Well-Being Reading

Crisp, 2003

Crisp, R. (2003) "Experience, Desire and the Ideal," in Crisp, R. (ed.) Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Mill on Utilitarianism. New York, NY: Routledge, pp. 45-66.

- Crisp distinguishes between veridical and non-veridical experiences. An experience is veridical if it is an experience of something real. For example, if a person drinks wine, his experience of this wine-drinking is veridical. An experience is non-veridical if it appears or presents itself to the person whose experience it is as an experience of something real but is in fact not real. For example, if a person dreams of drinking wine, but does not in fact drink wine, this experience which presents itself to this person as an experience of wine-drinking is non-veridical.
- A non-veridical experience may be indistinguishable from a veridical one to the person whose experience it is from within the experience. For example, a sufficiently realistic experience of wine-drinking in a dream could be indistinguishable from a veridical experience of wine-drinking from within the experience.

Crisp, 2021

Crisp, R. (2021) "Well-Being", The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy

- A person's well-being describes "what is non-instrumentally or ultimately good for a person." Something is a constituent of a person's well-being if that thing non-instrumentally or ultimately makes that person's life go better for that person.
- On the hedonist account, it is pleasure and the absence of pain which constitutes a person's well-being, i.e. makes a person's life go better for that person.
  - Crisp describes the view that well-being consists in pleasure and the absence of pain as substantive hedonism, and the view that well-being consists in pleasure and the absence of pain because of the pleasurableness of pleasure and the painfulness of pain as explanatory hedonism.
  - More generally, a theory of well-being is substantive if according to it, some things are constitutive of well-being, and a theory of well-being is explanatory if it offers the grounds for thinking these things are constitutive of well-being.
- Crisp briefly discusses arguments for hedonism, objections, and responses.
  - One objection is that hedonism is the "philosophy of swine". This is brought out by the thought experiment of Haydn and the Oyster.
  - Mill responds by distinguishing between higher and lower pleasures.
  - Another objection is brought out by Nozick's Experience Machine thought experiment.
  - The hedonist could suggest that our intuitions about the experience machine are mistaken. What makes a person's life good for him is pleasure, but pleasure is most effectively pursued indirectly, so we are sophisticated in our pursuit of what makes our lives good for us, and it thus appears to us that the Experience Machine would not be good for us.
- "The experience machine is one motivation for the adoption of a desire theory."
  - The Angry Adolescent thought experiment motivates the abandonment of present desire theory in favour of comprehensive desire theory.
  - Parfit's Addiction thought experiment motivates the abandonment of comprehensive desire theory in favour of global desire theory.
  - The Orphan Monk thought experiment motivates informed versions of global desire theory.
  - The Grass Counter thought experiment grounds a strong objection to desire theory altogether.
  - "The idea that desire-satisfaction is a ‘good-making property’ is somewhat odd. As Aristotle says (*Metaphysics*, 1072a, tr. Ross): ‘desire is consequent on opinion rather than opinion on desire’. In other words, we desire things, such as writing a great novel, because we think those things are independently good; we do not think they are good because they will satisfy our desire for them."
- "Objective list theories are usually understood as theories which list items constituting well-being that consist neither merely in pleasurable experience nor in desire-satisfaction."
  - On perfectionist accounts of list theory, "what makes things constituents of well-being is their perfecting human nature."
  - One common objection to objective list theories is that they are élitist, since they appear to be claiming that certain things are good for people, even if those people will not enjoy them, and do not even want them.

- "One strategy here might be to adopt a ‘hybrid’ account, according to which certain goods do benefit people independently of pleasure and desire-satisfaction, but only when they do in fact bring pleasure and/or satisfy desires. Another would be to bite the bullet, and point out that a theory could be both elitist and true."
- "It is also worth pointing out that objective list theories need not involve any kind of objectionable authoritarianism or perfectionism. First, one might wish to include autonomy on one’s list, claiming that the informed and reflective living of one’s own life for oneself itself constitutes a good. Second, and perhaps more significantly, one might note that any theory of well-being in itself has no direct moral implications."

Parfit, 1984

Parfit, D. (1984) Reasons and Persons. London, England: Oxford University Press, pp. 493-502.

- "Narrow Hedonists assume, falsely, that pleasure and pain are two distinctive kinds of experience. Compare the pleasures of satisfying an intense thirst or lust, listening to music, solving an intellectual problem, reading a tragedy, and knowing that one's child is happy. These various experiences do not contain any distinctive common quality."
- "What pains and pleasures have in common are their relations to our desires. On the use of ‘pain’ which has rational and moral significance, all pains are when experienced unwanted, and a pain is worse or greater the more it is unwanted. Similarly, all pleasures are when experienced wanted, and they are better or greater the more they are wanted. These are the claims of Preference-Hedonism. On this view, one of two experiences is more pleasant if it is preferred."
  - "Near the end of his life Freud refused pain-killing drugs, preferring to think in torment than to be confusedly euphoric. Of these two mental states, euphoria is more pleasant. But on Preference-Hedonism thinking in torment was, for Freud, a better mental state. It is clearer here not to stretch the meaning of the word ‘pleasant’. A Preference-Hedonist should merely claim that, since Freud preferred to think clearly though in torment, his life went better if it went as he preferred."
- According to Unrestricted Desire Theory, what makes a person's life go better for him is the fulfilment of his desires throughout his life.
  - Consider the following counterexample. I meet a person suffering from a terminal illness and desire that he be cured. I never meet or hear of this person again. Later, unbeknownst to me, he is cured.
- According to Success Theory, what makes a person's life go better for him is the fulfilment of his desires that are (in a meaningful sense) about his own life throughout his life.
  - A person's desire, for example, that his life be one lived on a planet on which Derek Parfit is an opera singer, is not in a meaningful sense a desire about this person's life.
  - A person's desire, for example, that his children's lives go well, as such, is not in a meaningful sense a desire about this person's life, but a person's desire that he be a good parent, is.
  - Parfit argues that success theory is committed to the view that a person's life can be made better or worse even after his death. This is because the only relevant effect of a person's death is that it ensures this person will never know about the fulfilment of his desires, but a person's knowledge about the fulfilment of his desires is irrelevant.
  - Consider the following case. I either do A or B. If I do A, I do not regret it. Then, my desire to have done A is satisfied. If I instead do B, I do not regret doing B instead of A. Then, my desire to have done B is satisfied. Success theory and preference hedonism appear committed to the judgement that my life goes as well for me regardless of what I do. But this is implausible if, if I do A I am very glad to have done A but if I do B I am only somewhat glad to have done B.
  - So "[w]hether we appeal to Preference-Hedonism or the Success Theory, we should not appeal only to the desires or preferences that I actually have. We should also appeal to the desires and preferences that I would have had, in the various alternatives that were, at different times, open to me. One of these alternatives would be best for me if it is the one in which I would have the strongest desires and preferences fulfilled."
- According to a Summative Desire Theory, how well a person's life goes for him is in direct proportion to the number of his desires that are fulfilled less the number of his desires that are not, weighted by the intensity of each desire.
- According to a Global Desire Theory, what makes a person's life go better for him is the fulfilment of his global desires. A desire is global if "it is about some part of one's life considered as a whole, or is about one's whole life."
  - Consider the following counterexample to summative desire theory. I offer you an ample supply of an addictive drug. If you consume one dose, each subsequent morning, you wake up with a very intense desire for another dose. This desire is itself neither pleasant nor painful. Plausibly, the initial desire not to take the first dose, and the subsequent regret, are not greater in intensity than the daily desire for an additional dose. So, on a summative desire theory, your life goes better for you if you become addicted.
  - One response to this objection, in defense of a summative desire theory is that the satisfaction of desires that a person desires not to have do not make his life go better for him.

    - Consider the following counterexample. You are in great pain and thus desire relief. On a summative desire theory revised as above, your receiving relief does not make your life go any better for you since you would desire that you not be in such pain (hence that you not require such relief).
    - On a global desire theory, the daily desires to consume the addictive drug are not global, and so their satisfaction does not contribute to your well-being.
    - Further, on a summative view, a sufficiently long life in which each year is barely worth living is (prudentially) better than a reasonably long extremely "high quality" life.
    - "A simpler way to put this point is this. The first alternative would be good. In the second alternative, since my life is worth living, living each extra day is good for me. If we merely add together whatever is good for me, some number of these extra days would produce the greatest total sum."
- According to an Objective List Theory, some each thing on some objective list makes a person's life go better for him, not merely in virtue of its pleasurableness or its fulfilling his desires.
    - "An Objective List Theorist might claim that his theory coincides with the Global version of the Success Theory. On this theory, what would make my life go best depends on what I would prefer, now and in the various alternatives, if I knew all of the relevant facts about these alternatives. An Objective List Theorist might say that the most relevant facts are those just mentioned—the facts about what would be good or bad for me. And he might claim that anyone who knew these facts would want what is good for him, and want to avoid what would be bad for him."
    - "A Success Theorist would reject this description of the coincidence. On his theory, nothing is good or bad for people whatever their preferences are. Something is bad for someone only when, if he knew the facts, he would want to avoid it. And the relevant facts do not include the alleged facts cited by the Objective List Theorist. On the Success Theory it is, for instance, bad for a person to be deceived if and because this is not what this person wants. The Objective List Theorist makes the reverse claim. People want not to be deceived because this is bad for them."
    - An important difference between list theory and suitably informed desire theory is that in the former, a person desires something because it is good for him, whereas in the latter, something is good for a person because he desires it.
    - "The first two kinds of theory give an account of self-interest which is purely descriptive—which does not appeal to facts about value. This account appeals only to what a person does and would prefer, given full knowledge of the purely nonevaluative facts about the alternatives. In contrast, the Objective List Theory appeals directly to what it claims to be facts about value."
- The grass counter poses a challenge to success theory.
- "It might be claimed instead that we can dismiss the appeal to such imagined cases. It might be claimed that what people would in fact prefer, if they knew the relevant facts, would always be something that we could accept as what is really good for them."
- "After taking certain kinds of drug, people claim that the quality of their sensations has not altered, but they no longer dislike these sensations. We would regard such drugs as effective analgesics. This suggests that the badness of a pain consists in its being disliked, and that it is not disliked because it is bad."
- Hedonists argue that things such as knowledge would make a person's life no better for him if they did not either bring him pleasure or fulfil his desires, hence things such as knowledge must be valuable only because they either bring a person pleasure or fulfil his desires.
- On a hybrid account, what is good for a person is things such as knowledge while wanting just these things and/or taking pleasure in just these things.
- "Pleasure with many other kinds of object has no value. And, if they are entirely devoid of pleasure, there is no value in knowledge, rational activity, love, or the awareness of beauty. What is of value, or is good for someone, is to have both; to be engaged in these activities, and to be strongly wanting to be so engaged."

Crisp, 2006

Crisp, R. (2006) "Hedonism Reconsidered," Philosophy and Phenomenological Research, 73(3), pp. 619-645.

- Well-Being
    - A theory of well-being is a theory of what ultimately or non-instrumentally makes a person's life go better for the person whose life it is. To say that a person's well-being is constituted by, for example, the greatest balance of pleasure over pain, is to say that the greatest balance of pleasure over pain makes this person's life go better for him, and all other things that make his life go better for him do so if, because, and to the extent that they contribute to the balance of pleasure over pain in his life.
- Hedonism
    - According to (enumerative) hedonism, a person's well-being is constituted by the greatest balance of pleasure over pain in his life. The relevant understanding of pleasure is as a sort of mental state (as opposed to pleasurable activity,

in the sense of "golf is a pleasure") and not referring exclusively to the bodily pleasures.

- Enumerative and Explanatory Theories
  - Enumerative theories of well-being answer the question "which things make a person's life go better for that person?" while explanatory theories answer the question "why do these things make a person's life go better for that person?"
- Explanatory Hedonism
  - According to explanatory hedonism, pleasure makes a person's life go better for that person because it is pleasurable. In other words, pleasurableness is the ground of pleasure's prudential goodness.
- Internalism and Externalism about Pleasure
  - On an internalist conception of pleasure, "what enjoyable experiences have in common 'is their positive feeling tone: an intrinsic unanalysable quality of pleasantness which is present to a greater or lesser degree in all of them'."
  - The standard objection to pleasure internalism is that "introspection and reflection make it clear that there is no such common quality of enjoyableness to all of the things we in fact enjoy: 'eating, reading, working, creating, helping'."
  - According to pleasure externalism, "what all pleasures share [is] the fact that they are ... objects of some positive attitude on our part". It is natural to think that all pleasures are objects of desire.
  - Kagan argues that while pleasantness is not plausibly a common component of pleasurable experiences, it could be a common dimension, just as volume is not a component of any sound, but a dimension along which all sounds vary. In other words, pleasantness could be a property of experiences without being "found within" these experiences.
    - Crisp is skeptical about this approach.
  - Sidgwick argues that the internal quality common to pleasant experiences, i.e. pleasantness, is that they are experienced as desirable.
    - "The more serious problem with Sidgwick's definition is that it detaches enjoyment from actual desire. It seems possible that I should apprehend a feeling as desirable, and yet not desire it, and it is hard to understand how this could be a case of enjoyment." It seems, it is a person's desiring an experience (in some way), and not a person's thinking an experience desirable (in the sense of being worth desiring) that makes that experience pleasant.
  - One version of pleasure externalism is that pleasantness is the quality of some experience's being such that the person whose experience i is desires for it to continue, for its own sake.
    - Sumner objects. According to Sumner, an experience's being pleasant has no necessary relation to a person's desiring that this experience be prolonged. For example, childbirth or a romantic moment. Gosling's example of the pleasure of enjoying a subtle whiff of scent is also apt. "Gosling's objection is that the enjoyment of smelling it cannot consist in the subject's desire that the experience continue, both because part of the enjoyment lies in the ephemerality, and because the subject would find the prospect of its continuation nauseating"
  - In response to these counterexamples, another version of pleasure externalism is that pleasantness is the quality of some experience's being desired in the moment where it is being experienced.
  - "But enjoyment cannot merely be an experience desired by its subject." For example, a priest would not desire sexual pleasure, but that sexual pleasure is not pleasant even for the priest seems implausible. (Rachels, 2000, p. 193)
  - This pleasure externalism could be refined. On the refined account, the pleasantness of a pleasurable experience consists in its being desired for how it feels.
  - Crisp offers the following counterexample. I have never experienced serious pain, so in my first experience of serious pain, at least briefly, I desire the pain because it feels novel. But that this pain is not in fact pain because it is so desired seems implausible.
  - It seems natural then to refine pleasure externalism further. On this further refined account, the pleasantness of a pleasurable experience consists in its being desired because it feels good. But then it seems more plausible to think that a pleasurable experience is simply one that feels good, not one that feels good and is therefore desired.
  - Ultimately "I think the internalist would be well advised to refer to our ordinary understanding of enjoyment. First, enjoyable- ness is usually taken to be a single property of a variety of experiences. Eating, reading, and working - to use three of Griffin's examples - are very different from one another. [...] Second, I can ask you to rank those experiences in terms of how enjoyable they are."
- "The Philosophy of Swine?"
  - According to hedonism, pleasure in a person's life make this person's life go better for him, in virtue of the pleasantness of pleasure. Then, the elevated pleasures, for example, the pleasure of enjoying a symphony and the base pleasures, for example, the pleasure of indulging one's sexual appetites, make the same sort of contribution to a person's life. But we think, intuitively, that elevated pleasures make a more meaningful sort of contribution. Apparently implausible judgements follow from the commensurability of each pleasure's contribution to a person's life. One example of this is the thought experiment of Haydn and the Oyster.

    - Mill distinguished between higher and lower pleasures.
    - It is commonly thought that Mill faces a dilemma. "Either the higher pleasures are higher because they are more pleasurable or enjoyable, in which case no special distinction between higher and lower pleasures can be drawn on the basis of anything except intensity and duration; or they are higher for some other reason, such as their being more 'noble', in which case Mill has abandoned hedonism by allowing non-hedonistic values into his formal theory."
    - "Logically Mill is not prevented from claiming that properties such as nobility do in fact increase the enjoyableness of experiences". "But this solution fails to get Mill entirely off the hook since it is not clear why, if nobility can increase enjoyableness and hence value, it cannot be a good-making property in its own right, nor why an experience could not be noble without being in the slightest enjoyable."
    - Crisp describes the context of Mill's argument. "Earlier empiricists had seen pleasure as something like a sensation, the value of which depended on two factors only: intensity and duration."
    - [Skipped]
- "The Experience Machine and the Value of Accomplishment"
    - "Nozick believes that the experience machine example shows that various things do matter to us in addition to our experiences: (1) we want to do certain things; (2) we want to be a certain kind of person; (3) we want to be able to make contact with a reality deeper than one that is entirely man-made. We might call these the values of accomplishment, personhood, and authentic understanding."
    - Crisp suggests that the Experience Machine thought experiment could be made more powerful if reframed. As given by Nozick, the thought experiment "raises a variety of unnecessary technical and empirical issues, and also is likely to elicit answer influenced by contingent and differing attitudes each of us might have to risk."
    - Crisp considers two persons, one of whom lives an ordinary, well-lived life. The other lives an internally indistinguishable non-veridical life, from within an experience machine. According to hedonism, both lives go equally well, but we intuitively think otherwise.
    - Crisp argues that "there are considerations often not taken fully into account in [reflection on intuitions about the experience machine] that, once given appropriate weight, show that wholesale rejection of hedonism as unreasonable and implausible is not justified."
        - The goods cited by non-hedonists, such as achievement, are goods "we often, indeed usually, enjoy". Each such good involves pleasant experiences.
        - "One version of the paradox of hedonism is that one will gain more enjoyment by trying to do something other than to enjoy oneself. The tennis player who forgets about enjoyment and focuses on winning will enjoy the game more than were she to aim explicitly at enjoyment." And "the player who thinks that winning really matters is going to find it easier to focus on that as a goal, and to be more strongly motivated to achieve it." So our thinking that there are non-hedonistic goods could be because our so thinking is prudentially optimal, by hedonistic lights, not because there are in fact non-hedonistic goods.
        - Crisp argues that our valuing non-hedonistic goods could be because of evolutionary pressures. In other words, we think such things as achievement non-hedonistically good for us because we have evolved, biologically and culturally to think so, not because such things are in fact non-hedonistically good.
        - Crisp argues that we would not think such things as achievement prudentially good if it was not also enjoyed. "This case, however, might be said at most to suggest only that enjoyment is a necessary condition for well-being, not its only constituent. Perhaps well-being consists wholly or partly in an 'organic whole', comprising genuine accomplishment on the one hand, and enjoyment of that accomplishment on the other." But "the idea of an organic whole involves a mystery". Why must, for example, accomplishment be enjoyed to contribute to a person's well-being?
        - Perhaps we think such things as achievement prudentially good because we over-value what people do over what happens.

Rosati, 1995

Rosati, C. S. (1995) "Persons, Perspectives, and Full Information Accounts of the Good," Ethics, 105(2), pp. 296-325.

- Rosati considers the difficulty in comparing "apparently incommensurable paths our lives might follow". The difficulty seems to be that "[w]hichever choice we make, we will come to value some of those activities and experiences our chosen life makes possible for us, because the choice we make will affect what sort of person we become". We wonder, though, whether there is some way to evaluate our options other than from within the standpoints of the lives with which they present us."
- We often think that the standpoint from which we could evaluate such different lives is one in which we have sufficient information about what such lives "would hold for us", i.e. "what it would be like to live those lives." From such a "birds-eye

point of view", a person would have access to the relevant standpoints in each life and then "would be able to compare and choose between the different trajectories her life might follow."

- Rosati argues that "the notion of a person being fully informed faces two fundamental difficulties. First, the "fully informed person", though purportedly you, may not be someone whose judgements you would recognise as authoritative; thus, Ideal Advisor views lack normative force. Second, because of what it is like to be a person and to have a perspective, it appears that no person can be fully informed."
  - "In making difficult life choices, we do not face a problem that could be overcome simply by supplying missing information. Rather, we confront limitations that stem from what it is like to be a person and to have a perspective."
- Prima facie, the judgements from a suitably-informed standpoint appear to be authoritative. In other words, the judgement from such a perspective that some course of action is best for us seems to supply us with reason to pursue that course of action.
  - Intuitively, some thing can be good for some person only if this person cares about this thing, at least under ideal conditions. For example, if I would, under no relevant circumstances, care about the number of blades of grass on the lawns of Harvard, there being some number of such blades of grass could not be good for me.
  - Further, some person's caring about some thing under ideal conditions makes that thing good for that person only if that person has some reason to care about the fact that he would care about that thing under ideal conditions.
  - Both these "motivational links" appear to be satisfied by "Ideal Advisor" theories. When suitably informed, it seems, we would care about the things that make our life go well for us. We have reason to care about what we would care about if fully informed, because such judgements are in some sense ours.
- [...]
- There are reasons to doubt that the judgements of "Ideal Advisors" have normative force. "A person will have to change markedly to become fully informed, and Ideal Advisor views lack the resources to guarantee that the fully informed person, though purportedly oneself, is someone whose reactions an individual either will or should regard as authoritative."
  - "We ordinarily think that any particular person will be unable to appreciate certain facts, given what she is currently like. Because of her intellectual and psychological features, she occupies a point of view, a perspective from which she views the world and which determines what can be informing for her."
  - "[W]hat can be informing for us [in the meaningful sense which entails a vivid appreciation of facts] is a function of our personalities, or more generally, of who we are at a time."
  - For example, an unempathetic person could not be so informed by a person's telling him that his actions are hurtful. Plausibly, such a person would respond that "it's your fault that you are so sensitive". An unempathetic person would fail to appreciate in a fully vivid way the hurt he causes others.
  - "Some barriers [to receiving information] can be overcome simply by the devices that Falk and Brandt propose, such as properly timed transmission and repetition of information and correction of mistakes in reasoning. As Railton observes, however, other barriers will be overcome only if a person undergoes education or experiences of a kind sufficient to render information fully vivid. What's more, barriers may be overcome only if a person changes either prior to or by means of undergoing those very experiences".
  - "The experiences a person must undergo in order to appreciate information may enable her to appreciate it only by changing her quite dramatically."
  - "At a minimum, she would have to have capacities of reason, memory, and imagination far surpassing those she actually has. She would have to be able to have all the necessary experiences and keep them clearly before her mind [...] In addition, she would have to retain features of her personality that enable her to experience her lives as she would as the persons living them, desiring and being motivated as she would be from within those lives, while losing all features of her personality that keep her from absorbing information."
  - Such an idealised person would be very different from the person prior to the process of idealisation.
  - It is not problematic for the Ideal Advisor view that the idealisation process changes a person, that was the whole point of idealisation, "we did not desire to survey our possible lives as our imperfect, unreasonable selves".
  - But in order to consider the idealised person's judgements as authoritative, we need to know whether the process of idealisation has actually worked, i.e. whether the idealised person has in fact changed for the better and been made a better judge of the prudential good. But since idealisation necessarily involves changes in a person's personality and motivational system, we need a substantive account of a good personality and motivational system. Then, it seems the Ideal Advisor is some ideal person.

Fletcher, 2013

Fletcher, G. (2013) "A Fresh Start for the Objective-List Theory of Well-Being," Utilitas, 25(2), pp. 206-220.

- "Seeing that the objective-list theory is an enumerative theory helps to undermine some of the reasons why objective-list theories are rejected, reasons that stem from thinking that there is a deep difference between hedonism and objective-list theories as a class."
- Fletcher argues that "we should not distinguish between hedonism and objective-list theories in our taxonomy of theories of well-being." Hedonism is a monistic enumerative theory and one that meets the experience requirement. But it is not unique in virtue of these facts. For example, the theory that well-being consists in itch-relief is a monistic enumerative theory that meets the experience requirement. So it seems that the category of "objective-list theories" is a catch-all for enumerative non-hedonist theories. Then, properly understood, hedonism is simply an arbitrarily short list theory.
- The idea that hedonism is simply an arbitrarily short list theory could seem difficult to accept. Hedonists have tended to criticise objective-list theory on the grounds that it is "attitude independent, elitist, or autonomy-violating". These complaints suggest themselves as grounds for distinguishing between the two.
    - Fletcher rejects that objective-list theories are elitist or autonomy-violating. The complaint that objective-list theories are elitist seems to be the complaint that such theories license an "elite" to think of themselves and/or others in certain ways. For example, according to some list theory where things such as knowledge, aesthetic appreciation, and achievement, the lives of the British monarchy go better for them than the lives of the hoi polloi. It is quite natural then, to worry that this fact licenses the former to take an objectionably elitist, dim view of the latter. The complaint that objective-list theories are autonomy-violating seems to be the complaint that such theories license paternalistic intervention in the lives of others whom the theorists are committed to considering as mistaken about what is good for them. Neither of these objections succeed for two reasons. First, an objective-list theory can include "the esteem of others" and "autonomy" as non-instrumental prudential goods. Such a list theory would then supply the "elite" with reason to avoid contempt for and paternalistic intervention in the lives of others (insofar as they have reason to care about the well-being of others). Second, how persons ought to treat each other is a matter of inter-personal morality, hence it is to some extent agnostic to theories of well-being. So, even if the lives of the elite go better for them than the lives of the hoi polloi, and the lives of the hoi polloi could be made better by some paternalistic intervention, these facts do not supply sufficient reason for holding the hoi polloi in contempt, or intervening paternalistically in their lives. A plausible moral theory will demand that we treat each other with respect, and respect others' rights which guarantee them some degree of autonomy.
    - The thought that objective-list theories are attitude-independent whereas hedonism is not seems to be the thought that, on an objective-list theory, something can be good for some person even if that person does not have a pro-attitude toward that thing, whereas according to hedonism, something cannot be good for some person unless that person has such an attitude.
        - But hedonism is not attitude-dependent in this sense. "Take an ascetic who seeks to avoid feeling pleasure for fear of corrupting his soul or angering his deity. Hedonism claims that all and only pleasure is good for someone and is thus committed to claiming that if this person were to experience pleasure then this pleasure is good for them, despite the fact that the person actively does not want this thing."
        - Even a desire-fulfilment version of hedonism, which claims further that pleasure consists in the fulfilment of desires, appears to be attitude-independent in this sense. Suppose the ascetic has some first-order desire, for example, for an extravagant meal, and this desire is fulfilled. Then, on this version of hedonism, the ascetic experiences pleasure, which makes his life go better for him. Suppose further that the ascetic has the second-order desire that he have no desire for an extravagant meal. His life's going better for him is independent of this desire. He does not welcome this pleasure, and still it makes his life go better for him.
        - One could think that hedonism is attitude dependent in a looser sense, in that whether something is good for someone is in some way dependent on this person's pro-attitudes.
        - On this looser understanding of attitude-dependence, objective-list theories, too, are attitude-dependent. Suppose that friendship is a non-hedonistic prudential good. Plausibly, a person's having the good of friendship depends on his pro-attitudes towards his friends.
- Fletcher proposes a new pluralist enumerative theory, and shows that "a major motivation for the competitor theory – the desire-fulfilment theory – is captured by [his new theory], without incurring the costs associated with the desire-fulfilment theory"
    - One potential complaint about Fletcher's list is "that these items are all subjects of detailed philosophical investigation into their nature and that, for this reason, the theory does not tell us enough." While there is debate about the right account of each of these things, it is not controversial that each of these things is real. The same is true of competing theories. Hedonism "awaits the correct theory of pleasure" "the desire-fulfilment theory awaits the correct theory of desire" "human nature perfectionism awaits the correct theory of human nature".
    - Fletcher's list is "Achievement, Friendship, Happiness, Pleasure, Self-Respect, Virtue"
- Fletcher thinks that the appeal of desire-fulfilment theory is in large part the idea that such theories are appropriately sensitive to a person's attitudes, while enumerative theories are not. Intuitively, the worry is that, according to list theory,

some things would be good for a person regardless of whether that person was indifferent to those things, or even loathed them.

- Fletcher argues that each item on his list has certain pro-attitudes as a necessary component. For example, achievement necessarily involves thinking the things one achieves are worthwhile goals. For example, if one was forced to count the blades of grass in Harvard, and thought this completely pointless, one would not consider oneself as having achieved anything in finishing this counting. Also, if one did all the acts ordinarily involved in a friendship but had no affections to any other person, he would not enjoy the good of friendship.
    - "Desire-fulfilment theory correctly latches onto the fact that how well one's life goes is correlated (albeit imperfectly) with the extent that one experiences pro-attitudes. The mistake that the desire-fulfilment theory makes is that of allowing one's desires and attitudes to play an unrestricted explanatory role, one that goes beyond their being elements of well-being enhancers."
    - Desire theory treats our desiring (under certain restrictions) something as sufficient for that thing's being good for us. "Subjectivists claim that the relevant sort of desire grounds, not merely tracks, the truth of claims about what is good for a person." (Sobel, 2009, p. 337)
    - This deference to desire gives rise to the problem for desire theories that "too many things come out as good for us."
    - Fletcher's solution "is attitude-sensitive without giving attitudes a role over and above being necessary constituents of the states that are good for us."
- Fletcher considers the objection that "the theory is arbitrary in some troubling way."
- Fletcher responds that "[a]s it is sometimes wielded, the objection is overblown because no theory of well-being could avoid it." For example, it is not clear what non-trivial reason there is to think that pleasure and only pleasure is good. Likewise for desire-fulfilment and the perfection of human nature. "All explanation stops somewhere." It is difficult to establish what items should be on the list, but this can be tested against our intuitions.

Bradford, 2017

Bradford, G. (2017) "Problems for Perfectionism," Utilitas, 29(3), pp. 344-364.

- Perfectionism is the view that what ultimately and non-instrumentally makes a person's life good for that person is the development of his characteristically human capacities.
- "[T]here is a sense in which Objective List Theory is unsatisfying: it is a mere list after all, and hardly a theory. [...] Perfectionism provides a unifying explanation that captures much of what we want in the objective list view."
    - "Perfectionists typically take rationality as among the human capacities – knowledge is the exercise of our theoretical rationality, and achievement is the exercise of our practical rationality."
- Bradford considers the objection that "perfectionism counterintuitively undervalues the relevance of pleasure and preferences."
    - For example, perfectionism seems to demand that a person forego retirement in the pursuit of greater perfection through the refinement of his abilities in work. It seems also to suggest that persons are better off pursuing some "fruitful" occupation than their passions.
    - The underlying complaint is that a person's pleasure seems to be an important consideration in what makes his life go better, and perfectionism seems to ignore this.
    - "The most obvious starting point is to incorporate something along the lines of capacities to experience pleasure, as several perfectionist accounts do." "A drawback of including something as broad as 'affective capacities' on a perfectionist account is that there seems to be no reason to restrict the affective capacity to only pleasant affect – after all, we have the capacity to feel great sorrow, pain, fear, and so on."
    - "Instead, a better approach capitalizes on the more nuanced observation that it is fundamental to our nature to pursue pleasure and avoid pain."
    - "But one might object that this is not a capacity of the relevant sort. Perfectionism is only interested in capacities to engage in activity and not passive capacities, such as the senses or digestion. Passive capacities are not relevant for perfectionist well-being on grounds of its Aristotelian roots, where flourishing essentially involves activity."
    - But the pursuit of pleasure is an activity, even if mere sensitivity to pleasure is not.
    - It seems natural to think that a similar perfectionist strategy for accommodating the apparent importance to how well our lives go for us of our preferences, by positing that there is some capacity for satisfying preferences. But there is no single capacity for satisfying preferences because our preferences can be satisfied in many ways, many of which have nothing to do with our own activities.
    - Instead, the perfectionist could posit that the exercise of autonomy is a characteristically human capacity. Bradford understands autonomy as "a capacity to direct one's own activity in response to reasons."

        - One worry about this response is that even then, in choosing the course of action which satisfies one's preferences but fails to develop one's other capacities, one is responding poorly to reason, since one has greater (prudential reason) to develop one's other capacities, so one is not exercising autonomy well. Then, each capacity is either left undeveloped or exercised poorly in choosing what one (merely) prefers over what would better develop one's other capacities.
        - But desire in itself generates reasons, and possibly sufficient reason to do as one desires even if that fails to maximally develop one's capacities.
- One concern about perfectionism is that "what turns out to be characteristic of human nature may include features that are intuitively bad, and exclude features that are intuitively good."
    - Dorsey argues that the core claim of perfectionism, that what makes a person's life go well for him is the development of his characteristically human capacities, is not independently (of its yielding plausible "enumerative" judgements) plausible. Suppose that the capacity to develop hypothermia was a characteristically human capacity. Then, it seems, even the perfectionist would feel no "theoretical pressure" to consider the development of this capacity as constitutive of well-being, but would feel pressure to revise his account of human nature.
    - Bradford argues that the general claim of perfectionism is not undermined by the implausibility of some conception of perfectionism. For example, a conception of hedonism which takes pleasure to consist in itch-relief is patently implausible. But the implausibility of this conception does not suggest the implausibility of more sensible conceptions.
    - A conception of perfectionism which holds that the relevant human capacities are the uniquely human capacities is implausible. Such a conception would consider making fires and wearing clothes constitutive of well-being. This conception yields such implausible judgements because of its erroneous identification of the relevant human capacities, which flow from its implausible view of human nature.
    - Similar objections could be made to other theories. For example, the Stranger on a Train counterexample to some conceptions of desire theory. This counterexample does not suggest that desire theory as a whole is implausible, but that the conception which takes even desires that are not meaningfully about oneself to be relevant is implausible.
- The Deep Problem
    - "Recall that a central motivation to accept perfectionism initiates from the intuition that objective list items are indeed good, but need a unifying explanation. Perfectionism purports to provide such an explanation: the items on the list are good because they are instances of developing human capacities."
    - But this does not seem to be an explanation of the normative force of the items on the list. It unifies the items, by explaining what is common to them, but it does not explain why these items are good.
    - The question remains, "what is it about being human capacities that is good?"
    - "In fact, perfectionists go to the trouble of clarifying that the account is purely descriptive. The motivation for this move is to avoid charges of circularity, since an account that identifies which features are good to develop cannot identify those features by their goodness."
    - Fletcher ultimately argues that "the deep question is a question for all theories of well-being and perfectionism fares no worse (perhaps even better) than other theories."
- "One possible response is just to drop the deep question altogether. The deep question asks for an explanation that is a foundation of perfectionist goods, but we might think this is unnecessary."
- "On this approach, the contention is that a further theory of value explains why the development of capacities is good. We appeal to this further theory of value, not human nature, which in turn explains why our developing human capacities is good: human capacities instantiate this other value."
- "Another possible answer to the deep question in perfectionist terms can be found in the Aristotelian roots of perfectionism. The Aristotelian answer is that to develop the perfections is to flourish, and flourishing just is to live well."
- Normative Perfectionism
    - Human beings are rational agents, and it is as rational agents that we act in the world. So it is our capacity for rational agency that determines how we act in the world. Since an important part of how we act in the world is the sort of things we pursue, our rational agency determines the sorts of things we pursue. Brink then defends a normative conception of rational agency. According to Brink, our rational agency would not determine us to undermine itself, and would instead determine us to cultivate itself. Then, because our rational agency is authoritative, since it determines how we act in the world, we have authoritative reason to cultivate and excellently exercise our rational agency. And we think that our reasons to pursue the prudential goods are also authoritative, i.e. that we have good reason to care about what is good for us, in the sense that these reasons are not reasons we could dismiss by saying "why does that matter?" So perfectionist goods are in some sense "fit for purpose". This, it seems, is good reason to think the perfectionist goods are indeed prudential goods.
    - The authority of reasons to pursue such perfectionist goods as achievement and knowledge flow from the authority of reasons to cultivate and excellently exercise rational agency. Achievement involves the exercise of rational agency in

two ways, first in selecting worthwhile goals and second in acting to realise those goals. So achievement is one way in which rational agency is excellently exercised. Rational agency also requires the development of one's capacity for knowledge since rational agency involves being appropriately sensitive to reasons including epistemic ones.
    - This strategy fails to generalise to other capacities whose development seems to be good for a person, such as a person's physical capacities and his capacity for friendship. "This is a particularly disappointing drawback since a central appeal of perfectionism is that it grounds the value of a plurality of goods".
- "The deep problem is not unique to perfectionism [...] The deep problem raises a question that we can put to any moral theory, and perfectionism fares no worse than any other."
    - Hedonism seems be grounded on the intuitively plausible claim that pleasure is good. This claim is so intuitively plausible, it seems, that the burden of argument lies with those who would dispute it. But that the claim is intuitively plausible is not an explanation of its truth. The hedonist, it seems, has no obvious ground for thinking that pleasure constitutes well-being.
    - This is Mill's point when he tells us "ultimate ends do not admit of proof".
    - "One thought is that the lingering niggle is a matter of motivating perfectionism rather than explaining it. The intuitive plausibility of the starting point for some accounts of the good is more immediate than others – pleasure or desire satisfaction, for example, strikes us as immediately relevant for our good and so a good starting point for a theory, barely worth questioning." In contrast, the perfection of human capacities is something far more abstract, and so less intuitively compelling.
    - "If the deep question is only a matter of motivating the theory, it's simply a PR problem, as it were – a question of having used effective rhetoric to describe the theory in such a way that it captures the imagination. If that's so, this isn't such a deep problem at all and perfectionism just needs a better sales pitch. It may threaten the theory's popularity, but it wouldn't threaten its truth."
    - Normative perfectionism grounds "authoritative reason to shape our lives in a certain way". It seems hedonism and desire theory have yet to offer such grounds.

Heathwood, 2005

Heathwood, C. (2005) "The Problem of Defective Desires," Australasian Journal of Philosophy, 83(4), pp. 487-504.

- "This paper defends the actualist desire-satisfaction theory of welfare against a popular line of objection—namely that it cannot accommodate the fact that, sometimes, it is bad for a person to get what he wants." "I aim to show how [actualist desire theory] can accommodate the obvious fact that we can desire things that are bad for us."
- "Defective desires" include ill-informed desires such as the desire to drink from a river one does not know is polluted, irrational desires such as the desire to avoid the dentist visit one knows will be good for one's health, base desires such as a desire to commit bestiality, and poorly cultivated desires. Defective desires include also pointless desires, such as the grass counter's, artificially-aroused desires, such as those induced by excessive uninformative advertising, and desires to be badly off.
- Defective desires are desires whose satisfaction does not make their subject better off.
- Heathwood's Conception of Actualist Desire Theory
    - "[D]esires are propositional attitudes. Desire satisfactions, then, are states of affairs in which a subject desires that some proposition is true and in fact the proposition is true. Desire frustrations are states of affairs in which a subject desires that some proposition be true but the proposition is not true."
    - Only basic, i.e. intrinsic, i.e. non-instrumental desire satisfactions count. "Intuitively, a basic desire is a desire for something for its own sake, not merely for something else that it will lead to, or otherwise realise."
    - A "paradigmatic version" of actualist desire theory is the summative one, where how well a person's life goes for him is the sum of desire satisfactions less the sum of desire frustrations weighted by the intensity of each desire.
    - A summative desire theory is in contrast to a global one.
- Heathwood distinguishes between something's being all-things-considered good or bad for a person and something's being "intrinsically" or ceteris paribus good or bad for a person. Something is all-things-considered good for some person iff the life this person were to lead if this thing obtained is better than the life this person were to lead if this thing did not obtain. Something is ceteris paribus good for some person iff all other things being equal, the life where this thing obtains is better than the life where this thing does not.
    - Then, satisfaction of ill-informed desires could be ceteris paribus good but all-things-considered bad. The difficult intuition is that fulfilment of an ill-informed desire is bad for a person. This intuition can be explained by the fact that such fulfilment is all-things-considered bad.
    - It seems plausible that the satisfaction of even ill-informed desires is intrinsically good. This is brought out by the Polluted River case.

    - An analogous argument applies to irrational desires.
- Sidgwick lamented that "the objects of our strongest desires often come to us as 'Dead Sea apples', no longer wanted once they are gotten, 'mere dust and ashes in the eating'." For example, a desperate Oxford undergraduate, in the months leading up to his exam, could want nothing more than to achieve an excellent result. Yet in the moment that this is achieved, it means nothing to him, and all he wants is a restful break.
    - An actualist desire theory could accommodate this by maintaining that desire satisfactions are only intrinsically good for a person if the person has the desire at the time when it is satisfied.
    - Heathwood argues that the same is true of artificially aroused desires. At the time that such desires are satisfied, the person no longer so desires.
    - If such desires remain at the time that they are satisfied, Heathwood maintains that their satisfaction contribute to a person's well-being. Such desire satisfactions may also be all-things-considered bad.
- Heathwood argues that "the only sense that can be made of the idea of a desire being 'inauthentic', or in conflict with one's 'true self', is that the desire conflicts with many other desires held by the person." So the intuition that the satisfaction of artificially aroused desires do not contribute to well-being because they are inauthentic desires can be explained by the fact that such desire-satisfactions are all-things-considered bad.
- "Some critics think that some desires are 'intrinsically defective'. The claim is that, for some desires, a person can be made worse off by having them satisfied, not because the satisfaction leads to a lower net balance of satisfactions, but simply because the satisfaction is bad (or not very good) in itself. The case of base desires is perhaps the most common example."
    - Moore's example is of a person whose "strongest possible desires are satisfied 'by a perpetual indulgence in bestiality'. The upshot is that the advocate of an actual desire-satisfaction theory is forced to maintain, absurdly, that 'such a state of things would be heaven indeed, and that all human endeavours should be devoted to its realisation'."
    - Heathwood maintains that actualist desire theory comes to the correct verdict about the perpetual bestiality-indulger. Plausibly, our intuitions are again muddied by the thought that indulgence in bestiality is typically all-things-considered bad, because the indulger would experience shame, guilt, and loneliness, or come down with some barnyard diseases. Our intuitions may also be muddied by the thought that no person could possibly have such desires, so we imagine the bestiality-indulger as forced or unwilling. We must also imagine that the bestiality-indulger does not have many and/or intense other desires frustrated as a result.
    - It is consistent to say that the bestiality-indulger's life goes well for him, but also that it is a pathetic and degrading life. His life could be good for him but bad in many other ways.
    - Our intuition that the life of the bestiality-indulger is bad, then, could reflect the fact that we think his life is empty of many other important goods. "We don't merely want ourselves to be well off; we also want to do good things, to be good people, to achieve worthwhile goals. A life of perpetual indulgence [...] lacks the other elements we care about."
    - Desire theory also does not say that a person's being well-off is good.
- The Argument from Pointless Desires
    - Heathwood asks "what is meant by saying that a desire is pointless?"
    - The relevant sense of pointlessness cannot be that some state of affairs is instrumentally pointless, i.e. that it fails to achieve its end since the satisfaction of instrumental desires is already ruled out in any plausible desire theory. The relevant sense of pointlessness also does not seem to be simply badness, because Rawls's grass-counter does not seem to desire something bad. It also does not seem to be moral non-badness since many non-pointless activities such as playing the piano seems neither morally bad nor pointless.
    - "Consider yet another hypothesis. These activities are unworthy not because they lack moral goodness (or have moral badness) but because they lack excellence. And, it might be claimed, human persons, as beings with dignity and worth, ought to pursue the excellent over the pointless."
    - If the argument from pointlessness is premised on such a conception of pointlessness, it seems to beg the question against desire satisfaction theory because it pre-supposes that something is good for a person only if it is excellent.
    - Heathwood rejects the argument from pointless desires. "No way of making sense of the notion of pointless desire yields a kind of desire that is intrinsically welfare-defective", i.e. a kind of desire whose satisfaction does not contribute to well-being.
- The Argument from Poorly Cultivated Desires
    - Heathwood brings out the point by considering twins waiting in a dentist's office, one listening to Muzak and the other listening to Mozart. The question seems to be "what is it to me that the music I am listening to is in some sense worse?" It is not clear what authoritative reason there is for someone to think that the difference in the music makes a difference to how well his life goes, ceteris paribus. "It may be plausible to say that I'm lacking in aesthetic virtue, or even that I degrade myself by listening to such schlock, but this is not to say I'm harmed by it, welfare-wise."
- The Argument from Desires to be Badly Off

- Heathwood employs the same device here. The satisfaction of a desire to be badly off consists in a person's being all-things-considered badly off, i.e. many and/or intense desires of his are frustrated, but this is consistent with the satisfaction of that desire being intrinsically or ceteris paribus good for him.

Feldman, 2002

Feldman, F. (2002) "The Good Life: A Defense of Attitudinal Hedonism," Philosophy and Phenomenological Research, 65(3), pp. 604-628.

- Feldman distinguishes between pleasure as a feeling and pleasure as an attitude.
  - Pleasure as a feeling is a conception of pleasure as some sort of distinctive sensation or as some class of sensations that a person takes pleasure in.
  - Feldman argues that some "feelings" are in fact propositional attitudes. For example, if a person "feels that the water is too hot", this "feeling" is in fact a propositional attitude. In contrast, the feeling of hotness is not. The former "feeling" can be sensibly described as either true or false while the latter can at best be described as misleading. The latter feeling can be sensibly described as having some location in the body while the former cannot.
  - Feldman understands enjoyment as an attitude which "takes propositional entities (or states of affairs) as its objects." In other words, we enjoy such things as that the weather is nice, or that some philosophy paper is well written. Other propositional attitudes include hope and fear, belief and doubt, and recollection and anticipation. For example, we believe such things as that the weather is nice.
  - Feldman suggests that a necessary condition for a propositional entity to be the object of some person's such attitude is that it is conceivable by that person. Feldman does not assume that attitudinal pleasure is always directed toward truths, but believes that attitudinal pleasure is necessarily directed toward propositions the person (whose pleasure it is) thinks true.
- According to Sensory Hedonism, what ultimately makes a person's life go better for him is pleasure in his life, and pleasure is some distinct sort of sensation or some class of sensations which have the property of being pleasant.
- According to Attitudinal Hedonism, what ultimately makes a person's life go better for him is pleasure in his life, and pleasure is a propositional attitude. Such pleasures vary in intensity and duration. According to Intrinsic Attitudinal Hedonism, only intrinsic attitudinal pleasure counts. An attitudinal pleasure is intrinsic iff the person (whose pleasure it is) is attitudinally pleased by some state of affairs not in virtue of the fact that he is attitudinally pleased by some other state of affairs. For example, a person who is attitudinally pleased by the fact that there is water in the pitcher and the fact that there is water in the pitcher so he will be able to drink it, derives intrinsic attitudinal pleasure only in the former case.
- The "mental statism" objection is the objection that hedonism implies that "if two lives are alike with respect to mental states, they must also be alike with respect to value" even if "one of the individuals takes his pleasure from correctly perceived interactions with real human beings and the other individual is a mere brain in a vat".
  - A more plausible case is that of Happy Businessman, who is happy because he thinks "his career is going well, he is respected in his community, and he has a loving family" but all these beliefs are false.
  - One hedonist response rejects that the deceived businessman's life is going all that poorly for him. Our intuition that it is could be explained by the fact that we would not like to be deceived, and would find it painful. We know that the businessman is being deceived, and this is an essential element of the case we are made to consider. Then, the hedonist would respond, our intuitions about this case misfire because we are unable to fully step back from this knowledge and into the perspective of the businessman. We bring our knowledge of his deception into what we imagine the businessman's life is like for him, so we do not fully appreciate the fact of the businessman's blissful ignorance.
  - "Furthermore, if any of his deceivers should slip up, the businessman might discover his real situation. Then he would be miserable. We would not like to have a life constantly on the brink of misery."
- According to Veridical Intrinsic Attitudinal Hedonism, only intrinsic attitudinal pleasure in true states of affairs ultimately make a person's life go better for him.
- The Argument from Worthless Pleasures
  - The pleasures of cruelty in the life of the terrorist seem to make his life worse, not better. Another relevant case is Moore's Porky, the perpetual bestiality-indulger.
  - According to Desert Adjusted Intrinsic Attitudinal Hedonism, the (prudential) worthiness of pleasure is enhanced by the suitability of the object of pleasure and diminished by the unsuitability of the object of pleasure.
  - Feldman argues that "it's reasonable to describe certain objects by saying they 'deserve to be objects of pleasure'. In the case of such objects it is fitting, or appropriate, that someone take pleasure in them."

Olsaretti, 2007

Olsaretti, S. (2007) "The Limits of Hedonism: Feldman on the Value of Attitudinal Pleasure," Philosophical Studies, 136(3), pp. 409-415.

- Olsaretti understands Feldman as aiming to respond to objections to hedonism by showing that hedonism is "plastic" and not "implausibly restrictive in its range of judgements about the good life."
- Olsaretti understands Feldman's argument as proceeding in two steps. The first step is a rejection of sensory pleasure as prudentially valuable in favour of attitudinal pleasure. The second step is to "formulate different hedonist views which make the value of pleasure vary in accordance with some aspects of the object of pleasure" such as its veridicality, its aesthetic value, or its moral value.
- Olsaretti contests Feldman's "defence of the claim that attitudinal pleasures are the chief good" and Feldman's "claim that hedonists can overcome the objections levelled against them while remaining pure hedonists".
- Olsaretti grants that it is uncharitable to the hedonist to treat sensory hedonism as the only defensible sort of hedonism.
- The problem for Feldman's attitudinal hedonism is that "attitudinal pleasures include such different attitudes that it is implausible to hold, as Feldman seems to do, that they are all equally valuable". For example, the propositional attitudes that constitute attitudinal pleasure seem to plausibly include attitudes such as "I am glad that this is happening", "This is delightful", "I am satisfied with this", "I love this", "This has turned out very well". Such attitudes differ along several lines. Some are momentary while others are long-lasting, some involve judgement or assessment while others involve only approval or positive affect, some are present-oriented, others are past-oriented or future-oriented. Feldman seems to think all such attitudinal pleasures, ceteris paribus, equally valuable. But this does not seem plausible, because we think, for example, all else being equal, the attitudinal pleasure constituted by the propositional attitude "upon deep reflection, I have lived a wonderful life" more prudentially valuable than that constituted by the propositional attitude "this is fun".
  - Feldman could reply that he does not defend the claim that all attitudinal pleasures are of equal prudential value, and merely aims to illustrate how an attitudinal hedonism could be formulated.
  - If Feldman retreats to this claim, Olsaretti argues, Feldman does not provide much of a defense of hedonism, since it could very well be the case that no version of attitudinal hedonism is plausible.
- On an adjusted hedonist view, "the value of pleasures depends, in part, on the nature of the objects of those pleasures, so that, say, false pleasures have less value than true pleasures, and do so regardless of whether the person whose pleasures these are cares about her pleasures' being true.
  - Feldman insists that such a hedonism is still "pure" in the sense that it holds that "attitudinal pleasures and pains are the only things that contribute in the most fundamental way to the value of life".
  - But Feldman's motivation for adjusting the value of pleasure seems to be "to make room for independent, non-hedonist convictions about the good life, namely, convictions that there are intrinsic goods other than pleasure". In other words, it seems that it is because Feldman thinks that veridicality is important to a good life that he is willing to adjust the value of pleasures based on their veridicality. If not so motivated, these adjustments seem ad hoc, since Feldman does not offer any other reason for thinking them plausible. So adjusted hedonist views are actually mixed theories.
  - Feldman could claim that the adjustment is not of the value of pleasures, but of the pleasurableness of pleasures. Then it is still pleasurableness that makes pleasure valuable. But this is not adequately motivated.
  - Feldman's adjusted attitudinal hedonisms are pure in the sense that he gives, but not pure in the sense that pleasantness is what makes pleasures valuable.
- "Feldman successfully shows that we should think of the hedonist [...] family of views, as a richer one than is often thought. The success of critics of sensory hedonism, then, is no more a conclusive argument against hedonism as this family of views than the success of critiques against actual desire theories, or of attacks on perfectionist versions of objective list theories, is a conclusive argument against these."

Raz, 1988

Raz, J. (1988) "Personal Well-Being," in Raz, J. (ed.) The Morality of Freedom. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 288-320.