

2.1

Different Kinds of Value and Different Accounts of Those Kinds

IE: The intrinsic / extrinsic distinction.

Finality Sense: IE turns on what is valuable (and what is not valuable) for its own sake. (pg 30)

Possible Supervenience Approach: It is widely believed by realists and anti-realists alike that values are properties which objects have in virtue of having other (natural) properties. (pg 30)

Supervenience Sense: IE turns on the nature of the value-making features of the value bearer; if a value depends exclusively on the bearer's internal properties it is intrinsic; otherwise it is extrinsic. (pg 30)

Moore, for his part, introduced the *ontological isolation test* in order to determine which things were valuable intrinsically, versus that which is extrinsically valuable. (1993: 142, 145, 147, 236–37, 256) This test, however, has some powerful criticisms. Lemos, in contrast, found his *intentional isolation test*, though similar, to be superior. (pg 31) Where Moore's test required that we attempt to imagine something intrinsically valuable by itself, Lemos' test requires us to ask if the thing in question is good but without requiring it to be in isolation. A problem for this test is that it does not consider that a thing may be valuable for its own sake solely because of its relational (extrinsic) properties. If such a thing is possible, then the Lemos test is limited in what it can prove.¹ These complexities, will be glossed over for now and will use 'intrinsic' and 'extrinsic' in the standard way.

Focusing on intrinsic value for a moment leads us to a needed discussion about its *derivation sense*:

Derivation Sense: IE turns on whether or not the value needs to be justified (by other values): if a value provides justification for other values and is not justified by any other value, it is intrinsic; and if it needs to be justified or is valuable in virtue of other things being valuable it is extrinsic (see e.g. Harold 2005).

In response to the idea that being non-derivative entails being intrinsic, Rønnow-Rasmussen uses the analogy of a diamond ring. (pg 32) There are, then, two ways different ways to have final value:

“The set of final values is then constituted by, on the one hand, intrinsic values (understood as the values something has in virtue of the bearer's internal features alone) and, on the other hand, final extrinsic values, that is, things that

¹ Such a possibility is argued for in the next paper we are reading by Dale Dorsey.

are valuable for their own sakes in virtue of at least some of the bearers' externally relational properties." (pg 32)

Mooreans would not accept this possibility. Any supposed case of a final extrinsic value must, they claim, reduce to a final intrinsic value. Whether or not such a reduction is possible in all cases is a matter of current debate. (pg 33) Korsgaard argues that what is of intrinsic value is what a thing has in itself and extrinsic value is, in some sense, the value placed upon it by another source. Though this is an interesting claim, it relies on the truth of a controversial position. Subjectivism is the view that the value of a thing is dependent upon our having certain attitudes to it. Objectivism is a denial of that claim (i.e. the value of a thing is not dependent upon our having certain attitudes). If by 'source' Korsgaard is implicitly accepting subjectivism as the correct way of understanding extrinsic value, then (if subjectivism is ultimately false) her position crumbles.

2.2

How Should We Understand 'Instrumental Value'?

There are some interesting questions regarding what instrumental value amounts to - if anything - but after highlighting some of these issues, Rønnow-Rasmussen sets them aside (though we will revisit the regress in a moment). Perhaps something like the FA analysis (see the Zimmerman handout for a refresher) can explain instrumentality without running into the kind of infinite regress Rønnow-Rasmussen highlights. (pg 34-35)

"FA understands value in terms of a normative notion (e.g. fittingness or reason) and a pro or contra response (typically an attitude like a desire or preference) ... It has also been pointed out that on one version of FA, x is instrumentally valuable if and only if there is a reason to favor x for the sake of something else, where the latter might, but need not, oblige us to refer to what is valuable for its own sake." (pg 35)

FA has two advantages. First, being valuable as a means now is understood as having a reason to favor X as a means. Second, FA ends the regress since only those means that are fitting to favor can be part of our explanatory chain.

Next class we will be reading the Dorsey paper that is discussed next, so keep what Rønnow-Rasmussen says in mind. Dispositions are, in general, ways that a thing can be under certain manifestation conditions. Fragility is a classic disposition to use as an example. For our purposes, we can think of dispositions as a kind of conditional claim. Standard non-tempered window glass, for example, is fragile. This means that if it were struck, then it would shatter.²

² The disposition literature is quite dense and this conditionalized account is not uncontroversial. I find this conditionalized use the most intuitive and so, for our purposes, the best way to explain the concept.

The core criticism that Rønnow-Rasmussen offers against Dorsey is that:

“A perhaps more plausible suggestion is that the value does not supervene only on the internal features of the tire. It is rather a combination of internal dispositional features and some relational properties having to do with what a tire is capable of in a certain circumstance that has value. The value-making features would be dispositional (internal) features of the object, but also relational features of the world in which it is located.” (pg 36)

2.3

Is There Such a Thing as *Final Value*?

- **Final Intrinsicism (FI):** The view that there is only one final value, namely the intrinsic kind.
- **Final Extrinsicism (FE):** The view that there are (at least) two kinds of final value, one intrinsic and the other extrinsic. (pg 36)

FI faces a number of counterexamples. Peter Geach, for example, famously argued that the predicative use of ‘good’ (the idea that ‘X is good’ full stop) is nonsensical. Richard Kraut agrees, claiming that absolute goodness is not a normative property. Despite this being a source of much debate, there is general agreement that ‘good for’ is used to describe what is valuable as a means. Whether or not ‘good for’ can be used non-instrumentally is, however, a matter of much debate. If the attributive and predicative use of ‘good’ cannot be understood in terms of one another, however, then there may be two senses of the IE distinction: one cast in terms of what is finally (non-instrumentally) good, period, and another cast in terms of what is finally (non-instrumentally) good-for. (pg 38)