, I argued, was that Goldie relies too much on a perceptual analogy in developing his notion of a "perceptual" understanding of DANGER—the idea of the perceptual is misplaced here. The most promising idea of a "perceptual" understanding of DANGER that I found in Goldie links this understanding to an ability to identify objects as dangerous based on feeling afraid of them. This ability is supposed to be analogous to the ability to identify objects based on their colour that Goldie claims can only be acquired on the basis of prior perceptual experience of the relevant colours. But I argued that the analogy was not as close as Goldie required. Emotional experience and evaluative concepts are

importantly different from perceptual experience and sensory (specifically colour) concepts, and this meant the idea of a "perceptual" understanding of an evaluative concept remained obscure. Any argument Goldie might be able to provide for specific emotional experientialism was thus unconvincing.

In Chapter 3, we met another argument for specific emotional experientialism, this time in the work of Linda Zagzebski. Zagzebski tries to defend the stronger version of specific emotional experientialism, arguing that particular emotional experiences (for example, shame and joy) constitute a "foundation" on which corresponding judgements in terms of evaluative concepts (for example, SHAMEFUL and JOYOUS) must be based. She seems thus to suggest that *no* understanding of the evaluative concept is possible for a person who has not had the corresponding emotional experience—failing to recognise the insight I acknowledged in Goldie. But as we have seen, the strong version of emotional experientialism is too strong: at least some understanding of evaluative concepts seems to be possible without emotional experience.

Strong emotional experientialism is too strong, even on the neo-sentimentalist account of evaluative concepts that I endorse in this thesis. This may seem surprising, since that account claims that an evaluative concept applies if and only if it is appropriate to feel a relevant emotion: that PITIFUL applies to something if and only if it is appropriate to pity it; that DELIGHTFUL applies to something if and only if it is appropriate to be delighted by it. But this link between concept and emotion can be grasped *in some sense* even by someone who has never experienced the relevant emotion. And so *some* understanding of evaluative concepts seems likewise to be possible in the absence of the relevant emotional experience, even if we endorse neo-sentimentalism, as I have been doing.

I argued that what was right in Zagzebski's argument was her insistence on a close connection between emotional experience and evaluative concepts. But this connection, I argued, is better captured by the neo-sentimentalist claim that evaluative concepts are in some way connected to ideas of appropriate emotion than it is by her foundational story. And I argued that Zagzebski did not give us sufficient reason for thinking it impossible to have at least some understanding of this neo-sentimentalist connection, and so of the evaluative concept, without having experienced the corresponding emotion.

The two arguments for specific emotional experientialism that I considered in Chapters 2 and 3 thus both failed. Of course, this does not in itself constitute an argument that *all* possible arguments for specific emotional experientialism must likewise fail; but it does perhaps give us reason to explore whether alternative forms of emotional experientialism—and specifically general emotional experientialism—might be argued for more readily.

In Chapter 4 we met one such argument drawn from the work of Deonna and Teroni. I argued that Deonna and Teroni's argument did not work as an argument for specific emotional experientialism (it was unclear whether they meant it as such) but that it was plausible as an argument for general emotional experientialism. General emotional experientialism is the claim that emotional experience in general has an essential role to play in our understanding of evaluative concepts. It is a claim more easily expressed in its negative corollary: as the claim that a creature entirely devoid of emotional experience must lack an understanding of (all) evaluative concepts.

I then followed Goldie's insight and argued that emotional experientialism was defensible only in its weaker form. If we lack emotional experience we do not lack all understanding of evaluative concepts, we only lack a certain sort of understanding of these concepts. The question then becomes *what sort of* understanding must such a person lack? And whereas I argued in Chapter 2 that Goldie's idea that the understanding we must lack is perceptual was problematic, in Chapter 4 I argued that Deonna and Teroni's provide us with a more promising idea. This is the idea that a person lacking all emotional experience must lack an understanding that renders *intelligible* why a certain emotional experience is appropriate in a given circumstance.

I also took from Deonna and Teroni an argument for why this should be so. This argument relied on the notion of *valuing*. The argument was that to have this understanding of an evaluative concept we need to understand *what it is like* to value things in the relevant way. This provided the basis for an argument for emotional experientialism because valuing, I claimed (following Scheffler), is connected to emotional experience: *to value something is to be emotionally vulnerable to that thing*. And so a person who is unable to have emotional experience would also be unable to value. To understand what it is like to value—as we need to do to make intelligible why a certain emotional experience is appropriate in a given circumstance—we thus also need an understanding of what it is like to experience the

corresponding emotions. Valuing has an important role to play in this argument because it connects the emotional experience with the evaluative concept as it applies to the objects of experience. In understanding what it is like to value we thus understand more than merely a property of experience: we come to a deeper understanding of the appropriateness of emotional experience.

I agreed with Deonna and Teroni that someone who had never had an emotional experience (of any sort) could not understand what it is like to have an emotional experience (of any sort). They could thus have no understanding what it is like to value. An emotionless creature could thus not find the appropriateness of our emotional responses fully intelligible. This form of understanding of evaluative concepts is impossible for such a creature, and so we have an argument for weak general emotional experientialism.

The question this raises is what picture do we get of evaluative understanding if (weak) emotional experientialism is true in its general but not in its specific form?[50] If specific emotional experientialism is not true, and we do not need to have had a specific sort of emotional experience in order to have the relevant understanding of the corresponding evaluative concept (do not, for example, need to have experienced shame to have this understanding of SHAMEFUL), then how is it that we come to understand the appropriateness of emotional experience in the absence of the corresponding emotional experiences?

It is at this point that I want to argue that imagination comes in. This is the project of this chapter. My claim is that it is through imagination that we can come to understand the way that specific evaluative concepts make specific emotional experiences appropriate, even without having experienced the relevant emotion. As we shall see, this understanding is still intimately linked to emotional experience, since my claim will be that what we need to do to come to understand this appropriateness is imaginatively engage with emotional experiences. We need to do this in order to understand what it is like to value the object *in the relevant*

50 To reiterate: I do not take myself to have *proved* that specific emotional experientialism is false. I have not even, thus far in this thesis, given any positive reasons for thinking that it should be false. I have only tried to show that some arguments for specific emotional experientialism do not work. If the picture of evaluative understanding that I present in this chapter is convincing, however, then I would take that to count as at least some form of argument against specific emotional experientialism, since this picture assumes that specific emotional experientialism is false.

way: only thus can we understand how the emotional experiences can be appropriate, without ourselves having experienced the relevant emotion. My claim is that we do not need to actually *have* these emotional experiences, do not need to have actually valued something in this specific way: imagination is enough—in theory, at least.

I will argue that we can have this understanding of specific evaluative concepts because imagination can teach us what it is like for things to matter to us in the particular way that they do when this specific evaluative concept applies. It can, in other words, teach us what it is like to value things in this particular way. We can do this even if we have never experienced the relevant emotions for ourselves and so have never actually valued things in this particular way. We can, for example, come to learn what it is like to feel that a loss is grievous (and so can come to understand how grief is appropriate when GRIEVOUS applies) through reading about other people's experiences of such losses and imaginatively enacting these situations, even without ever having experienced grief for ourselves. I thus endorse the link established in the last chapter, Chapter 4, between understanding the appropriateness of emotional responses and understanding what it is like to value things in the corresponding way. But against philosophers like Deonna and Teroni, I want to claim that we can understand what it is like to value things in a wide variety of ways (and so can make intelligible to ourselves the appropriateness of the relevant emotional response), even if we have never ourselves valued anything in this particular way before. This is a strong claim, that many would reject out of hand on the basis that these are the sorts of experience that we cannot understand what they are like without having them for ourselves. I return to this issue in section 4, below, where I give my reasons for rejecting this line of argument.

It is important to reiterate that, as I will argue in this chapter, the possibility of imaginatively expanding our evaluative understanding is only open to us because we have had some form of emotional experience; without such, we would lack the resources for this imaginative expansion. Our capacity to imagine new ways of valuing—to imagine new and different emotional experiences to those we have already experienced—is dependent on our having already acquired an understanding of valuing and of other emotional experiences (and evaluative concepts) through experiencing them for ourselves. I find it implausible that a creature entirely devoid of emotional experience would be capable of affective imagination of any kind. Thus, we still do justice to the truth of general emotional experientialism. But imagination allows us to expand our evaluative understanding beyond the limits of our

immediate emotional experience.

That, then, is the project of this chapter. I start by considering the sort of imagined emotional experience with which I will be concerned.

2. Fiction, Imagination, and Emotional Experience

The cases which will be relevant for determining the distinctive role of imagination in our understanding of evaluative concepts will be cases in which we *imagine ourselves having an emotional experience*. In this section I distinguish these sorts of case from others in which imagination interacts with emotional experience that will not feature in my argument. It is important to do this because there are a variety of ways in which imagination and emotional experience interact. The distinction that I want to make in this section is between (actual) emotional experiences with imagined intentional objects and imagined emotional experiences (whether they have imagined or actual intentional objects).[51] It is the latter that I claim are relevant for probing the limits of emotional experientialism, because it is these sorts of case that might allow us to expand our evaluative understanding beyond our actual emotional experience.

The argument of this section is mostly negative: it will be concerned with cases in which we have actual emotional experiences with imagined intentional objects, which I will discuss so as to explain why I am ruling them out of consideration of this thesis. Substantial discussion of the cases that will be my main focus in this chapter, cases in which we imagine having an emotional experience, will have to wait until the following section.

I want to explain this distinction through a debate in the philosophical literature about the emotions we feel towards fictions.[52] These cases have been much discussed because some philosophers have found a puzzle in our emotions towards fictions. They claim that there is something inherently strange—paradoxical even—about our feeling afraid while knowing we are in no danger; or in our feeling affection or concern for a character we know not to be real.

51 In this chapter I will talk as if there is a sharp distinction here, to keep the argument as straightforward as possible. In practice, I suspect the line is rather more blurred and complicated, but I do not think this poses any substantial difficulties for the account I give here.

52 See Walton 1978, Lamarque 1981, Carroll 1990), Moran 2017 / 1994, Schroeder and Matheson 2006.

The most visceral example has been the horror film: we jump in terror while knowing we are safely sitting in the cinema or on our sofa.[53] There is supposed to be something odd and in need of explanation about the emotions we feel towards fictions.

In this section I present two contrasting interpretations of this "paradox of fictional emotions" (Moran 2017 / 1994: 5): first Kendall Walton's (1978, 1990), then Richard Moran's (2017 / 1994). These interpretations differ in a number of respects: they differ in their analysis of these emotions; and whereas Walton wants to claim there really is some form of paradox here, Moran denies this. The point of my discussion is not to resolve this problem of emotions felt towards fictions.[54] The point is rather that the two different analyses illustrate the distinction that I want to make: Walton sees these cases as ones in which we imagine having an emotional response, while Moran takes them to be cases in which we have an actual emotional response to an imagined object.

Walton (1978, 1990), who brought this problem to philosophical attention, offered one solution to the problem of emotions felt towards fictions. Walton claimed that a paradox arises in cases where we fear fictions, because we seem to feel fear despite knowing there is no danger. Walton resolved this paradox by claiming that what we feel is not real fear but only imagined fear. He supposed that what we are doing when "caught up" in a fiction in this way is treating certain propositions as true for the purposes of the fiction. He thus claimed that we do not feel *real* fear in these cases, but only treat as true the proposition that we are afraid.[55] Fear at fiction is in this sense only imaginary fear. We are not really afraid, only imagining ourselves to be so. If Walton were right, then this would be just the sort of case I said would be important, cases in which we imagine ourselves to be having an emotional experience.

There are, however, alternatives to Walton's analysis. Walton assumes that, in emotions felt towards fictions, he has identified a special sort of case. Richard Moran (2017 / 1994) challenges this assumption and so also challenges the idea that there really is a paradox here. Moran (2017 / 1994: 5) points out that there is a "more general phenomenon of emotionally charged relations to what is known to be in some sense nonactual". His point is that

53 This was the main example Walton (1978) used in the paper that started the debate.

54 Although, for the record (and as may be evident from the following), my sympathies lie with Moran.

55 He is talking about hypothetical imagination, in the terms of the distinction I explain in Section 3.

imagination seems to play a particularly important role in the many emotions that are to some degree proleptic or anticipatory, emotions like fear, anxiety, or excitement. In these sorts of case, our emotional experience is often initiated by something we imagine (involuntarily or otherwise). We read a frightening story or hear a twig snap, we imagine that there is an intruder outside our window, and we feel afraid; we are giving a speech tomorrow, we imagine ourselves becoming tongue-tied and unable to speak, and we suddenly feel overwhelmingly anxious; we are returning home, we imagine the excited greeting we will be given by our dog, children, and/or partner and we ourselves become excited to see them. These sorts of case are pervasive in our emotional life. Moran thus argues that there is no *special* problem with the idea that in fearing fictions we fear a danger that is nonactual, because a wide range of emotional experiences likewise have nonactual objects—objects that are in some sense imagined. He thus suggests that we should think of our fear of the fictional monster as being closer to our fear of the (non-fictional) possible intruder.

Moran thus prefers to think of these cases as ones in which we feel *genuine* emotion towards a fictional object, rejecting Walton's idea that we are imagining ourselves feeling an emotion. As Moran (2017 / 1994: 17) says: "I think it is less misleading to see them as different types of, for example, pity, rather than to think of the difference as akin to that between a real horse and an imaginary one." And this seems to fit with our ordinary way of talking and thinking about our responses to fictional works and characters. We think of ourselves as getting excited and anxious for these characters, as coming to love and hate them. We do not take ourselves to be pretending or imagining that we are excited, anxious, feeling love or hate. It also seems to fit better with the phenomenology of the experience: when we jump at a horror film we seem to be doing something quite different from merely treating as true the proposition that we are afraid.

I said above that I do not want to decide the problem of emotions felt towards fictions. I will not, therefore, consider the arguments for Walton and Moran's positions in any more than the very preliminary way that I have just done. Nor do I want to offer any of my own arguments pro or con. But although the answer we give to this question does not matter to this thesis for its own sake, it is important for the purposes of my argument because it will decide whether these sorts of cases lie within the scope of my discussion in this chapter. That is to say: I am focusing here on cases in which we imagine ourselves having an emotional experience. So if Walton is right about the cases we have been discussing in this section, then these cases will

lie within scope, because they will be cases in which we imagine ourselves having an emotional experience. But if Moran is right, then they will not, because, on Moran's account, the emotional experiences felt at fictions are not imagined but rather real emotions felt towards imaginary objects. Because I agree with Moran's analysis, I will assume that these sorts of case are not ones with which I should be concerned in this chapter. But I offer no argument to this end, and anyone who endorses Walton's account could apply what I say later in the chapter to these cases too.

In this chapter, then, I will focus on cases of imagining having an emotional experience and not with cases in which we have an actual emotional experience towards an imaginary object. I focus on these cases because I am interested in challenging specific emotional experientialism, which claims that it is necessary to have had an emotional experience of the relevant type (shame, grief, joy) in order to make intelligible the appropriateness of that type of emotional response when the relevant evaluative concepts (SHAMEFUL, GRIEVOUS, JOYOUS) apply. Assume, for the moment, that both sorts of case can give us the relevant evaluative understanding (I will argue this in following sections). To make the challenge, I need cases in which I can claim an understanding develops *even in the absence of* the relevant emotional experience. This rules out cases of actual emotional experience with imaginary objects, for the simple reason that in such cases we have the relevant emotional experience—it just has an imaginary object. These sorts of case thus do not seem to pose as serious a challenge to specific emotional experientialism as do cases in which we only imagine ourselves having an emotional experience, because in these cases there is more clearly no immediate emotional experience.

Let me illustrate this with an example. Consider the episode of the Box Hill picnic in Jane Austen's novel *Emma*, where Emma insults Miss Bates. There is a demand that everyone in the party tells either "one thing very clever […] or two things moderately clever; or three things very dull indeed." Miss Bates, who is a kind-hearted character notable chiefly for her garrulity, says that she will not find it difficult to meet the last requirement and Emma interjects "Ah! Ma'am, but there may be a difficulty. Pardon me, but you will be limited as to number—only three at once." Emma's joke at Miss Bates's expense is one that we can have some sympathy with, but it is clear that it is a hurtful and small-minded one, especially within the social context of the novel in which Emma is moneyed and desirable, Miss Bates quite the opposite.

A natural reaction to have to this episode is to feel a sense of moral opprobrium at Emma's actions. What she does is rude, hurtful, morally wrong, and we feel this. Compare our reaction to this fictional situation, to an exactly similar but real case. There are some complications here, because there are differences of nuance arising from the differences between early nineteenth century England and the present day. But suppose we see a friend making a similarly mean-spirited jibe, and feel a similar sense of moral opprobrium. If the argument of the last chapter that I recapped at the beginning of this section is correct, then this experience of moral opprobrium can make it possible for us to have a certain sort of understanding of the corresponding evaluative concept or concepts, call it RUDE. The idea, recall, was that (dis)valuing our friend's action as we do when we feel this opprobrium gives us an understanding of how things matter when the concept, RUDE, applies, and so renders intelligible the appropriateness of responding with moral opprobrium.

There are, no doubt, some very important differences between this case and that of reading *Emma*. But I think that they are similar enough in the relevant respects to justify claiming that both cases might play similar role in the development of our understanding of the evaluative concept, RUDE. Although this is a contentious claim, I think that if we had never felt moral opprobrium before, and felt it for the first time on reading this episode from *Emma*, then it is plausible to think that this opprobrium could give us a similar understanding of RUDE as might the case of the previous paragraph, assuming that had been our first experience of moral opprobrium instead. An actual emotional experience with an actual object (the friend example) thus seems to be capable of playing a similar role in the development of our evaluative understanding to an actual emotional experience with an imagined object (the *Emma* example). I thus do not think that further consideration of these cases poses a significant challenge to specific emotional experientialism.

To be clear: I do not take myself to have sufficiently argued here that these cases *must* be capable of playing equivalent roles in the development of our understanding of specific evaluative concepts. I am rather ruling them out because, even once this argument is made, I do not think they pose so serious a challenge to specific emotional experientialism as the cases I want to consider in the following sections.

These are cases in which we imagine ourselves to be having an emotional experience, as

Walton took us to be doing when we have emotional experiences towards fictions. But if Moran is right, and these are rather cases in which we have an actual emotional experience towards an imaginary object, then we need to look further afield to understand what it is to imagine ourselves to be having an emotional experience. That is what I attempt to do in the next section.

3. Dramatic Imagination

To explain what is involved in imagining an emotional experience it is helpful to appeal to a distinction that Moran (2017 / 1994: 24) makes in the course of his discussion of imaginative resistance. This is the distinction between hypothetical and dramatic imagination. I am not interested in the problem of imaginative resistance for its own sake, but it will be helpful to introduce it here very briefly in order to clarify this distinction between hypothetical and dramatic imagination. The problem of imaginative resistance arises because we seem to be resistant to adopting devious moral attitudes, even in a hypothetical way. In an example from Brian Weatherson (2004: 1), we are asked to imagine that Craig "does the right thing" in shooting Jack and Jill because they are causing a traffic jam by having an argument in the middle of a road. To put it in terms of appropriateness, we seem thus to be asked to imagine that it is appropriate to do as Craig does, despite the fact that we would ordinarily think the opposite (to put it mildly).

There are a number of puzzles that are debated here: the principal question is *why* there is resistance to adopting these attitudes even though they are adopted merely for the purpose of the fiction; but there has also been debate over issues like whether these cases are *impossible* to imagine or whether it is only difficult to do so; and also about whether the problem applies exclusively to moral cases or also arises in other cases (such as aesthetic ones).[56] I will touch on some of these issues below, but my focus is not on the issues themselves (which I make no attempt to decide) but only on the distinction that Moran introduces within this context.

We can see the problem of imaginative resistance at work by contrasting two sorts of case, taking, following Moran, *Macbeth* as example. First, try to imagine that Shakespeare has written the plot differently: imagine that Macbeth had not murdered Duncan, or that the play

56 For a survey of the problem of imaginative resistance see Gendler and Liao 2016. For further discussion, see Moran 2017 / 1994, Goldie 2000: ch. 7, 2003, 2009, Gendler 2000, 2006, Weatherson 2004, Nichols 2006.

is set in England rather than Scotland. Second, "suppose the facts of the murder remain as they are in fact presented in the play, but it is prescribed in this alternate fiction that this was unfortunate only for having interfered with Macbeth's sleep that night, or that we in the audience are relieved at these events" (Moran 2017 / 1994: 17). The problem of imaginative resistance arises because there seems to be a difficulty in trying to imagine the second case that we do not face (or we face difficulties of a different kind) in imagining the first. We ordinarily take the murder to be abhorrent and entirely inappropriate, and when we are asked to imagine ourselves reacting differently to it (to imagine ourselves being relieved), to imagine the killing as appropriate, it can seem hard or impossible to do so. By contrast, we do not seem to face this sort of difficulty in imagining that Shakespeare set the play England rather than in Scotland.

Whatever the nature of the problem here, the importance of it for our purposes is that it provides Moran with an occasion for distinguishing hypothetical and dramatic imagination. In hypothetical imagination, we suppose the truth of propositions. This, Moran assumes, is what is generally in play in the "easy" cases above, in our imagining that Macbeth does not murder Duncan, or that the events of the play take place in England.[57] By contrast, Moran argues that part of the reason it is difficult to imagine being relieved at Duncan's murder is that to do this we need to *dramatically* imagine the situation.

> Imaginatively adopting a perspective on something involves something different from the sort of imagination involved in ordinary counterfactual reasoning. Hypothetical reasoning involves seeing what would follow from the truth of some proposition. It does not involve either feigning belief in that proposition or determining what would follow from the fact of one's believing it. There need be no reference to oneself, either as believer or as any sort of psychological subject, and one does not determine the truth of a counterfactual by imagining "what it would be like" to believe the antecedent. By contrast, imagination with respect to emotional attitudes may require such things as dramatic rehearsal, the right mood, the right experiences, a sympathetic nature. It thus *says* more about a person that he is either able or unable to imagine something in this way, and he bears a different responsibility for it. More is revealed and given of oneself than in the case of ordinary counterfactual reasoning, where one only needs to be provided

57 On Walton's account, our fears at fictions (see Section 1) seem to involve our hypothetically imagining being afraid. Or this is what Walton's talk of "treating as true for the purposes of the fiction" seems to imply.

> with the proposition in order to reason from the assumption of its truth. By contrast, imagination with respect to the cruel, the embarrassing, or the arousing involves something more like a point of view, a total perspective on the situation, rather than just the truth of a specifiable proposition. And imagining along these lines involves something more like genuine rehearsal, "trying on" the point of view, trying to determine what it is like to inhabit it. It is something I may not be able to do if my heart is not in it. (Compare this with ordinary counterfactual reasoning, which is considerably less topic specific or dependent on moods.) If we understood better why imagining in such cases requires your heart to be in it, we would understand better what is being resisted when we resist. (Moran 2017 / 1994: 24-25)

To dramatically imagine something, we need to adopt the perspective of someone who takes the situation this way "from the inside". And Moran's idea is that doing this is much more involved, and much more difficult, than simply supposing the truth of a proposition. Where what we are being asked to imagine involves emotional responses that diverge from our normal responses, then to do this we will need to think ourselves into the mind-set of someone who might take things in a way so foreign to our own ethical perspective. And this is not easy to do.

It is because dramatic imagination involves adopting a perspective imagined "from the inside" that it is especially relevant for the expansion of evaluative understanding that I am considering in this chapter. In the cases Moran is discussing, when we adopt a perspective on an event, we imagine *what it would be like* to experience that event. This is key, for the purposes of my argument, because I have claimed that to make intelligible the appropriateness of our emotional responses we need to understand what it is like to experience the corresponding emotion insofar as that gives us an understanding of what it is like to value something. This is just what we have seen that we are attempting to do in dramatic imagination: we attempt to imagine what an experience would be like. And insofar as our imagining is successful, we will gain an understanding of what the experience would be like and so, by the argument considered in Chapter 4, we will also gain an understanding of what it is like to value in the relevant way and so of the way the related evaluative concepts make emotional responses appropriate. It is thus through dramatic imagination that we might be able to expand our evaluative understanding.

Note that the connection between dramatic imagination and actual emotional experience remains complex. If we can dramatically imagine feeling delight at the murder of Macbeth, then I assume that in imagining this we are not feeling any real delight, but only imagining ourselves to be doing so. By contrast, if we dramatically imagine ourselves walking along a precarious cliff, then we may feel something like real fear at this dramatically imagined possibility. We are back in the realm of emotions felt at fictions here and all the considerations of Section 2 remain relevant. In what follows, however, I will put this second sort of case to one side, and discuss only those cases in which we dramatically imagine ourselves to have an emotional experience *without* having any accompanying actual emotional experience.

It is important to recognise that there will be a number of factors affecting how more or less difficult it will be to dramatically imagine any given sort of case. There will be some cases where the perspective we will be attempting to adopt will vary relatively little from our own. An example here might be dramatically imagining the grief we would feel at the loss of a loved one (assuming we have never felt grief before). Attempting to imagine such a case seems to involve little change to our actual evaluative perspective; we are just imagining how *we* would feel in a novel situation. We imagine ourselves into the situation, but our values and preferences seem to remain intact (I will qualify this claim somewhat below). These cases are thus only ordinarily difficult. I think they represent, however, a significant expansion of our evaluative understanding, because we can come to find intelligible the appropriateness of emotional experiences like grief as otherwise we would only be able to do by actually having that emotional experience.

There are also harder cases. These are cases in which we attempt to imagine ourselves into an evaluative perspective that is more radically removed from our own. Consider, for example, Allan Gibbard's (1992) example of "*gopa*" the exalting sense of glory that is felt by headhunters at having violently murdered their enemies. If we take on board the point recapped at the beginning of this chapter, then to understand the way in which an emotional response like *gopa* is appropriate when an evaluative concept like *GOPA* applies we need to be able to understand what it is like for someone to feel the exalting glory that accompanies paradigm applications of the concept. Attempting to do this will involve attempting to dramatically imagine what it would be like to *value* bloody violence the way the headhunters

do, and to do this we will need to imagine ourselves outside of our own ethical perspective and into that of the headhunters. This is what we would need to do if we wanted to acquire this understanding of *GOPA*.

These cases are harder because it seems much more difficult to step out of our ordinary ethical perspective, and value things in this more radically new way. These are issues that have been discussed in the literature on imaginative resistance, where there is disagreement over just how hard the problem is. Some philosophers argue that there is real impossibility (Walton 1990, 1994, Weatherson 2004), whereas others argue that there is only reluctance (Gendler 2000, 2006). A third possibility is that the apparent difficulties are based on the poverty of the examples generally used (Todd 2009): it may seem impossible to dramatically imagine feeling *gopa* on the basis of the paltry description of the previous paragraph, but if we could work out the example more fully (cf. for example Nabokov's *Lolita*) then the difficulties might start to disappear. My own view is that something like this third position is right, and that the harder cases, though difficult, are not fundamentally impossible. But I do not intend to argue this point here: it is enough for my purposes to focus on the less extreme cases and allow my reader to make up their own mind about the rest.

We should note, however, that the distinction between "hard" and "harder" cases is only one of degree. This is because, for a wide range of interesting cases, the question of how alien the evaluative perspective—how radically new the way of valuing—you are attempting to imaginatively adopt is not clear cut. Suppose, for example, that you have not yet had children and are trying to imagine what it would be like to do so. Because you are imagining what it would be like *for you* to have children there is one sense in which you remain within your own evaluative perspective. However, having children seems to be a personally transformative event, in the sense that it changes your values and preferences.[58] It is thus an event that changes your evaluative perspective. And so, if you want to properly dramatically imagine what it would be like, you need to build this change of perspective into your imagining, and imagine what it would be like from a perspective different to your current, childless one. The differences are therefore differences of degree: imagining what it would be like to have a child involves adopting a perspective somewhat different to your current one. But this perspective is less foreign than that involved in imagining feeling *gopa*.

58 We will meet this idea of "personally transformative" again and at greater length in the next section.

What is it that decides whether or not it is possible to dramatically imagine a situation? My suggestion is that it depends in part on our prior emotional experience. When we imagine a new situation, we must draw on the resources of our previous experience. When we try to imagine what it would be like to value something differently to how we have valued things before we will inevitably draw on this prior experience of valuing things. It seems implausible to suppose that we could conceive of anything *entirely outside of* and *radically different to* that prior experience. But how far we can project and expand on these resources will vary from person to person. It is a matter of each individual's imaginative capacity: some people are simply better at stepping outside of their immediate experience in this way.

This explains, I think, why the harder cases are harder. It is a matter of how far they lie outside our previous experience and so of how much of an imaginative effort is required.[59] In some cases, *no* imaginative effort will be enough. To return to the argument for general emotional experientialism I recapped in the first section of this chapter: someone with no prior experience of any emotion, who had never valued anything, would, I think, be incapable of imagining what it is like to value something—she would lack relevant resources for her imagination to draw on. But for ordinary, mature, human beings with a reasonably wide-ranging stock of emotional experience, I think it plausible that we can imagine having emotional experiences that we have not already had for ourselves, and so possible for us to expand the limits of our evaluative understanding. We can do this by dramatically imagining (and so coming to understand what it is like to experience) things like grief, having a child, or falling in love.

Dramatically imagining new sorts of emotional experience in this way allows us to expand our evaluative understanding because it can give us an understanding of what it is like to value things in novel ways, which as I argued in Chapter 4, involves understanding the specific ways in which evaluative properties make emotional responses appropriate. As we saw in Section 1, to understand the way a specific evaluative concept such as SHAMEFUL makes specific emotional responses appropriate, we need to understand the way in which things matter as they do in paradigm cases where the evaluative concept applies. Actual emotion experience might provide us with this understanding, because when we feel shame we value things in this specific way. But if my argument here is correct, then dramatic

59 Because each individual's prior experience will be different, what is a hard case for one may not be so for another.

imagination can also provide us with this understanding. We do not need to *actually* value things in the relevant way; merely dramatically imagining how things *would* matter can render intelligible why a certain emotional experience is appropriate in a given circumstance.[60]

That claim is contentious, however. Some philosophers would deny that we can really understand what it is like to value in these novel ways without experiencing them for ourselves. In Section 5, I will therefore examine one such objection.

4. Empathy and Imagined Emotional Experience

Before examining this objection, however, I want to say something about the connection between the sort of dramatic imagining I have been discussing here and empathy. There is much argument about exactly how empathy should be understood and I do not want to get into these arguments here. But there are some ways of understanding empathy that I think make empathy one way of performing the sort of dramatic imagining I have just described, and so I want briefly to explain the connection here.

According to one recent account, empathy is "the activity of imaginatively adopting another person's perspective, in a way that somehow engages the emotions of the one doing this imaginative work" (Bailey 2022: 50). This makes empathy a form of dramatic imagination. When we empathise with someone, we dramatically imagine how things are emotionally for the person we are empathising with: we dramatically imagine their emotional experience. I said above that if we have not yet experienced shame and want to understand why shame is appropriate when the concept, SHAMEFUL, applies, then we can do this by dramatically imagining what it is like to feel shame. If this account of empathy is right, then empathy might be *one way* of doing this: if we meet someone feeling shame, and successfully empathise with them, and so dramatically imagine their emotional experience, then we will have, through empathy, just what I argued we needed for an understanding of the appropriateness of shame.

60 There is also a quite complex question about whether we must imagine an *appropriate* emotional response. This relates to the debate about whether or not we have an experience of the appropriateness of the response. My view is that even an inappropriate emotional response (whether imagined or actual) can give us an understanding of the corresponding evaluative concept. But these questions are difficult.

However, we need to be careful here. The cases that I have identified in this chapter as being relevant for emotional experientialism are those in which we dramatically imagine an emotional experience, *without actually experiencing* (or ever having actually experienced) that type of emotional experience for ourselves. In this context, I distinguished dramatically imagining having an emotional experience from having an actual emotional experience with an imaginary intentional object.

Empathy is complicated because it may be thought to involve *actual* rather than merely imagined emotional experience. Some philosophers deny that when we empathise we feel any genuine emotion (Deigh 1995: 175, Walton 2015: 281ff). If this is right, then empathy should be able to play the role assigned to dramatic imagination in this chapter so far. But other philosophers claim that when we empathise we do feel some genuine emotion (Blum 2011: 172, Prinz 2011: 215, Bailey 2022: 53). Things become more complicated in this case. If when we empathise with someone who is feeling shame we are moved by their shame in some way that falls short of actually feeling shame for ourselves, then these sorts of case might still fall among those I want to discuss here. There would be some actual emotional experience felt by the empathiser, but it would not be of the relevant sort to spoil the argument concerning emotional experientialism. Some views (for example Bailey 2002), however, seem committed to saying that we do actually feel shame when we empathise with someone feeling shame. If empathy is understood as such, then the cases I am interested in will not include cases of empathy, because cases of empathy will not be cases in which we dramatically imagine having an emotional experience *that we have not actually experienced for ourselves*.

For simplicity's sake, in what follows I will put empathy to one side and concentrate exclusively on dramatic imagination. All I want to point out here is that there are plausible accounts of empathy that allow it to play just the role that I am attributing to dramatic imagination. If we believe these accounts, then empathy will be capable of providing just the sort of expansion of our evaluative understanding that I am discussing in this chapter.

5. Transformative Experiences?

In this section, I want to consider an objection to my argument so far. This objection is

important because it is based on a belief that there is a wide range of experiences that are so different from our other experiences that there is no way of understanding what these experiences are like other than by having them for ourselves. David Lewis (1999: 262), for example, claims:

> If you want to know what some new and different experience is like, you can learn it by going out and really *having* that experience. You can't learn it by being told about the experience, however thorough your lessons may be.

Lewis was interested in this claim for the sake of what it might tell us about the prospects of materialism in the philosophy of mind. But it is also forms the basis of a possible objection to the argument I have been presenting in this chapter.

I have been claiming in this chapter that it is (sometimes) possible to have an understanding of what it is like to value things in a particular way (to find them shameful, or praiseworthy, for example) without ever having valued things in that particular way for ourselves. But since this new way of valuing things may seem to constitute a new and different experience, this is an idea that Lewis's claim may seem to directly deny.

In this section, I want to consider a particular, more developed, account of Lewis's thought at greater length. This I find in the work of L. A. Paul (2014). Paul (2014) is interested in what she calls "transformative experiences". Paul claims that we can only know what these experiences are like if we actually experience them for ourselves. In this section I will give an exposition of exactly what Paul means by "transformative experience" and I will explain what challenge this poses to my argument in this chapter. Before doing this, however, there is a distinction (that Paul is aware of) that it will be important to note.[61]

This is the distinction between type and token experiences, and their type and token phenomenologies. It should be clear that what is relevant to our understanding of evaluative concepts will primarily be types of valuing and types of emotional experience, rather than token instances of emotional experience and token instances of valuing. If we want to understand the appropriateness of shame, for example, what we will need is an understanding

61 A very similar challenge arises in the context of empathy. There is a question whether it is possible for someone who has never felt, for example, grief, to empathise with someone who is feeling grief. This is related to the criticism sometimes made of empathy that it is morally objectionable because we tend to empathise more with people whose experience more closely resembles our own (Bloom 2016).

of what shame is like, and of what it is like to disvalue shameful happenings, as *types* of experience rather than of the phenomenology of any particular token experience of shame.

Of course, type and token are related: when we learn about shame and SHAMEFUL from our own experience, we will inevitably draw on individual token experiences of shame. But it should also be clear that we can go wrong here if we mistakenly take features of the individual token as characteristics of the type. When it comes to developing our understanding, a certain amount of abstraction from particular instances will be necessary and having a token experience will be no guarantee that we come to understand the type.

Conversely, understanding of the general type of experience will plausibly help us understand particular tokens. If I want to understand what you are feeling when you feel shame as you are doing in this instance, then I will draw on my general understanding of what shame, as a type of emotion, is like. I will then have to apply it to your particular circumstances, and I will be successful or not in understanding what you are going through now depending on whether I successfully take account of those particular circumstances. The point that I want to make here is that these complications concerning individual token experiences can be set to one side here, because, as I said, what is relevant for understanding evaluative concepts is understanding the general type. In Paul's discussion (2014: 36), it is types of experience that are her main concern.

With the distinction between type and token experiences in place, we can now move on to Paul's account of transformative experiences. These experiences are transformative both "epistemically" and "personally" (Paul 2014: 17-18). An experience is epistemically transformative, for Paul, in the sense that when someone has such an experience:

> Her knowledge of what something is like, and thus her subjective point of view, changes. With [such a] new experience, she gains new abilities to cognitively entertain certain contents, she learns to understand things in a new way, and she may even gain new information. (Paul 2014: 10-11)

An example Paul (2014: 15, 35) gives of an epistemically transformative experience is eating a durian, a fruit whose taste and smell are notoriously incomparable. Paul quotes the celebrity chef Anthony Bourdain describing it as "indescribable". Eating a durian is epistemically transformative because only after we have experienced it can we understand what it is like. And the experience thus gives us an understanding of what it is like to taste a durian that we

could not gain any other way.

As Paul notes (2014: 16-17), experiences like the above are somewhat trivial. For all but a few (the chef, the food writer, the future creator of durian ice cream) whether or not one has eaten a durian will have a relatively small role to play in one's life. The "transformative experiences" that Paul is interested in must thus also be "personally transformative".

> Such experiences may include experiencing a horrific physical attack, gaining a new sensory ability, having a traumatic accident, undergoing major surgery, winning an Olympic gold medal, participating in a revolution, having a religious conversion, having a child, experiencing the death of a parent, making a major scientific discovery, or experiencing the death of a child. (Paul 2014: 16)

These experiences are personally transformative in the sense that they change "what it is like for you to be you" (Paul 2014: 16). The key change that they make to you seems, for Paul's purposes, to be a change in your preferences and values. Things that seemed important to you before may no longer do so. Things that you could not see the point of before may now seem to matter very deeply.

The problem that Paul tries to answer is the problem of how we might choose whether or not to have a transformative experience. How should we decide whether or not to have a child, for example? Because Paul thinks that these experiences are transformative in both of the above senses, she thinks that ordinary rational decision theory does not apply. We lack an understanding of what the experience will be like, and we do not understand in advance how it will change our values and preferences. Paul thinks this means that we cannot evaluate the choice in the way that decision theory requires.

The details of Paul's positive argument need not concern us here. What is interesting, for my purposes, is that Paul's claim that there are epistemically transformative experiences seems, like Lewis's claim, to undermine the argument I want to make in this chapter. Or at least this will be so if the sort of experiences I am talking about here count as epistemically transformative. And it would seem that they must, since I claim that they are capable of advancing our evaluative understanding. My point of difference with Paul is that whereas I claim we can imagine what these experiences are like beforehand, Paul denies this. Moreover, I think that this imagination can form the basis for a deepening of our understanding of the corresponding evaluative concepts, whereas Paul seems to be committed

to denying this (although it is not a question she explicitly addresses).

There is another important point on which I differ from Paul. Paul restricts her idea of what we learn through transformative experience to *properties of experience*. She seems to think that when we learn about what it is like to have a child, for example, what we are learning is limited to properties of this (type of) experience. As John Campbell (2015) argues in his comments on Paul's book, this conception of what we can learn from experience seems too limited. When we learn what it is like to have a child we learn not just about properties of experience, but also about properties of the object of experience: we learn about relationships of (hopefully) love and kinship and not merely about what it is like to experience these relationships. The same is true also, I want to claim, of what we learn when we learn what it is like to value things in particular ways. We learn not only about properties of our experience, but also about what it is for things to be valuable in these particular ways. It is this that establishes the link between our experience—whether actual or imagined—and the evaluative concepts that apply to objects in the world. It is because our understanding is not limited to properties of experience that it can be an understanding of evaluative concepts that applies to objects of experience.

As Campbell himself notes, it is a complicated question how integral this commitment of Paul's is to her argument as a whole. Much of her argument seems to work in the same way if interpreted as Campbell suggests. I agree with Campbell on this point and so will interpret Paul's argument in this light. Where I disagree with both Campbell and Paul is in their belief that first-hand experience is the *only* way to reach this understanding.

I have discussed the epistemically transformative aspect of transformative experiences, but what of the other side of these experiences: their being personally transformative? Paul's notion of an experience being personally transformative is relevant to my argument, in the sense that at least some of the examples I am discussing (feeling grief or shame for the first time, coming for the first time to value a child or a work of art) have the potential to change "what it is like to be you"—to change our values and preferences—in just the way that Paul discusses. But this aspect of these experiences is less directly related to the question of evaluative understanding than their being epistemically transformative.

It is still important to note, however, that to adequately imagine what it would be like to value

in (at least some) novel ways, we will need also to imagine personally transformative changes. To imagine what it is like to have a child, for example, we need to imagine not what it would be like for me with my current values and preferences, but what it would be like for the parent I would become. This constitutes an additional bar for our imagination to overcome. It is, however, one that I think our imagination *can* overcome, at least sometimes. And note that, at least sometimes, engaging in this sort of imagined personal transformation may actually be personally transformative, in the sense that our actual values and preferences may change on the basis of what we have imagined.

I will focus my discussion on epistemically transformative experiences, because these are most relevant to the argument of my thesis. This is because acquiring the new understanding of evaluative concepts that I am discussing is an epistemic transformation. My argument is that we can sometimes get this epistemic transformation without *actually* having the experience, because we can instead dramatically imagine what it would be like to have the (epistemically transformative) experience. But we need to bear in mind that, in some cases, dramatically imagining having an epistemically transformative experience will involve dramatically imagining having undergone a personal change—as in the case of imagining having children. My claim (contra Paul) is that we can imagine this, in some sense at least. And again, my claim is that we can do this without *actually* undergoing any personal transformation. I suspect that many of the cases that are relevant for the purposes of my argument involve dramatically imagining at least some degree of personal transformation. We will meet one example in Chapter 6, in my discussion of grief. But for now, I will concentrate on Paul's claim as it relates to more straightforward cases of epistemically transformative experience.

Paul (2014: 8) puts the case for epistemically transformative experience in the following manner:

> the deep and familiar fact that different subjective points of view, as different conscious perspectives, can be fundamentally inaccessible to each other. Unless you've had the relevant experiences, what it is like to be a person or an animal very different from yourself is, in a certain fundamental way, inaccessible to you. It isn't that you can't imagine something in place of the experience you haven't had. It's that this act of imagining isn't enough to let you know what it is *really* like to be an octopus, or to be a slave, or to be blind. You need to have the

> experience itself to know what it is really like.[62]

What seems indisputable here is the idea that if an experience or mode of experience is "fundamentally inaccessible" to us, then we can have no idea of what that experience is like. Paul also talks (2014: passim) of transformative experiences as "radically new experiences". The two ideas are closely connected: it is presumably because the experience (or sort of experience) is radically new (different to anything that we have before experienced) that it is fundamentally inaccessible to us. We cannot imagine what it is like to be an octopus (that experience is fundamentally inaccessible to us) because that experience is radically different to our own. Paul's argument requires that all of the experiences she mentions be "fundamentally" or "radically" different from our own. What is up for debate so far as I am concerned is *which* experiences are radically new in this way. As I suggested above in relation to Lewis, again with Paul I differ in setting a much higher bar for an experience to count as radically new.

In this respect, I think that Paul's argument is much stronger than she tends to suggest. It is strong because it requires us to lack *all* understanding of the relevant experiences. If we have *some idea* of what a new experience is like, then this would constitute some sort of understanding of what that experience is like. And this seems to allow for quite a lot of uncertainty in our understanding. One of Paul's examples of a transformative experience is becoming a vampire.[63] About this she says:

> If, in the end, you choose to become a vampire based on the exciting possibilities that becoming immortal seems to offer, you shouldn't fool yourself—*you have no idea what you are getting into*. You just don't know what it's like to be a vampire. And if you refuse to become one on the basis that you can't imagine not

62 Note that Paul's examples, here (being a slave, being blind) and elsewhere (being of a different gender, sexual preference, or ethnicity), are something of an ethical powder keg. I do not have space to adequately address the issues they raise here. But it is important not to confuse ethical and epistemological issues. There are very good ethical reasons to avoid speaking for another in these sorts of case: for a man to tell a woman what it is like to be a woman, for example. But I think these issues are often confused with the epistemological ones. It does not follow from the ethical impropriety of speaking for another, for example, that any given woman's understanding of what it is like to be a woman must be better than any given man's. To avoid these difficulties I want to put aside such contentious cases.

63 It is an unhelpful example, in my view, because it is fictional, and so indeterminate: we get only as much of an idea of what it is like to be a vampire as Paul allows us.

> being human anymore, then you also shouldn't fool yourself—*you have no idea what you are missing*. (Paul 2014: 47)

The question is whether Paul is really right that we can have *no idea* what the experiences she discusses are like. If we can have some idea, then they are not really transformative experiences, in Paul's sense: they are not radically different and new to what has gone before.

With most of the experiences Paul describes as epistemically transformative, I think we can have some idea of what they might be like beforehand.[64] For example, if we try to imagine what it is like to have children (if we have not had them ourselves) then we seem to have plenty to go on: past experience of our relationship to our parents and to other people we love, testimony, and experience caring for other people and things. We can imagine what it will be like to love these children, can imagine how we will value them, can imagine how our values and preferences will likely change. It is true that we can recognise certain shortfalls in what we can imagine in this way: we may imagine what it is like to be persistently pestered by a bored child, but this sort of thing will have one complexion when we are simply able to *stop* imagining it—it is different when there is no escape. But our very capacity to recognise these shortfalls in advance seems to get us closer to an understanding of what it is like to have children. Things might well be very different from how we imagined (indeed they almost certainly would be), if we do go on to have children. But this does not mean we have *no* prior understanding. Moreover, at least some of the things that will be different will be down to the peculiarities of the particular token experience we might have of having children, rather a consequence of a failure to understand what it is like to have an experience of this general type.

In this instance, at any rate (it is one of Paul's examples), it seems to me that there is very good reason to think that we can have at least some idea of what it (the type of experience) is like. Most saliently for the argument of this chapter, we can thus have some idea of what it is like to value children, and so some understanding of the associated evaluative concepts.

64 In earlier work on what Paul calls transformative experience, Edna Ullmann-Margalit (2006) uses examples like deciding to undergo religious conversion (also an example of Paul's). In these examples there may seem to be a holism to the mind-set we come to adopt that gives it a better claim to radical newness. It changes how we think about *everything*, we might think. I think even in these cases the radical newness is probably overstated. But I do not need to argue this here. I am not claiming that there is *no such thing* as unimaginable transformative experience, just that the cases relevant to my thesis are not of this sort.

How, then, do we decide whether a (type of) experience is really radically new—so radically new that we can have no prior understanding of what it is like? My suggestion relies on the possibility, after we have had the experience in question, of our comparing it to what we before imagined it would be like. My suggestion is that if the experience is radically new, then it should be *inconceivable* that the experience should be just as we imagined it. I want to note that this sets quite a high bar: it is not enough that it should be merely *unlikely*. Many of Paul's examples, I think, fail this test. For example, Vasily Grossman, in his novel about Stalingrad, *Life and Fate* (pt 1, §58), suggests that experience of war may also fail this test, when he has a young radio operator called Katya say: "When I was at home […] I imagined that war would be a matter of lost cats, children screaming and blazing buildings. That seems to be just how it is."

I am not trying to deny that there is any such thing as transformative experience. I am in agreement with Paul on another example she discusses: Jackson's Mary (Paul 2014: 8-9; see also Chapter 2 of this thesis). It does seem to me to be inconceivable that Mary, having never before experienced any of the colours, should be capable of imagining what it is like to see red. Whatever she imagines it will be like to see her first red rose, I cannot conceive of her imagination matching up to the reality. Mary simply seems to lack the imaginative resources.

The same, I think is true of the emotionless creatures I considered in Chapter 4. I cannot conceive of a creature who had never before valued anything having the capacity to imagine what it is like to value. Any experience of valuing, along with any associated emotional experience would, for such a creature, be radically new. By contrast, the examples I have been discussing in this chapter do not, I think, pass the test of radical newness. It is conceivable, for example, that someone should be capable of imagining what it is like to love a child, on the basis of their prior experiences of love for their friends, pets, and parents. It is also, I think, conceivable, although this is more contentious, that someone who had never experienced grief should be able to imagine what grief is like on the basis of their other (prior) emotional experiences, should be able to imagine the way in which they might (dis)value a loss as grievous.[65] In all of these cases, we can have some understanding, some idea, of what it would be like to value in the relevant way. And because this is an understanding what it is like to value things *as we do when we take the corresponding evaluative concept to apply*, understanding this can also make intelligible why the relevant

65 I will return to grief in Chapter 6.

emotional response is appropriate in these circumstances.

I do not think we should endorse the objection I drew from Paul. I have claimed that imagination might help us develop our evaluative understanding because we can imagine what it is like to value things in novel ways (associated with novel emotional experiences) and that this can deepen our understanding of related evaluative concepts. And I think that the experiences I am interested in here are not *radically* different to other ways of valuing things that we have already experienced (if we are ordinary, adult human beings). I think it is wrong, therefore, to claim that we can have *no prior idea* what it is like to value in these ways. Rather, we can have at least some notion of what it is like through dramatic imagination; and imagining in this way can give us an understanding of the corresponding evaluative concepts.

Conclusion

What does all of this mean for emotional experientialism? All of this, I think, is very much in keeping with the picture I presented in Section 1 of this chapter. We can dramatically imagine what it is like to value things in ways that we have not (or not yet) done in our actual experience. In the process, we come to a better understanding of the corresponding evaluative concepts. In this way, general emotional experientialism is vindicated: we need to have had some experience of things mattering to us—and so need to have had some form of emotional experience—in order to get started on the process of imagining how things could matter differently. But the prospects for more specific forms of emotional experientialism are less good. We can dramatically imagine what it is like to value differently even if we have never actually done so. In this way, we are able to expand our understanding of evaluative concepts, without needing to have the corresponding emotional experiences for ourselves.

6. Grievousness, Grief, and Other Emotions

In Chapter 4 I argued that there is a special understanding of evaluative concepts that comes with understanding the point of the evaluative practices in which these concepts play a part. To understand the point of these evaluative practices, I argued, we need to understand the way in which emotional responses are made appropriate when the relevant evaluative concepts obtain. And I argued that to understand this we need to understand what it is like to value things as we do when we feel the relevant emotion—this was the conclusion of Chapter 4. But in Chapter 5 I argued that this understanding is possible *either* on the basis of first hand emotional experience *or* on the basis of dramatic imagination. We can understand the appropriateness of our emotional responses by *actually* valuing things in the relevant way for ourselves, but it can also be sufficient to merely *dramatically imagine* what it might be like to value in this way—even if we have never actually done so for ourselves. In this way, we can expand our evaluative understanding beyond the limits of our first-hand emotional experience.

In this chapter, I want to apply the above picture to a particular case study: grief. This chapter is not a mere case study, however—not a mere application of the account of emotional experience and evaluative concepts given in previous chapters—because I will also use this discussion of grief to develop certain aspects of my general account.

One problem that we face in trying to ascertain what sort of understanding of evaluative concepts is possible without emotional experience is that emotional experience is so pervasive in ordinary human life. There are many types of emotional experience that it is unrealistic to expect an ordinary, mature human being to have gone through life without ever having experienced: emotional experiences such as anger, joy, disappointment, and pride. Grief is suitable for my purposes because it is an emotion that seems to be something of an exception. Many people do sadly suffer bereavement at an early age; but many others reach maturity without ever having lost someone close to them. It thus seems plausible that there are people who have reached maturity without ever having experienced grief. And so we can realistically ask the following question of such people: what understanding can they have of the grievousness of loss? And what role does their dramatic imagination play in this

understanding?

In Section 1, I identify five features of grief that I will further discuss in this chapter. Section 2 explains, with reference to these features, what of grief and GRIEVOUS we can understand in a purely theoretical way and contrasts this with the understanding we can get through actual or imagined emotional experience. In this section I explain how dramatic imagination can provide us with an understanding of the ways that grief might be appropriate, even if we have never before experienced grief. This section also presents a more nuanced picture of how our understanding of GRIEVOUS is also related to emotional experiences other than grief, and in doing so develops the argument of the thesis as a whole. Section 3 then asks whether there is anything that actual experience of grief can contribute to our understanding of GRIEVOUS that it is not possible for dramatic imagination to provide. I acknowledge that actual emotional experience may be important in myriad ways, but I find no reason to think it has anything distinctive to contribute to our understanding of GRIEVOUS. I thus leave the ball in the court of anyone wishing to argue the contrary.

1. Five Features of Grief

What I want to do in this chapter is to concentrate on five key features of grief so as to ask: first, how well can they be dramatically imagined in advance of actual experience of grief? And second, to what extent can this imagining give us some form of understanding of what it is for a loss to be grievous?

What I am not trying to do here is to say what grief *is*. There is extensive debate about this question in the literature, which is also a specific manifestation of the more general debate about what emotions are. There is disagreement among philosophers who discuss grief specifically over, for example, whether grief is a mental state (Nussbaum 2001) or a sort of process (Goldie 2012: ch. 3). These different positions mirror different positions on the nature of emotions in general. And as I said at the beginning of this thesis (see Chapter 1), I want to remain so far as possible neutral on the question of what an emotion is, focusing rather on the question of what role emotional experience might play in our evaluative understanding. In this specific case, my question takes the form: what role might our experience of grief play in our understanding of associated concepts such as GRIEVOUS and LOSS? To get started on this question I do, however, need to say at least something about

how I understand grief; this will be the subject of this section.

I am going to identify five features of grief that will be relevant in the discussion that follows. All of these features are related, and some are more closely related than others. The first feature concerns the object of grief. The way I will understand grief is as being about loss, and paradigmatically it seems to be felt in response to the loss (death) of someone who is personally close to us and whose life, and whose relationship to us, we value. Grief can, of course, be felt for other sorts of thing. We can grieve a relationship that has ended or perhaps even a house or a job we have left, but these sorts of case will not be my focus here. We can also probably grieve for people with whom we have no personal connection (Marušić 2018: 6), but these sorts of case have their own difficulties and so I will also not discuss them explicitly. There is some room for debate over whether the object of grief is the person, the relationship, or something else (Solomon 2004: 88), but the exact specification will not matter for my purposes.

The second feature of grief is that in cases where we have such a personal connection to someone who dies, grief seems to be the *appropriate* response.[66] We ordinarily take there to be something reprehensible about the child who fails to grieve for their parent, the partner who fails to grieve for their partner, and such like. It seems by contrast to be *appropriate* to grieve when we lose someone close to us.

The third feature of grief that I want to draw attention to is connected to Goldie's idea that grief is a process. Whether or not we agree with this claim as a claim about what grief *is*, it seems to be true that grief develops in a characteristic way over a more or less extended period of time. There are many different ways, both literary and scientific, of describing grief's characteristic development, and any such description of "the stages" of grief is likely to be contentious. But however exactly the characteristic development of grief is conceived, some such development would seem to be part of what it is to grieve, and part of what it is to feel grief.

The fourth feature of grief that I want to draw attention to is connected to the third. This is that grief, in the normal course of its development, eventually comes to an end, and it is

66 Some claim that grief is obligatory (Solomon 2004: 78), but this claim is more contentious and so I will prefer to talk in terms of appropriateness.

usually thought to be appropriate that it should do so. There seems to be something close to pathological about grief when it continues to be felt long after the loved one's passing.[67] So the fourth feature of grief is that it usually comes to an end.

Having said this, there is a puzzle here because our intuitions seem to pull in two different directions as to the appropriateness of grief's coming to an end (Marušić 2018). On the one hand, there is the intuition just mentioned: that we ought, in time, to "get over" our grief; that life must go on and we cannot go on forever feeling so deep a grief as we do at first. On the other hand, there is the opposing intuition that, since our loved one is still dead, and is still loved, we really *ought* to go on feeling grief as strongly as ever.

A hardline view here would therefore say that it is *wrong* for our grief to end and that we ought to go on grieving for ever.[68] A "soft" view would, by contrast, try to explain away the opposing intuition and say that it is wrong to go on grieving and remain unreconciled to our loss. And a whole range of middle views are also possible which allow that there is some sense in which it is appropriate to go on grieving for ever, but that other considerations counterbalance or outweigh this. I would favour a view of this third sort. I think that it is (in almost all cases) all things considered appropriate that grief should come to an end; but I also think that it can be tragic that this should be so, since the ending of grief represents a sort of letting go of the loved one. The way I have identified this fourth feature of grief—that, in the normal course of development, grief eventually comes to an end, and it is appropriate that it should do so—does rule out the hardline view. But beyond this I want to remain so far as possible neutral about how and to what extent there may be other reasons that weigh against grief's ending.

The fifth and final feature of grief I will explain at somewhat greater length than the previous four because it will be especially relevant to views of Robert Solomon that I will discuss in Section 2. The fifth feature is that grief usually ends because we "move on" from our loss by reconstructing our life so as to live it without the beloved. This "moving on" provides at least some reason why the cessation of grief may be appropriate. Note that, as I just said in

67 For a discussion of this in terms of reasons, see Marušić 2018. Marušić tries to explain why the reasons that we have for grieving in the early stages of grief cease to be (such) good reasons as time goes on.

68 Something like this hardline view of grief is discussed in Solomon 2004. Callard 2018 considers an analogous position to this with respect to anger.

discussing my fourth feature of grief, there is a question that I will not try to decide here as to whether grief ought to end, and so there is also a question (to put it in terms of this fifth feature) as to whether or not we ought to move on. The fifth feature of grief is not that grief ends because we *must* move on, but rather that *when* grief ends, it ends because we move on.

Martha Nussbaum (2001: 82) identifies something very like what I mean by "moving on" when discussing how her grief for her mother has diminished with time:

> I will still accept many of the same judgments—including judgments about my mother's death, about her worth and importance, about the badness of what happened to her. But propositions having to do with the central role of my mother in my own conception of flourishing will shift into the past tense. By now, in August 2000, it is no longer as true of me as it was in 1992 that "my mother is an important element in my flourishing"; I now am more inclined to accept the proposition, "The person who died *was* a central part of my life," and this judgmental change itself is a large part of what constitutes the diminution of grief.

At least part of what I mean by "moving on" is just this change in the structure of the griever's life in which the loved one, once central to that life, over time becomes less so (see also Solomon 2004: 95ff). Before she dies, Nussbaum's mother occupies a central part of Nussbaum's life. This does not change immediately on her death, but in time how Nussbaum lives her life changes and, with this, so does her mother's place in it. Nussbaum's mother no longer plays as central a part in Nussbaum's life and in this sense Nussbaum has moved on from her loss.

A key difference to acknowledge within the context of Nussbaum's treatment of grief is the difference between a loss that is positively felt and a loss that becomes, most of the time, mere absence. As we move on after the death of a loved one the structure of our life changes such that the loved one comes to have less of a place in it. In the initial stages of grief, we find ourselves constantly butting up against the loved one's absence. This happens in both large and small ways. On the one hand, we miss them being there to discuss life-changing events, while on the other, we miss the way they would leave their shoes by the door or pull the covers towards them on getting into bed. These are *positive* absences in the sense that, before the loved one's death, these features were built into the structure of our life; and now that the loved one is gone they have left a hole or gap in our lives. The more deeply integrated the person we are grieving was built into our life, the more often we will find

ourselves coming up against these felt absences.

But as time passes, the structure of our life changes. We develop new routines, new ways of coping with an everyday existence in which the person we loved no longer plays a part. In the process, the holes that the loved one's death has left in our life come to be more or less completely filled in. We *move on*. The dead person is still absent from our life, but their absence is no longer felt so persistently and pervasively.

I have allowed that some people might grieve forever; and I have allowed that we might think it *appropriate* to grieve forever in some cases (perhaps the grief a parent feels for a dead child might be such a one). But I do want to insist that even in these cases there is a "moving on" in some sense, even if grief does not end. The structure of the life of the griever *must* inevitably change: for the simple reason that before the relationship of the griever to their loved one was a relationship with a living and changing person, whereas now that person lives no longer. My point here is that although grief can constitute what Robert Solomon (in a phrase I will discuss at greater length in Section 3) calls a "continuation of love" and so a continuation of the loving relationship, the nature of this relationship must shift from a relationship with a living person to an inevitably somewhat ritualised relationship with the dead. The place of the loved one within the griever's life must therefore also change, and in this sense the griever will "move on", even if they do not in the process "get over" their grief.

Note that the difficulties that I acknowledged in relation to my fourth feature of grief are still present here. There is still a question of whether it is a good thing that we move on from our losses. From a certain perspective, moving on from a loved one can seem to be a bad and regrettable thing: we feel that we *ought* to hold on to the dead more fiercely than we do. But perhaps it is better to think of this less as grief and more as a combination of other emotions like guilt. Guilt at having moved on. We feel guilt not because we have inappropriately ceased to grieve, but because we have filled the space in our life that our loved one used to fill. In any case, nothing I have to say in what follows will depend on our response to this question.

And note also that even where someone has moved on and so no longer feels grief so pervasively, it is still likely that they will have occasional *episodes* where the loved one painfully comes to mind and the grief recurs. These episodes need not be any less *intense*

than the original grief. My claim is just that in time they will come to be less and less of a feature of everyday life.

To recap, then. In this section I have identified five features of grief. First, it is felt in response to the death of someone who is personally close to us and whose life and relationship to us we value. Second, in such cases it is appropriate to grieve. Third, grief develops and changes over time. Fourth, it seems to be appropriate to stop grieving in time. Fifth, part of the reason it seems to be appropriate to stop grieving is that we "move on" and the initial positive absence from our life of the loved one becomes more of a negative absence.

It is important also to recognise the relevance of these features of grief to how we understand the evaluative concept GRIEVOUS. On the neo-sentimentalist account I have been relying on in this thesis, a loss is grievous if and only if it is appropriate to feel grief for it. The features of grief that I have identified are all relevant here, because all of them touch, each in their own way, on the appropriateness of grief (which appropriateness was itself the second feature identified). To take the first feature: I claimed that it was only appropriate to feel grief for the loss of someone who was personally close to you. These losses are thus also grievous.[69] And something similar is true of the other three features: grief develops and changes over time (third feature) and so it will also be appropriate for our response to a grievous loss to develop and change over time. More specifically, a grievous loss will be one that it is (usually) appropriate for us to stop feeling grief for as time goes on (fourth feature) and as we move on from the loss (fifth feature). These five features that I have identified as putting some limits on how I will be understanding grief will thus also put limits on how I will be understanding GRIEVOUS. In this way there is, on the neo-sentimentalist account I have been deploying, a direct connection between features of grief and features of GRIEVOUS; and our understanding of the one will therefore be intimately connected to our understanding of the other.

2. Understanding Grievousness without Experience of Grief

What can we learn from this discussion of grief about the connection between emotional

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69 More accurately, they are grievous *to you*, since other people will not share the same personally close relation and so it will not be appropriate for them to feel grief. In this sense, GRIEVOUS is a relative concept.

experience, dramatic imagination, and evaluative concepts? I think all of the above can be understood—in some way at least—by someone who has *not* themselves experienced grief and I think this constitutes an understanding of the evaluative concept, GRIEVOUS. But what role does dramatic imagination play in this understanding? There are really three questions here. First, what understanding of GRIEVOUS can we have in, as I put it following Goldie in Chapter 2, a theoretical manner? Second, how can this understanding be deepened by dramatically imagining what it is like to feel grief (in the manner described in Chapter 5)? Third, how does the understanding of GRIEVOUS we might get from dramatic imagination differ from the understanding we might get from having a first-hand experience of grief? This section will deal with the first two questions, before I return, in Section 3, to the third.

Note that in talking about dramatically imagining what it is like to feel grief in a way that goes beyond our previous experience, there are at least two sorts of possible case. The first is one in which we attempt to dramatically imagine what it is like to feel grief having *never* experienced grief for ourselves before. This is the sort of case that I will principally be interested in here and on which my discussion will focus. But there is also the case in which we *have* experienced grief before—for example, the grief at the loss of our parents or grandparents, or our pets—and then attempt to dramatically imagine the grief we might feel at other sorts of loss—for example, for a partner or child. This case is also important and interesting, but it raises slightly different issues to the first. I think that much of what I have to say here will also apply, mutatis mutandis, to this sort of case. But my focus will be on cases of the first sort, and I will not discuss the second any further here.

According to the view of the connection between emotional experience and our understanding of evaluative concepts that I have been defending in this thesis, we can have *some* form of understanding—which I have been calling a theoretical understanding—of a specific evaluative concept (such as JOYFUL or SHAMEFUL) without ever having had the corresponding emotional experience (such as joy or shame).

This seems to be true of grief also. It is plausible to think that we can understand something of what it is for a loss to be grievous in a purely theoretical way. We can understand in a general way the idea of death and its irretrievability, the idea of the personal connections existing between people that make grief appropriate in some cases but not others, and so on. We can also grasp, in at least some way, the neo-sentimentalist biconditional that says that

grief is appropriate if and only if a loss is grievous. And we also seem able to pick up on at least some of the features that make grief appropriate in the absence of any experience of grief. For example, we can ascertain that it is inappropriate for Sue to feel grief for Sarah, because Sarah and Sue have no personal connection. Contrariwise, we can ascertain that if Sarah and Sue had had a close and loving personal connection, then grief might be appropriate. In this sort of way, I think we can have a theoretical understanding of all five of the features of grief identified in the previous section; and so, through the neo-sentimentalist biconditional, also a theoretical of understanding of GRIEVOUS, even without any notion of what it feels like to experience grief.

But this can only get us so far. To attain a deeper understanding, I think we need to appeal to the idea we first met in the Chapter 5 and which I recapped at the beginning of this chapter. This is the idea that there is an understanding of an evaluative concept that requires us to understand the particular way in which it makes the relevant emotional response appropriate from the perspective of an engaged participant in the relevant evaluative practice. Only with this understanding does the appropriateness of the relevant emotional experience become intelligible. And I think that it is difficult to see how someone could come to understand this in the theoretical manner of the previous paragraph, for reasons discussed in Chapters 4 and 5. This theoretical understanding can only be an understanding *that* the emotional response is appropriate, I claimed. It does not make this appropriateness intelligible.

Applying the general argument of Chapters 4 and 5 to the particular case of grief: it is hard to see how grief's appropriateness can be intelligible to us unless we have some understanding of what it is like to value things as we do when we experience a loss as being grievous. And it is just this understanding of how things matter that I want to claim *cannot* form part of a theoretical understanding of GRIEVOUS.

I think we can say more about *how* exactly it is possible to dramatically imagine feeling grief by acknowledging the connection between GRIEVOUS, grief, and other emotions. And in the process we will develop the account of the connection between emotional experience and evaluative concepts more generally: what I say here is, I think, particularly clear in the case of grief and GRIEVOUS, but I think something similar can also be said of many other evaluative concepts.

I have claimed that to understand the way in which grief is appropriate when GRIEVOUS applies it is necessary to understand what it is like to value things as we do when we feel grief. At times I have talked in this chapter (as I have elsewhere in connection to other emotions) as if there is a one-to-one connection between particular ways of valuing things and particular sorts of emotional experience, which would imply that there is, in this case, grief on one hand and the way we value things when we feel grief on the other. This has been useful for the sake of clarity of exposition, but in practice I think things are more complicated than I have generally presented them as being thus far. I do not think that there is a *single* sort of emotional experience involved. In reality I think that, when we value things, there is an interrelation between different sorts of emotional experience. And correspondingly there is an interrelated understanding of different evaluative concepts. This connection is recognised also in the account of valuing first presented in Chapter 4, which made valuing something a matter of being vulnerable to a *range* of different emotions with respect to that thing; and valuing will play a central role in my argument here.

A good way to think about this with relation to grief in particular is in terms of Robert Solomon's notion that "grief is the continuation of love" (Solomon 2004: 90).[70] I want to give this idea a slightly different interpretation to Solomon's, so I will first explain what Solomon means by it and then explain the purpose to which I shall put it.

Solomon talks about grief as the continuation of love in relation to some of the issues I discussed when identifying my fourth and fifth features of grief in Section 1 of this chapter. Solomon wants to avoid the idea that grief is an entirely "negative" emotion, one that we would be better off without. He denies that we can think of grief exclusively in terms of the suffering of the subject of the emotion. This, he thinks, is the picture often presented by stoic-inspired accounts of grief: that grief is a form of suffering that we become vulnerable to when we love people, and that we would be better off if we could train ourselves to have the love without the grief. According to this picture of grief, we should try to avoid grief if at all possible, and if we are grieving, we should try to "get over it" as quickly as possible.

Solomon has a more positive conception of grief, which he associates with the idea that grief is "grounded" in the loving relationship (Solomon 2004: 88). He thus claims that it is wrong

70 For more on Solomon's view on grief, see Solomon 2007: ch. 4. Solomon (2004) presents his discussion as a development of ideas in an unpublished paper by Janet McCracken.

to think of grief (as he claims the stoic does) merely in terms of the suffering of the griever. Rather grief registers in some way the relationship with the loved one who is now dead. And because of this, grief is not something simply to be "got over", since it constitutes, in its own way, a continuation of the loving relationship. Thinking about grief purely in terms of the suffering of the griever fails to acknowledge this.

I do not need to arbitrate between Solomon and the stoic because the idea that I am going to discuss is recognised by both sides. I think both sides of the argument rightly highlight a connection between grief and love: we grieve for the people we love. And part of what makes a loss grievous is that the deceased is loved. The stoic, in their simple way, recognises this as much as Solomon. It is precisely what the stoic thinks is dangerous about loving. This is the relevant sense for my purposes in which grief is the continuation of love, because I want to claim that loving opens up the possibility of dramatically imagining what it would be like to feel grief: having loved people, we can dramatically imagine the grief we would feel were they to die.

We can put this in terms of the account of valuing I introduced in Chapter 4. To value something, recall, is to be emotionally vulnerable to that thing. And if we value someone in the way that we do when we love them, this will involve being vulnerable to various different emotions. We will be vulnerable to positive emotions: we will have feelings of love in the loved one's presence, will be happy to see them, excited at the prospect of seeing them, and so on. But we will also be vulnerable to negative emotions: disappointment when plans to meet fall through, sadness at prolonged absences or when hardship befalls the loved one, grief if the loved one dies. All of this needs to be born in mind when thinking about what it is to value someone as we do when we feel grief. The love for the person is as important a part of this valuing as is the immediate feeling of grief.

This suggests that having loved (or loving in an ongoing way) might provide one sort of condition for dramatically imagining what it is like to grieve—as I have suggested we need to do for the appropriateness of grief to be intelligible to us. When we value someone as we do when we love them, we make it possible to open an imaginative window on what it would be like to grieve for that person. We can dramatically imagine how we might feel if the loved person were to die: we can attempt to adopt the perspective that we would adopt were they to die. And my claim is that because we love this person, this dramatic imagining can get us

close enough to what it would be like to feel grief to give us an understanding the way grief is appropriate: an understanding that goes beyond our prior theoretical understanding *that* grief is appropriate in such situations. Because we love the person, we can dramatically imagine ourselves into the sort of situation—one in which our loved one is dead—that makes it intelligible to us why grief is the appropriate response. We can thus reach this understanding of GRIEVOUS imaginatively, and without actually having experienced grief for ourselves. Of course, this is not to say that there are *no* differences between actual experience and dramatic imagination. I will return to consider these differences—insofar as they are relevant for our understanding of GRIEVOUS—in Section 3.

What opens up these possibilities of dramatic imagination to us is that we have valued people in the relevant way: we have loved them. And I think we can see how important this is if we consider harder cases, cases where a person's emotional experience is more limited and does not include love. Suppose, for example, that there are creatures very much like ourselves, who share many of our ethical and evaluative beliefs. They think that it is right to be kind to others, for example, and wrong to gratuitously cause suffering. But suppose that unlike us they do not form close personal bonds and so do not have their own analogues for evaluative concepts like LOVE and GRIEVOUS.

These creatures would be in a position relative to understanding GRIEVOUS analogous to the one that I argued in Chapter 5 that we are in relative to understanding the made-up concept *GOPA*. *GOPA*, recall, is an evaluative concept connected to the feeling of exalting in bloody victory, also called *gopa*. This is the feeling that Allan Gibbard's (1992) supposes his fictitious tribe of head-hunters to experience after killing their enemies in particularly gruesome ways. We seemed able to gain a theoretical understanding of *GOPA* in an anthropological manner; but it was a much more difficult question whether we could understand the specific way in which the appropriateness of feeling *gopa* is intelligible to an engaged participant in the evaluative practice of killing enemies in a gruesome manner. The loveless creatures seem likewise to be able to gain an anthropologist's idea of LOVE, GRIEVOUS and related concepts, without themselves experiencing the corresponding emotional responses. So, they can gain a theoretical understanding of these concepts. But would such creatures be capable of dramatically imagining what it is like to grieve and so capable of coming to understand grief's appropriateness?

The task of dramatic imagination certainly seems to be much more difficult here than it is for someone who has experienced love. I am reluctant to put any firm limits on what it is possible to dramatically imagine. I consider it a significant part of the import of imaginative literature that it is capable of realising imaginative situations that can be radically different to our own. But it is also clear that a great deal of imaginative work has to be done (by the authors of this literature—and also by its readers) to realise these alien situations. It seems clear that the imaginative task for these creatures, lacking personal relationships as they do, would be large and so the imaginative work correspondingly difficult. I do not want to deny that it is possible. But I do think this case is clearly a *harder* case. And I think this provides some level of support for my claim that having experienced emotions like love makes us more readily able to dramatically imagine what it is like to feel grief.

We have, then, the following picture. *Before* dramatically imagining what it is like to feel grief, we can understand that something is GRIEVOUS if it makes grief appropriate. But our understanding of this appropriateness is at this point a theoretical understanding only. We understand it on the model of other evaluative concepts, which when they apply make different sorts of emotional response appropriate. But if our understanding of the appropriateness of feeling grief is merely theoretical, then the appropriateness of feeling grief is not intelligible to us as it is to an engaged participant in the evaluative practice of grief. And our understanding of GRIEVOUS is thus also lacking. At the same time, if we exercise dramatic imagination successfully, it can become intelligible to us why grief is appropriate as if we were an engaged participant in the evaluative practice of grief and so we can make up for this lack. Dramatic imagination can thus help us advance beyond our theoretical understanding and develop a deeper understanding of GRIEVOUS.

We can now see how dramatic imagination gives us a different and deeper sense of the five features of grief identified in Section 1 than we can get from mere theoretical understanding. We can grasp in a theoretical way that it is appropriate to feel grief in response to the death of someone close to us (features one and two). But when we understand this theoretically, we do not have an understanding of *why* this response is appropriate as we do if we are engaged participants in the evaluative practice of grief. Dramatically imagining the grief we would feel at the death of a loved one can allow us to understand just this: it can give us a sense of why grief is an appropriate response in this sort of case.

The same is true, I think, of our understanding of the way that grief develops over time (feature three) as we move on and the structure of our life changes (feature five) and of the way in which these changes may or may not be appropriate (feature four). Again, we can grasp in a theoretical way that there are (in most cases of grief) such changes, and can again grasp in a theoretical way that such changes are appropriate, when the loss is really grievous. But, again, we do this without understanding *why* this response is appropriate as we do if we are engaged participants in the evaluative practice of grief. And again, I think that dramatically imagining how we should go on to feel as our life continues without our loved one can give us just this sense of why these changes in emotional response are appropriate. It is this sort of insight, provided by dramatic imagination, that can give us a deeper understanding of GRIEVOUS—an understanding that we would otherwise need to actually experience grief to obtain.

3. What We Get from Feeling Grief for Ourselves

So far, I have discussed the theoretical understanding that can be had of GRIEVOUS without any experience of grief and explained how through dramatic imagination we can deepen this understanding by coming to understand the appropriateness of grief as if we were engaged participants in the evaluative practice of grief. I now want to discuss what *actual experience* of grief might add to this understanding. I think it should be acknowledged that actual experience of grief may teach us many things—about ourselves and our relationships. But my claim is that it is not obvious that it teaches us anything distinctive about GRIEVOUS as an evaluative concept. In this section, I first clarify the claims of Section 2 with relation to actual emotional experience: all my argument requires is that dramatic imagination give us enough of an understanding of what it is like to experience grief to deepen our understanding of GRIEVOUS. So, I can allow that dramatic imagination may fall short in certain ways of giving us a complete understanding of what the experience is like. I then identify two ways in which actual experience of grief *might* provide us with a distinctive understanding of GRIEVOUS, but I argue that in both cases dramatic imagination can *also* provide the understanding that I am discussing. I thus leave open the possibility that there is some understanding of GRIEVOUS that comes with actual experience of grief. The challenge for those who believe in such an understanding is to specify what it is.

As a preliminary to this discussion, I want to recap some relevant points from the argument

of this thesis so far. The central question of this thesis has been what role emotional experience plays in our understanding of evaluative concepts. A concomitant question has been: if emotional experience *does* play an essential role in understanding evaluative concepts, how exactly should we specify the *sort of understanding* of evaluative concepts that emotional experience gives us? This question came to the fore in my discussion of Goldie in Chapter 2, where we saw that Goldie claims that emotional experience gives us what he calls a "perceptual" understanding of the relevant evaluative concept. I argued in Chapter 2 that Goldie's idea of perceptual understanding was flawed. But in Chapter 4 we met a more promising idea of the sort of understanding emotional experience might give us by appealing to the concept of valuing. That is, emotional experience provides us with an understanding of what it is like to value something and, in turn, this provides us with an understanding that renders intelligible why a given emotional experience is appropriate. I argued that this was a form of understanding of evaluative concepts that goes beyond the theoretical. But I argued in Chapters 4 and 5 (and again in this chapter) that dramatic imagination can *also* give us this understanding of the appropriateness of our emotional responses. So, this particular form of understanding of evaluative concepts is possible even without actual emotional experience.

I think it is important to acknowledge the limitations of our imaginative capacities; but it is also important to realise that only some of these limitations are relevant to our understanding of GRIEVOUS. It is, of course, unlikely that anyone who had dramatically imagined what it was like to feel grief in the way described in Section 2 would, on having their first real experience of grief, find it to be *exactly* how they imagined it to be. But this is in part at least a consequence of the particularity of any token experience of grief. Recall from Chapter 5 that what is relevant to understanding evaluative concepts like GRIEVOUS is understanding what it is like to have a *type* of experience, rather than understanding the phenomenology of particular token experiences. In dramatically imagining what it is like to feel grief as a *type* of emotional experience we will have recourse to imagining token instances of grief (how would I feel if my parents died? how my spouse? how if it was a consequence of illness, how if an accident? and so on). But it is not a deficiency in our understanding if our imagination fails to match up to any particular token instance of grief, because it is only our understanding of grief as a *type* of experience that is relevant to our understanding of GRIEVOUS as evaluative concept. This is what I have been claiming that imagination can give us.

It is important to note that I can thus allow that dramatic imagination may leave us

somewhere short of understanding what it is like to experience grief in any particular case. The peculiarities of any particular token experience may escape our imaginative powers. But this does not matter for the purposes of my argument because, I am claiming, what we miss does not—or has not yet been shown to—deepen our understanding of GRIEVOUS.

As a corollary of this, first-hand experience—actually experiencing grief for oneself—will also be no *guarantee* of understanding.[71] When a person has their first real experience of grief it will be a particular *token* experience. It will have its own peculiar idiosyncrasies and differences from other experiences of grief and other people's experiences of grief. But when it comes to understanding an evaluative concept like GRIEVOUS it will not be necessary to grasp what it is like to have any particular token experience in all of its phenomenological fullness. Rather what we need to do is understand those features of the phenomenology that are typical to all cases where GRIEVOUS applies.[72] It is this that will be relevant to understanding the way in which grief might be appropriate. If we do not pick up on the relevant features—if we are mislead by features of our particular token experience—then our understanding will be defective, despite our first-hand experience. I think this is a failing that we sometimes see in reality: a person's understanding of GRIEVOUS may be warped by being *too strongly connected* to their own individual experience of grief. They misunderstand what it is like to experience grief because they assume it must too closely model their own case.

Thus far we have failed to identify any form of understanding of evaluative concepts that is possible *only* on the basis of our having had the relevant emotional experience.[73] Of course, this does not constitute a *proof* that there can be no such understanding, since I have not canvased and rejected all possible candidates forms of understanding, only those I considered to be most promising. Nor have I tried to give any argument that there *could be* no such

71 This is part of what I meant by saying in Chapter 2 that our understanding of evaluative concepts has to be earned.

72 Probably things are slightly more complicated than this. We need an understanding not just of which features are typical, but also of such matters as how it is possible for individual cases to deviate. But I gloss over such complications for the sake of exegetical clarity.

73 A reminder: this is a claim about *specific* emotional experientialism. I continue to endorse general emotional experientialism: without having had *any* form of emotional experience, we would be unable to understand the appropriateness of any evaluative concept. It is specific emotional experientialism that has been at issue in this chapter because it has been concerned specifically with the relation of grief and GRIEVOUS.

understanding and nor am I going to give any such argument now. The argument of this thesis thus leaves open the possibility that there is some other form of understanding of evaluative concepts not considered thus far that is only available to someone who has actually had the relevant emotional experience. In the particular case under consideration in this chapter, this would be an understanding of GRIEVOUS available only to someone who has experienced grief. In the remainder of this section I make two more attempts to say what the relevant understanding might be, but both, I argue fail. I thus leave the ball in the court of the defender of the idea that there really is some form of understanding of evaluative concepts that is possible only on the basis of our having had the relevant emotional experience: it is for them to specify what this understanding might be.

I want, here, to consider an aspect of emotional experience that is particularly important in the case of grief. Grief (like love) is among the most personal of the emotions, in the sense that it relates in a deep way to our closest personal relationships. So, does this aspect of grief provide us with any special sort of understanding of GRIEVOUS that we can only have by actually experiencing the emotion for ourselves? Is there some special understanding of the concept that comes with experiencing the emotion in our own personal case?

The two ways in which I am going to suggest actual experience of grief might provide us with a distinctive understanding of GRIEVOUS both relate to this personal dimension. However, I will claim that both forms of understanding are also possible through dramatic imagination. First, grief is personal in the sense that it relates to *ongoing narratives of our lives* (Goldie 2012). Grief has the character it does because of the relation of the loved one to our past life and to our attempt to go on living in their absence. Is there some special understanding we get from experiencing grief in a way that is actually integrated into this narrative of our life, rather than merely being related to an imagined narrative? Second, grief is personal in the sense that it is often, as Paul (2014) would call it (see Chapter 5), *personally transformative*: grieving (at least sometimes) changes our values and preferences so that we become, in this sense, a different person from the person we were before. Again, there is a question whether actually going through these personal changes gives us an understanding of GRIEVOUS that we cannot get from merely dramatically imagining going through them. I start with the first of these points.

When it comes to the relation between our past and future lives, it is, I think, important to

recognise that this can form part of our dramatic imagination of grief as much as it does of our actual experience. When a loved one dies, in grieving for them our memories of them take on an ironic significance that has been described by Goldie (2012, 56-57). When we grieve, we think about the happy (and not so happy) past that we have shared with our loved one in the agonizing knowledge that this person is with us no longer. We think of past happy events with our loved one and remember that from our perspective of the time these events were happy. But we remember them from our current sorrowful perspective, knowing that our loved one is gone. This complicated ironic tension between these different and shifting perspectives on our memories is characteristic of grief.

But this sort of ironic awareness should not be absent from a full dramatic imagination of what it is like to feel grief. If we dramatically imagine how we should feel were a (now living) loved one to die, then our imagining should be capable of including this sort of complicated relationship to our past. We can imagine the sadness that will come to imbue what are now happy memories and can imagine the agonised dissonance of past and present perspectives. Dramatic imagination can achieve this because there is no limit to the "nesting" of perspectives that we can adopt when dramatically imagining. We can attempt, in dramatically imagining what it is like to feel grief, to adopt the perspective of someone thinking about memories that were happy from the perspective of the imagined past time, but are more sorrowfully imbued from the perspective of the imagined present. Indeed, I think Goldie's argument in part relies on our being able to do just this: his argument does not seem to me to depend on our having experienced this agonized ironic awareness for ourselves. In this and like ways, we can dramatically imagine the complicated relationship of past, present, and future that obtains when we feel grief.

Moreover, our capacity to adopt other people's perspectives in dramatic imagination, so as to include in that perspective much of their past life and outlook on the future is the *sine qua non* of much of literature. Goldie (2012: 68) quotes from Alan Bennett's account of his grief at his mother's passing; and part of what seems to me to be Bennett's success is his ability to provide us with enough of a sense of his own and his mother's lives to allow us to imaginatively engage with just the sort of delicate interplay between present and past that forms this essential feature of grief.

Of course, I am not claiming that our dramatic imagination is *the same* as Bennett's actual

experience of grief—whatever exactly that might mean.[74] To dramatically imagine feeling grief is not to actually experience grief. My claim is just that we can get far enough, through dramatic imagination, to have an understanding of these features of grief, and that this can contribute towards our understanding of GRIEVOUS. Dramatic imagination can thus give us an understanding of these personal aspects of grief, and it is this understanding that seems to me to be relevant to our understanding of GRIEVOUS. The key difference between dramatic imagination and actual experience of grief is that experience of grief relates our actual past and actual present and future; whereas dramatic imagination relates an actual (if we are imagining from our own case) or imagined (if we are thinking of examples like Alan Bennett's) past to a merely imagined present and future. But it is difficult to see what difference this should make, when it comes to our understanding of GRIEVOUS.

What of the second idea, the idea that grief can be personally transformative? Does this personal change, that is connected to actual emotional experience, contribute anything distinctive to our understanding of GRIEVOUS?

The question is what actually *undergoing* this sort of personal change contributes to our understanding of GRIEVOUS. If our dramatic imagination of grief is sufficiently full, then it should also include imagining these personal changes. In attempting to adopt the perspective of someone who is bereaved we should attempt to imagine how being bereaved changes our values and priorities. Does actually undergoing the sorts of personal change that are typical after a bereavement contribute anything to our understanding of GRIEVOUS that we cannot get from merely dramatically imagining the change in this way? There is no obvious reason why it should. We can have at least some sense of how losing a loved one should lead us to come to value things differently. For example, we can imagine how losing a loved partner and the life together that we shared might lead us to try to immerse ourselves more deeply in work or leisure activities. I think it is plausible to claim that understanding the appropriateness of grief in circumstances where GRIEVOUS applies should involve understanding that grievous losses are those that are liable to effect this sort of a personal change. But I think that we *can* have an understanding of this aspect of grief merely through dramatically imagining the personal change, we do not need to actually undergo them.

74 And putting to one side delicate questions about the difference between Bennett's actual experience and his literary presentation of it.

Although this is not a claim that I need to defend for the purposes of my argument as a whole, I think it is generally instructive to note that dramatic imagination seems also to be able to *actually effect* personal changes similar to those resulting from actual emotional experience. At the largest scale, the exercise of the imagination seems to have the power to change personal, indeed cultural, values. For example, throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, romanticism in imaginative literature seems to have made huge changes to people's attitudes towards countryside and childhood, among much else. These were changes that made the difference to what people valued. And at an individual scale also, the exercise of imagination seems to have the power to effect personal change. Imagining the death of our partner, for example, might make us reassess our values: might make us prioritise our personal relationships—and our relationship with our partner in particular—over other things such as work and recreation. We might, through this sort of exercise of dramatic imagination, change what we value and so undergo just the sort of personal transformation that is here in question.

It is true that this sort of reassessment may often be transitory. We imagine losing a loved one and think we should value our time with them more; but work pressures impinge and we slip back into old priorities. In this respect the lessons of experience may seem to hit harder (although even here there is often regression). But there remain questions as to whether this *must* be so. To illustrate with an example from a different context: I know a person who manages and is responsible for the health and safety of a small team of workers. Throughout his time as manager there have been a few serious accidents. His assessment of risk has been deeply shaped by his individual experience of these accidents: he exercises extreme caution about tasks where he has experienced accidents in the past, but he is relatively complacent about tasks that where there have not been accidents, even if these tasks are objectively more dangerous. I think this sort of cognitive bias is very common. To some extent it may be the outcome of experience teaching *too well*—testimony and imagination do not usually do nearly so good a job. For this reason, actual emotional experience may be *more likely* to secure deep and lasting personal change. But I do not think there is any fundamental reason why this must be so (a better manager would be able to minimise their bias and take a more objective view of risks). Dramatic imagination can also effect personal change; it is just that because of our typical psychology, it usually does not—or is usually much less likely to than is actual experience. In any case, this claim that *both* experience and dramatic imagination can effect personal change is not strictly necessary to the argument of this chapter as a whole

and so can be rejected without marring the general argument.

It is clear that grief is a life-changing experience—to put the matter somewhat glibly. In this sense, actual experience of grief *matters* very deeply, in a way that merely dramatically imagining grief does not. Being really bereaved is often a central event in people's lives, changing who they are and how they think of themselves in ways that could not have been imagined beforehand. But it seems to me to be a mistake to make these changes *necessary* for any new understanding of GRIEVOUS. What matters, when it comes to actual experience of grief, is often the particular way that we are bereaved, and the particular way that we take it. This is all immensely important. But insofar as experience brings an understanding that we *could not possibly* have had before, this understanding seems to me to relate to our understanding of ourselves as "token" individuals and to our experience of grief as a token experience. I do not think therefore that it need give us an understanding of GRIEVOUS as a concept that we could not have had before. Or at any rate I have not been able to identify any such understanding here.

To be clear: I am not claiming I have proved (in this section or elsewhere in this thesis) that actual experience of grief contributes nothing to our understanding of GRIEVOUS that we cannot also get through dramatic imagination. And nor have I proved any analogous claim about emotional experience and evaluative concepts other than grief and GRIEVOUS. I have only argued, in this section, that there are some personal aspects of grief that can be understood through dramatic imagination—and that this understanding through dramatic imagination contributes to our understanding of GRIEVOUS.

The third question I posed in Section 1 was: how does the understanding GRIEVOUS we might get from dramatic imagination differ from the understanding we might get from having a first-hand experience of grief? I have not identified any necessary difference here, and for my own part I am sceptical that there is any such. But I have given no positive argument to that effect. My argument has only proceeded through consideration of a number of possibilities, none of which, I claim, have worked out. It is thus open to someone less sceptical to propose one that does. Moreover, whatever we think of this third question, my earlier argument concerning dramatic imagination still stands: dramatic imagination can give us an understanding of the appropriateness of grief, and so deepen our understanding of GRIEVOUS, whether or not actual experience of grief is needed to further deepen this

understanding.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have presented a case study applying the account of emotional experience and evaluative understanding developed in the previous chapters to the particular case of grief and GRIEVOUS. I identified five features of grief and claimed that these were associated with features of GRIEVOUS. I argued that we could have a theoretical understanding of GRIEVOUS in terms of these features without having had any experience of grief. But I claimed that if we have this merely theoretical understanding, then we lack a certain understanding of GRIEVOUS: an understanding that renders intelligible the appropriateness of grief from the perspective of an engaged participant in the evaluative practice of grief. This is an understanding, however, that I claimed we can have *either* through actual emotional experience, *or* through dramatic imagination of what it is like to feel grief. It is thus possible, I argued, to have an understanding of the appropriateness of grief without ever having experienced grief.

I also gave an explanation of what makes it possible to dramatically imagine what it is like to feel grief: I claimed that what was important was the connection between different emotional experiences embodied in the notion of valuing as being emotionally vulnerable, and in particular our experience of love. Valuing someone as we do when we love them opens the possibility of dramatically imagining grief, whether or not we have experienced this emotion before. And with this comes an understanding of GRIEVOUS that we could otherwise only have through experiencing grief for ourselves. The general lesson here, when it comes to the possibility of dramatically imagining novel emotional experiences, is that what it is possible to imagine will depend, in part at least, on our existing stock of emotional experience.

Conclusion

In this thesis I have argued for a version of emotional experientialism: the claim that emotional experience has an essential role to play in our understanding of evaluative concepts. I have claimed that it is possible to have a theoretical understanding of evaluative concepts without emotional experience. But I have argued that we can deepen our understanding of evaluative concepts by understanding the way in which given emotional experiences are appropriate when a given evaluative concept applies. I argued that this was only possible on the basis of an understanding of what it is like to value something, for which in turn we need an understanding of what it is like to have certain emotional experiences.

In this way, emotional experience has an essential role to play in our understanding of evaluative concepts. But I argued that we do not necessarily have to experience the relevant emotions for ourselves to gain an understanding of what it is like to value in the relevant way. It is at least sometimes possible to gain the relevant understanding by dramatically imagining what it might be like to value things in the relevant way. I argued, however, that it is only possible to gain this understanding by means of dramatic imagination if we have experienced at least some emotions before. An entirely emotionless creature must lack this imaginative capacity. The argument thus supports emotional experientialism in its general, but not in its specific, form.

Several questions remain as projects for future research, two of which I want to pick out. First, I argued that we can advance beyond a theoretical understanding of evaluative concepts by coming to understand the way in which they make emotional responses appropriate. But I left open whether there were any other ways in which emotional experience might help us develop our understanding beyond the theoretical. Further research might attempt to discover such ways of developing our evaluative understanding, or try to show why they cannot exist. Second, in discussing grief, I explained one way in which our imaginative capacities might depend on past experience: I claimed that we can imagine what it is like to grieve on the basis of past experience of love. Further research might develop this picture further, by describing other such conditions for other types of emotion.

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