

# The Dawn of the Phenomenology of Feelings

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**ABSTRACT:** This essay reshapes our understanding of the origin and trajectory of the phenomenology of feelings. In contrast to accepted interpretations, I show that Husserl’s 1896 manuscript “Approval, Value, and Evidence”—and not his 1901 *Logical Investigations*—is the foundation of his subsequent phenomenology of feelings as it is found in *Lectures on Ethics and Value Theory, Ideas I*, and other manuscripts. This is for two reasons. First, in the 1896 manuscript—published in *Studies Concerning the Structures of Consciousness*—Husserl introduces the core problem, which continues to motivate his philosophy of feelings. He sees that feelings are not just affective, but also surprisingly rational. Second, Husserl addresses this enigmatic duality, by pioneering the method of analogizing, which he would employ for the next twenty years. In sum, I show that the 1896 manuscript introduces the problems and methods, in the absence of which Husserl’s later phenomenology of feelings appears inconceivable.

**KEY WORDS:** *Logical Investigations*, approval, axiology, rationality, Husserl, fulfillment

Edmund Husserl’s discussion of feeling acts from his 1901 *Logical Investigations* (Husserl 1984, 1970; hereafter, *LU*)<sup>1</sup> continues to have a substantial impact on the scholarship for two reasons. First, many thinkers have asserted that *LU* contains Husserl’s first rigorous attempt at a philosophy of feelings.<sup>2</sup> Second, his descriptions from *LU* have often been taken as the germ of his more mature phenomenology of feelings, as it is found in his 1908–1914 *Lectures on Ethics and Value Theory* (Husserl 1988; hereafter, *Lectures*) and other manuscripts.

This essay challenges both of these widely believed interpretative conclusions. First, before the publication of *LU*, in 1896 or 1897 Husserl composed a manuscript on the topic of feelings, which he entitled “Approval, Value, and Evidence”

(“Billigung, Wert, und Evidenz,” Husserl 2020a; hereafter, BWE). In this almost entirely overlooked manuscript,<sup>3</sup> which was just published in *Studies Concerning the Structures of Consciousness* (Husserl 2020b; hereafter, *Studies*), Husserl analyzes the feeling of approval and its connection to intellectual intentions. Husserl’s account of feelings from BWE not only comes before *LU*, but is also substantially different; Husserl describes feeling acts in vastly distinct ways in the two works.

Second, I show that Husserl’s unique conclusions about the structure of feeling intentions from BWE—and not from *LU*—are the true spores of his subsequent philosophy of feelings.<sup>4</sup> In *LU*, Husserl describes an intentional feeling as entirely non-objectifying, as a-rational, and structurally as a position-taking. In BWE, he describes an intentional feeling as implicitly objectifying, as rational, and structurally as analogous to both apprehension and position-taking. In this essay, I show that these observations from BWE, and not *LU*, directly prefigure Husserl’s later phenomenology of feeling acts, as it is developed in *Lectures, Ideas I*, and other manuscripts from *Studies*. By examining the connections between BWE and these subsequent essays, my analysis will reveal that the evolution of Husserl’s philosophy of feeling acts is much more consistent than has yet been accounted for. That is, when BWE is recognized as the legitimate precursor of Husserl’s robust philosophy of feelings, one also observes that he continued to describe feeling intentions in relatively similar ways throughout much of his career.

To accomplish these goals, the paper is divided into three sections and a conclusion. Section one introduces Husserl’s theory of feeling acts from *LU*, while section two examines his philosophy of feeling intentions (the feeling intention of approval) from BWE. In section three, I show why *LU* is not and why BWE is the seed of Husserl’s later phenomenology of feelings. I conclude by warding off a misinterpretation.

## 1.

### **1.1. Logical Investigations: Objectifying and Non-Objectifying Acts**

The central tasks of Husserl’s 1901 descriptive analysis of feeling intentions are to determine their structure and how they are completed or satisfied.<sup>5</sup> I discuss the former in this sub-section and the latter in the next sub-section. As these tenets of Husserl’s theory from *LU* have been frequently discussed in the literature, I examine only those parts of his 1901 account that are necessary for the purposes of this paper.

Husserl begins exploration of the structure of feeling intentions, by asserting that they are always founded in objectifying acts, such as perceptions, imaginations, or judgments (Husserl 1984: 515–18; 1970: 168–69). Further, he states that feeling acts have three essential components. Two of these parts belong to the founding

objectifying act. The feeling—or rather, that which makes the whole intention into a feeling—is one additional founded part of the intention (see note 7).

One moment of the objectifying act is the apprehension. Only this moment is responsible for “constituting” the abstract “theoretical” referent (see Husserl 2020b: 2–6) of the whole act. The apprehension refers to the object, in and with its properties such as size, shape, and color (Husserl 1984: 429–30; 1970: 121).<sup>6</sup> Via the apprehension, the abstract theoretical object can be intuitively represented and appear before me in person. Importantly, apprehension is not just objectifying, but also rational. All objects and properties that have been objectified via apprehension are rational and can be categorially judged (Husserl 1984: 658–61, 681–85, 704; 1970: 272–73, 286–89, 301; see Bernet 1988: 43–44; Byrne 2021a, 2021b).

Second, contra Franz Brentano (1874: 260–66; 2009: 152–56), Husserl asserts that every act has a doxic position-taking (act-quality) regarding the existence of the object. A doxic position-taking is, so to speak, motivated by the appearance of the apprehended object. When the apprehended object appears harmoniously (via perceptual apprehension), I take the stance that it exists; I take the stance that it is real. On the other hand, if the apprehended object appears unharmoniously, I might take the modalized positions that it dubitably or does not exist. During a cognitive objectifying act, I may not only take the doxic stance that the object exists, as I do during harmonious perception. I could alternatively take a stance that leaves the existence of the object in question, as I do when executing an imagining act (Husserl 1984: 657–61; 1970: 165–67. See Plotka 2018: 110–14).

Husserl emphasizes that a positive doxic position-taking, in contrast to the apprehension, does not constitute any real property of the object, which would be called “being.” While a position-taking is necessary for objectification, position-taking does not (abstractly considered) objectify. Doxic position-taking does not refer to an existence-property of the object. In another manuscript, written just before *LU*, Husserl states, in line with Kant: “Being is no real predicate. Being is no real part, no real side of a real object. Being is absolutely nothing (*überhaupt nichts*), which could be constitutive of an object” (Husserl 2001: 165; see Husserl 2009: 69; see also Byrne 2022a, 2022b). Because there is no being-property referred to by the position-taking, it is not possible for me to directly objectify and categorially judge about the existence of the object. There is simply nothing for me to directly judge about. Instead, I must reflect on and apprehend my primary level objectifying intention to execute a categorial judgment “about” being (Staiti 2015: 822–23; Rollinger 1999: 226–29; Varga 2006).

Third, Husserl affirms that an act becomes a feeling *intention* when I execute an additional position-taking (act-quality). An act becomes a *feeling* when I also take a stance regarding the apprehended object’s value (Husserl 1984: 402–6, 414–16; 1970: 109–12, 115–16).<sup>7</sup> To reiterate: *Concerning structure, Husserl abstractly understands intentional feelings, in LU, as kinds of position-takings.*<sup>8</sup> While

an objectifying intention can be executed by itself, Husserl claims that the feeling position-taking must be founded in an objectifying act—and specifically the doxic position-taking of the objectifying act (1984: 516; 1970: 168).

Further, a feeling position-taking—just as a doxic position-taking—can be motivated by the appearance of the apprehended object. For example, Husserl discusses how apprehension can refer to the pleasing “rosy gleam” of an object, where that gleam is “purely presentational” (Husserl 1984: 408; 1970: 111), that is, purely rational and cognitive (Jardine 2020: 53–54). Then, as Husserl writes, “The event thus pleasingly painted now serves as the first foundation for the joyful approach, the liking for, the being charmed” (1984: 408; 1970: 111), where he understands these latter experiences as feeling position-takings (Fisette 2021: 224–25; Melle 2012: 53–54). In this above quotation, Husserl is thus affirming that when the object appears with this apprehended pleasing feature, I might then take a stance that it is valuable.

Regarding intentionality, Husserl believes that a feeling position-taking—like a doxic position-taking—does not constitute its own particular object or property. *Feelings are, simply stated, non-objectifying.* A feeling refers to the object, which is intended via the rational apprehension, in a new way, but it does not add any new determination or “value”-property to that object. When I execute a feeling act, I am taking a new stance towards the same objectively and rationally apprehended object. As Melle writes, feeling acts “have no objective relation other than what the underlying objectifying act constitutes. . . . According to the terms of the *Logical Investigations*, the [feeling] act makes no contribution to the constitution of the object” (Melle 1990: 40–41). In line with this—in the same way that it is not possible to directly judge about existence, because the doxic position-taking refers to no property “existence” —it is not possible to directly judge about value, because the feeling position-taking refers to no property “value.” Again, there is simply nothing to directly judge about that could be called “value.” As such—just like “existence” properties—all categorial “value” determinations are grasped via reflection, that is, objectifying apprehension of the primary level feeling act (Husserl 1984: 748–50; 1970: 332–34; Byrne 2022c).<sup>9</sup>

## **1.2. Logical Investigations: Fulfillment and Satisfaction**

Husserl’s conclusions about the structures of objectifying acts and non-objectifying feeling intentions helps determine how he understands their completion (see note 5). He states that objectifying acts are completed via fulfillments, while non-objectifying feelings are completed via satisfaction.

For objectifying acts, fulfillment is primarily the “responsibility” of the apprehension. This is because the apprehension (via its apprehending form) refers to the object in an intuitive or signitive manner. An intuitively apprehended object appears before me intuitively. I see the object—perceptually or imaginatively—in

and with its primary and secondary properties. A signitive apprehension refers to the object, but does not intuitively represent it. Fulfillment can occur, according to the Husserl of 1901, when an act with an intuitive apprehension is synthesized via identification with an intention with a signitive apprehension (Husserl 1984: 566–70; 1970: 206–8). Even though apprehensions synthesize with each other during fulfillment, when discussed in the narrowest possible sense, fulfillment is *not* the verification of the apprehension of the act, but instead is (abstractly) the verification of the doxic position-taking. When an objectifying judging act is fulfilled, what is verified is my stance, that the apprehended object-as-having-this-property really does exist. I see that my position—that the state of affairs is real—was and is right.

On the basis of these observations about fulfillment, Husserl concludes that objectifying acts are rational, according to his two senses of the term. Objectifying intentions are rational in the first sense, because they are acts which have fulfilling intuitive evidence, which can provide a true grasp of the object to the attentive mind. The objectifying act is rational, because its intuitive fulfillment can reveal the state of affairs as it truly is. When a rational objectifying act is fulfilled, it not only intuitively presents the object before me, but also discloses the truth of the situation. I not only intend the ball as red, but—through fulfillment—I intuitively see and know it to be so (Drummond 2018: 137).

Objectifying acts are rational in Husserl's second sense because I can execute and express categorial judgments about the objects of these acts *and* because I can debate about the veracity of such judgments with others. On the one hand, I can judge about the referent of the objectifying act, by directly categorially reforming that objectifying intention. I can perceive the ball "as" red and then—via categorial formation—directly judge about that ball as red. On the other hand, I can engage in rational debate with others concerning these categorial judgments, by appealing to intuitive (fulfilling) evidence, which reveals the state of affairs as it truly is (the first sense of rationality).

While always maintaining that there is a distinction between them, Husserl describes the satisfaction of non-objectifying feelings as similar to the fulfillment of objectifying intentions (1984: 583; 1970: 217). He sees that the satisfaction of a feeling position-taking partially "relies" —like the verification of the doxic position—on the objectifying apprehension in its fulfilling function. For example, in the case where I wish for the arrival of my friend, this wish is founded in an objectifying signitive apprehension of the arrival of that friend. This objectifying apprehension constitutes the (wished-for) object and the doxic position-taking refers to the object as an object that does not currently exist (I naturally can only wish for that which I intend as not obtaining right now). As signitively apprehended, the arrival of the friend is not intuitively presented, but rather intended in its "absence." The wish itself, which is grounded in this mere presentation, is, so

to speak, the hope for the actualization of this presented object. As such, Husserl claims that the wish begins to be satisfied when that wished-for-object actually does appear in person via an intuitive objectifying act of perception. The wish might be satisfied when the founding objectifying act is fulfilled, that is, if the friend's arrival is intuitively apprehended and intuitively presented. Further, I now take the position that my friend's arrival exists—that it is real. Husserl writes that, “the wish-intention can only find its fulfilling satisfaction, when the founding mere presentation of the wished-for-object goes over into a corresponding perception” (1986: 583; 1970: 217).

The satisfaction of a non-objectifying feeling intention is yet still fundamentally different from the fulfillment of an objectifying act. This is, in part, because feeling acts and their satisfaction are not rational in Husserl's first and second sense. As Melle (1990: 41) writes, “One cannot speak of reason in the Husserlian sense with respect to non-objectifying acts.”

Concerning the first sense, Husserl understands feeling intentions to be a-rational, simply because the satisfaction of the wish does not secure the truth of any situation. The satisfaction of the feeling intention does not reveal anything regarding veracity at all; the satisfaction has nothing to do with the truth or falsity (or the goodness or evilness) of the feeling. The wish is not proven correct (or good) via its satisfaction, but is instead only met and placated. There is no new “value” property revealed by the satisfied feeling, precisely because the feeling does not refer to anything and thus cannot disclose anything.

Husserl asserts that a feeling intention and its satisfaction are also not rational in the second sense, because I cannot execute and express categorial judgments about the objects of these feeling acts *and* because I cannot debate about the veracity of such judgments with others by appealing to an experienced satisfaction. On the one hand, as discussed at the end of section 1.1, Husserl simply concludes in *LU* that I cannot directly categorially reform a feeling act to execute any judgment about “value.” On the other hand, even if I could judge about value, I could not engage in rational debate with others concerning such categorial judgments. This is because I cannot appeal to the satisfaction of a feeling to rationally argue for any (hypothetical) judgment about value. Because the satisfaction of the value cannot reveal the truth of a situation, it has no rational persuasive function (Drummond 2018: 137–38; Melle 1990: 40).

## 2.

### 2.1. “Approval, Value, and Evidence”: The Problem

While Husserl studies the structure of all feeling intentions in *LU*, in the 1896/97 “Approval, Value, Evidence” (BWE), he instead focuses his analysis on the structure of one particular feeling act, namely, approval (*Billigung*). Husserl defines

approval—on the most elementary level—as a secondary act (a “secondary feeling,” Husserl 2020a: 262) which is directed at an (objectified, *objektiviert*) first level, that is, primary intention.<sup>10</sup> For example, I like or judge about the flower before me. The liking and judging are primary acts, which are directed towards a transcendent object. I may then approve (execute the secondary feeling directed at) the primary feeling or the primary judgment. Husserl writes that approval “goes to the primary feeling: the approval of pleasure, of joy, of hope, of fear, of wishing, etc.” (262). And later he concludes that it is possible for us to, “approve of judgments” (264).

While Husserl executes a lengthy analysis of approval throughout BWE, his study is guided by two core insights about approval. He recognizes that approval is a feeling that is not explicitly objectifying. And he sees that approval is yet still rational.

On the one hand, Husserl clearly defines approval as a feeling, which is not explicitly objectifying. More specifically, he states that approval is a feeling that is most similar to liking (Husserl 2020a: 262). Yet, approval is naturally not identical with liking. I can experience a liking without an approval and vice versa. I may like that you wish for this, even though I do not approve your wish. Or I may approve your wish, even though I dislike it. Husserl writes, “When we approve, there we sometimes also like the approved. At the same time, not always, when we have liked something, do we have to approve it. I can experience a liking of the pleasure of the wine, but I can disapprove this pleasure” (262).

On the other hand, Husserl describes the feeling of approval as rational in both senses of the term. Regarding the first sense, Husserl concludes that approval (when fulfilled) reveals the truth (the true, the real, the actual value) of the state of affairs. Correct evident approval shows the world as it really is regarding its value. Specifically, Husserl describes approval as the recognition of the primary act as rationally correct or as justified.<sup>11</sup> He states that when I approve of another act, I intend the objectified primary intention (feeling or judgment) as correct. Regarding primary feeling acts, Husserl writes, “Now, what does ‘approval’ mean? ‘I approve of your joy’ = ‘you are correct, to be joyful’. Does this mean that I am joyed, that I like it, that you are joyful? No.” And on the same page, he states, “I approve of a joy: You, you are joyed, that is correct” (2020a: 261). Husserl further concludes that my approval of a primary judgment is my recognition of (my intending of) the objectified judging act as true. He writes, “We present the judgment objectively, and an actually distinct act of approval, which refers to [the judgment], attaches to [the judgment]. It has a particular character, and it endows the judgment with a corresponding relative character, namely, that of evident truth” (267). The approval is, as Husserl writes, that which “endows” the judging act with the character of truth. In the second sense of the term—and while I will develop this in the next sub-sections—Husserl concludes that approvals are rational, because we can ra-

tionally judge about approved valued objects<sup>12</sup> and because we can have rational debates concerning such propositions. This is to say that the evidence, which a fulfilled approval yields, gives good grounds and can be employed in rational debates. This is also possible, because—as Husserl now claims—approvals can be directly categorized and values can be directly judged about.

The insight—that approval is a feeling, which is not explicitly objectifying *and* rational—does not represent the endpoint of Husserl’s study of approval, but instead the problem his analysis is meant to address. Indeed, it is when attempting to account for this observation that Husserl develops the original tenets of his philosophy of feeling acts, which will stand in contrast to the theory from *LU*. Specifically, this novel dilemma concerns how to abstractly understand the structure of approval. As outlined, Husserl identifies two structures of consciousness around this time: position-taking and apprehension. Because Husserl believes, in 1896/97, that the feeling of approval is rational, he cannot conclude, as he will do in 1901, that approval is structurally a (non-objectifying) position-taking, which is a-rational. At the same time, Husserl asserts that approval cannot be understood as an objectifying apprehension, because he believes that the feeling of approval, as not explicitly objectifying, does not refer to theoretical determinations, such as color or shape.

To summarize: Husserl sees that approval—as both non-objectifying and as rational—is not structured as a (non-objectifying) position-taking or as a (rational, objectifying) apprehension. As these are the only two structures of consciousness that Husserl had identified at that time, to correctly account for the structure of approval then, he must rethink his philosophy of the overarching structures of consciousness. Specifically, he concludes that approval—abstractly considered—is a novel third structure, which is yet similar to both apprehension and position-taking. This is to say—as I outline in what follows—Husserl introduces and relies on the method of a double analogizing in BWE to describe the structure of the feeling of approval. He first describes approval as similar to position-taking and second as analogous to apprehension.

## **2.2. “Approval, Value, and Evidence”: Husserl’s 1896/97 Solution**

To account for the fact that approval is not explicitly objectifying, Husserl analogizes approval to position-taking. On the simplest level, he concludes that approval, like position-taking as defined in 1901, also does not constitute any abstract material or theoretical correlate, “value.” There is no material or ouso-logical property which approval constitutes that can be called value (Husserl 2020a: 263). Instead, many of Husserl’s comments suggest that—just like doxic and feeling position-takings as they are described in 1901—approval seems to be just a stance that I take towards the object, *where this stance is motivated by the apprehended object* (that is, the primary intention; 262–64). For example,



I take an approving stance towards a primary feeling act, because it appears to me with certain traits, such as the moral, the good, and the noble. Husserl particularly focuses his analysis on the trait of nobility. He writes, “The noble pleasure, the noble hope, a moral [intention] will have in their ‘nobility’ a peculiar characteristic, because of which they are approved as valuable. If I experience the noble itself, then it is necessarily valued” (263). I can alternatively approve of a primary judging act, when that judging intention is experienced with evidence. The evidence of the judging act is that which motivates the approval of that judgment. A judging intention motivates my approval, when the judgment is evident, that is, when it is experienced as having the characteristics of clarity and insight. Husserl thus writes, “A judgment appears with the character of inner clarity, with the character of insight. And it is this, which underlies our approval. . . . A judgment is to be approved, because it is evident” (264–265).

To account for the rationality of approval, Husserl begins to analogize approval to rational apprehension, by claiming that approval can be fulfilled just as an objectifying act can. Similar to how an objectifying act is fulfilled when (abstractly considered) an intuitive apprehension fulfills a signitive apprehension, an approval receives its full justification when an evident approval “fulfills” a non-evident approval.<sup>13</sup> Husserl writes that there is an “authentic and fulfilling approval [that is] opposed to a vague feeling, which arises, for instance, in the ‘thought’ of the noble and is sometimes directed this way, at other times in another way” (2020a: 263). This fulfillment of the approval is not an a-logical satisfaction. Instead, when an approval is evident and fulfilled, that approval does reveal the true state of affairs; it shows the primary act to be truly valuable. While rational objectifying intuitive fulfillment lets the state of affairs appear as truthful, the rational fulfillment via “an evident approval lets the approved appear as truthfully valuable” (263). Because approval is rational, once an evident approval fulfills a vague approval, the approved object is finally shown to be really and actually valuable (in contrast, see Melle 2012: 55). Naturally, this is what it means to be rational in the first sense of the term.

Another important similarity to apprehension that Husserl identifies in BWE concerns potential objectification and categorialization (Husserl 2020a: 262–263). Husserl concludes that approval writes although it does not objectify and refer to some objective property “value” writes still does refer to something that is *objectifiable* and can be brought into the categorial realm. In other words, approval, like position-taking, does not objectify a theoretical property, but unlike position-taking as defined in 1901, does have a referent that is objectifiable. Husserl is thus claiming that the feeling of approval is not explicitly, but rather implicitly, objectifying. The approval refers to something implicit, which can be made explicitly objective via explication or apprehension. This objectified “value” can, like other objectified properties of an object, be categorially judged about. I can directly categorially reform my (objective) intending of the value of an object

to categorially judge about that value. Husserl straightforwardly writes, “On the basis of the approval, there arises the material (*sachliche*) predicate, ‘value’” (263).

These observations also show us why Husserl believes that the feeling of approval is rational in his second sense. Not only can I categorially judge about the (objectified) value of the approved object. Rather, I can also engage in rational debate about these values by appealing to my evident approvals, which can reveal the true *Wertverhalte*, as proof for my claims about values.

### 3.

#### **3.1. Importance: The Problem**

To cash out my technical historical analysis, in this section I show how Husserl’s insights from BWE can shift our understanding of the inception and trajectory of his phenomenology of feeling acts. While Husserl’s observations from *LU* are often taken to be the germ of his mature philosophy of feeling intentions, I reveal this to be an inaccurate picture of the evolution of his thought. Instead, it is Husserl’s conclusions from BWE that prefigure his later theory of feelings as it can be found in *Lectures, Ideas I*, and other manuscripts from *Studies*.

To be clear from the start, the discussion of this section does not uncover anything radically new about Husserl’s more mature philosophy of feelings. All of Husserl’s later insights that I examine below have been discussed extensively in the literature. Yet, when these more mature ideas are juxtaposed not only to *LU*, but also to BWE, it becomes evident that *LU* is fundamentally different from those later works, while BWE directly prefigures them.<sup>14</sup> All of this is to say that, by placing Husserl’s phenomenology of feelings in this new context, our understanding of the evolution of his theory is profoundly changed. Specifically, I will show in this section how BWE, and not *LU*, prefigures Husserl’s later theory of feeling acts in *two distinct ways*.

First, in BWE—but not in *LU*—Husserl discovers the key *problem* concerning feelings (the feeling of approval) that will continue to motivate his later phenomenology. In *LU*, Husserl presents a simpler picture of feelings. He concludes that there is a clean and clear distinction between non-objectifying a-rational feelings and objectifying rational intentions. In contrast, in BWE, Husserl recognizes that feelings are more complicated than this. He sees that feelings, while not (explicitly) objectifying, are still rational.

Husserl’s subsequent descriptive philosophy of feelings—and this is an important point—can be read as an attempt to harmonize these apparently disparate observations first presented in BWE, that feelings are not explicitly objectifying and that they are rational. Husserl continues to hold onto the idea that feelings do not constitute fully objective correlates. Feelings do not refer to theoretical or ontological correlates like colors or shapes. There is a fundamental difference

between the theoretical properties and the values of an object. In the 1913 *Ideas I*, for example, Husserl writes:

We must distinguish accordingly; the objects, the physical thing, the qualities, the predicatively formed affair complexes . . . on the other hand, the value-objects themselves, and the predicatively formed value-complexes themselves. (Husserl 1977: 220–21; Husserl 1983: 232)

In a 1909/10 manuscript from *Studies*, Husserl also affirms this point:

When we say, the red is a property of the object, or, the beauty is a property of the object, it is most clear, that these are fundamentally distinct kinds of “determinations.” One would say that the former belong to theoretical determinations (the real *sachlich*, real in the widest sense), the other belong to value-determinations. (Husserl 2020b: 1–2)

At the same time, throughout his middle period, Husserl still asserts that feelings are rational in both senses of the term. Feelings are rational in the first sense, as they offer a direct grasp of the value of the object to the clear mind (Husserl 1988: 86, 254, 262, 266, 279; Drummond 2018: 138–39; Fisette 2021: 224). And they are rational in the second sense, as I can execute judgments about values and can have rational (evidence-based) debates about values (Husserl 1987: 36–38; Jardine 2020: 57).

For example, Husserl begins a 1911 lecture from *Lectures*, by writing,

And, as everywhere, in the evaluating estimating, in the desiring, in the practical behavior, there is talk of reason and unreason, so in the judgments built on these there is talk of truth and falsity. (Husserl 1988: 169)

While Husserl’s conclusion—that feelings are rational—has been extensively outlined in the scholarship, Husserl’s line of reasoning here is perhaps captured best by Steven Crowell, who writes:

Husserl’s phenomenology of value affirms that feelings present themselves not as mute but as meaningful; undergoing is not simply a causal-psychological occurrence, but a kind of intentionality, which Husserl calls ‘deeming.’ As intentional, it necessarily involves a norm of intelligibility. But, second, he immediately construes this normativity as a kind of *rationality*—that is, as a ‘claim to objectivity’ and hence, in the last analysis, as a kind of cognition. (Crowell 2005: 103)

### **3.2. Importance: Husserl’s Mature Solution**

In Husserl’s writings from his middle period, this enigma—that feelings are not fully objectifying and yet are rational—is still formulated as a problem concerning the structure of the feeling act. More importantly, this difficulty is also confronted via the method of double analogizing, which Husserl first discovered in BWE,

but did not use in *LU*. As I show in what follows, the later Husserl first accounts for the non-objectifying nature of a feeling intention, by demonstrating how it is similar to a position-taking. And second, he describes the feeling act as rational, by analogizing it to apprehension.

Just as he had done in 1896/97, in his subsequent essays Husserl again describes feeling intentions as non-objectifying (or at least not explicitly objectifying) by analogizing these feeling acts to position-takings. For example, in *Lectures*, he writes that there is “the analogy for the intellectual position-taking of belief in the class of emotional and willing acts” (Husserl 2005: 58). And he concludes that “the class of emotional acts, the class of feelings, of desire, and willing, openly collapses into the closely related genera. Here there are new kinds of position-takings” (58–59). Similarly, in the 1913 *Ideas I*,<sup>15</sup> Husserl initially classifies feelings as position-takings. He writes that there are “the many different kinds of position-takings of belief, of supposing, of valuation [*Werthen*], and so on” (1977: 203; 1983: 214). At another point, he states that there are “‘actual position-takings,’ for example, the execution of a decision of a doubt, of a rejection, of a subject-positing and a predication on that basis, of a valuation, and of a valuation ‘for the sake of something else’” (1977: 214/1983: 225).

Husserl goes on to account for the rationality of feeling acts—in parallel to BWE—by describing them as similar to apprehensions. In *Lectures*, he observes that feelings refer to and constitute their own correlates, namely, values. He writes, “It seems that emotive-acts must irrefutably be taken as constituting acts for values” (1988: 277; Melle 1990: 41). Also, in *Ideas I*, Husserl asserts that, “new kinds of ‘apprehensions’ are additionally combined” with the feeling act” (1977: 267; 1983: 277). He even goes so far as to state there that the feeling intention refers to “a totally new dimension of sense” (1977: 267; 1983: 277). Importantly, Husserl claims that feeling intentions do not just constitute values, but that they can truthfully disclose the value of the object (this is what makes them rational in the first sense of the term; Husserl 2020b: 269–75). He concludes that there is something like axiological intuition, which provides a true grasp of the value of the object to the attentive mind (Fisette 2021: 224; Melle 2012: 69). It is for this reason that Husserl famously asserts that a feeling is a *Wertnehmen* (value-taking, feeling), which is the parallel of a *Wahrnehmen* (truth-taking, perception). Feelings reveal the true *Wertverhalt* just as intuitions reveal the true *Sachverhalt* (Drummond 2009: 365–66).

Husserl further develops his understanding of the intentionality of feeling acts by echoing two more insights he put forth in BWE. First, the axiological intuition reveals a non-objective and non-theoretical value. The value is not an objective primary or secondary quality (Husserl 1988: 262), but is rather something like a “quasi-object” (Crowell 2005: 111–12). Husserl simply writes in *Lectures*: “Valuing acts are not directed to objects, but rather to values. Values are not existing

things, values are not existent or non-existent referents, but rather belong in another dimension. *Wertverhalte* are not mere *Sachverhalte*” (1988: 340). Second, even though a value is not objective, it can be objectified via a doxic objectifying apprehension. In *Lectures*, Husserl affirms,

Values are something objectifiable, but values as objects are objects of certain objectifying acts, being constituted in the objectifications that build themselves on the evaluative acts, but not being constituted by the evaluative acts themselves. Evaluative acts as specific kinds of acts “direct” themselves towards something, but not towards objects; it belongs only to their essence that their referent can be objectifyingly grasped. Above all, it is to be said that the directing of oneself, which belongs to the peculiar essence of non-objectifying acts, is not a directing of oneself towards the objects of the presentations, perceptions, judgments, etc. on which they are based. (1988: 340)

Later, in *Ideas I*, Husserl describes how this occurs, by writing that for all emotional acts,

Each time it is a matter of the essentially possible turning of one’s regard and of the co-included positional and synthetical-doxic procedures for fashioning a new act on the basis of the feeling act in which we wholly live, so to speak, only emotionally, thus without actualizing the doxic potentialities—a new act in which the only potential emotional objectivity for the present is converted into an actual doxic and possibly expressly explicit objectivity. (Husserl 1977: 280, see also 259–61; 1983: 290, see also 270–71)

Critically, in his later works, just as in BWE, Husserl asserts that the possibility of objectification holds within it the possibility for categorialization. An objectified value-referent can be categorially reformed and judged about (see Rinofner-Kreidl 2013: 60, 71). In *Ideas I*, Husserl writes that when “correlates take on the form of being-modalities . . . ‘the liked,’ the ‘wished for,’ the ‘ought,’ etc. become predicable” (1977: 260; 1983: 270–71). And in a manuscript from *Studies*, he writes that “a *Wertverhalt* is itself a state of affairs, where the value affairs is logically grasped. The validity of the value relations is executed in value-statements, in value-judgments” (2020b: 308).

## CONCLUSIONS

This essay has revealed that BWE, and not *LU*, contains the seeds of Husserl’s more mature descriptive analyses of feeling acts from *Lectures*, *Ideas I*, and other manuscripts from *Studies*. The core problem, which Husserl confronts in his later writings, and the method of double analogizing, which he continued to employ to address that difficulty, were first discovered and outlined in BWE.

To ward off misinterpretation, I find it prudent to conclude by highlighting that this essay has presented a simplified version of the evolution of Husserl's phenomenology of feelings. It is not the case that Husserl, throughout his middle period, always developed his phenomenology of feelings in total alignment with BWE. Certainly, there are some essays from that time period, where Husserl reverts back to describing feelings in line with his conclusions from *LU* (see, for example, Husserl 2020: 369–77, 392–94; Melle 2012: 82–83). In other cases, Husserl tests out entirely different ways to think about the structure of feelings, which do not agree with the ideas from either *LU* or BWE (see Husserl 2020b: 395–405). Moreover, in his very late essays, Husserl presents a substantially new axiology and descriptive account of feelings, which are centered on the concepts of vocation and love (see Melle 2002: 241–47). In sum then, my analysis has smoothed over many of the swings and idiosyncrasies of Husserl's thought to present a more coherent picture of his evolution. Indeed, a comprehensive examination of the development of Husserl's phenomenology of feeling acts—and how BWE fits within that evolution—would be the task of a much larger project. It was instead the more modest goal of this paper to show that, in BWE, Husserl introduces the problems, methods, and terms, in the absence of which his phenomenology of feelings from his middle period appears inconceivable.

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## NOTES

1. I provide references to the corresponding English translation (Husserl 1970) where available. Quotations from the *Logical Investigations* always come from the first edition. All translations are mine.
2. Saulius Geniusas (2014: 9) writes, “It is only to be expected that the origin of the phenomenology of [feelings] would be identified with Husserl's *Logical Investigations*” (see also Geniusas 2020: 54). Quentin Smith (1976: 85) states, “Husserl's first description of feeling-acts can be found in Chapter Two of the Fifth Logical Investigation.” Further, Zhang Wei and Yu Xin (2009: 131) write, “The issue of intentional and non-intentional feelings [was] initially proposed by Husserl in . . . *Logical Investigations*.”
3. The only secondary literature that deals with BWE in any detail is—to my knowledge—Ullrich Melle's 2012 chapter. While Melle certainly does present some piercing insights, he only addresses BWE on two pages (Melle 2012: 63–64). Further, the majority of his analysis is quotations from Husserl's manuscript.
4. Of importance is that Husserl had already developed an inchoate account of feelings in his 1893 manuscript, “Notes towards a Theory of Attention and Interest” (Husserl 2005: 159–89). As I have published on that 1893 manuscript (Byrne 2022c) and on Husserl's 1901 account (Byrne 2023), I recommend reading this current text on BWE in companion with those other articles, as they together present a comprehensive

- picture of the evolution of Husserl's earliest philosophy of feelings. Concerning the 1893 manuscript, see also Breyer (2011: 156), Depraz (2004), Wehrle (2015: 51).
5. Throughout the essay, I employ the term "completion" to mean "satisfaction" or "fulfillment," as there is no third term in Husserl's early writings that encompasses both.
  6. This situation is naturally more complex, as an apprehension has three parts. Only the apprehending-matter of a cognitive intention determines which object is meant in and with its determinations (Husserl 1984: 622–23; 1970: 242). Additionally, the apprehending form dictates whether the object is represented in "an intuitive, signitive, or mixed 'fashion' [*Weise*]" (Husserl 1984: 624; 1970: 245). The third moment is the apprehended content, which, as the name suggests, is apprehended to intentionally represent the object (Husserl 1984: 420, 525; 1970: 116–17, 174). I will not discuss the function of these moments in further detail, but have done so in Byrne (2020).
  7. Because of the language used here, it must be emphasized that Husserl's 1901 description of this founding relationship does not establish a building-block theory of consciousness, as if a feeling-layer of consciousness would be placed on top of a distinct cognitive layer. While the founding relationship between feeling and cognition is one-sided, the "two" intentions are bound together and mutually determine each other. They are unified in a similar way to how other complex wholes are unified. Just as a text is a unity of the scribbles on the page and its meaning, and just as a person is a unity of body and consciousness, so also a feeling act is the unity of the objectification and the feeling position-taking, which mutually determine each other and interpenetrate one another. As such, the language of the "same" objectifying intention remaining after the feeling position-taking fades away must be understood in a highly qualified sense. Sonja Rinofner-Kreidl (2013: 60–64) meticulously outlines these important ideas.
  8. In *LU*, Husserl identifies a second kind of feeling, namely, feeling-sensations (1984: 406–10; 1970: 109–12). To maintain proper focus, this essay does not discuss Husserl's descriptions of these feelings, nor will I examine the evolution of Husserl's views concerning feeling-sensations (see, for example, Husserl 2020b: 32–34, 50–52, 59–66, 218–20, 420–21, 427–32). I instead refer the reader to Fiset (2021: 225–26), Jardine (2020: 54), Melle (2012: 56–57).
  9. Melle writes (1990: 40–41): "These non-objectifying acts—such is the conclusion of the sixth investigation—can only be expressed as the objects of an objectification reflexively aimed at them. . . . All value- and practical-determinations would therefore be apprehended as mere reflective determinations."
  10. Approval is not directed to the primary liking intention as it is straightforwardly executed. Rather, according to Husserl, for a primary act to be approved, it must first be objectified. Via a cognitive objectifying intention, I first intend the primary liking act as an object. It is this objectified primary feeling that I intend and approve as correct and evident (and not the lived-through act simpliciter). Husserl writes that, the approval always "refers to an objectively presented [intention]" (Husserl 2020a: 262).
  11. Husserl's conclusion—that approval is the ascription both of correctness and of value—appears to be the result of a confusion. In his final writing on the topic of

- approval (Melle 2012: 70), which is the 1911 “Approval as a Secondary Feeling, which is directed at Correctness: The Double Sense of Approval and Valuation” (Husserl 2020b: 313–319), Husserl does properly distinguish the intellectual judgment of correctness from the axiological approval of value (because the experience is correct) from each other. Concerning the 1911 manuscript, see section four of Byrne (2022c).
12. Approving—it must be emphasized—is not itself a categorial act. An approval itself is not a judgment, which ascribes the predicate “correctness” to the primary “liking act,” as subject. Rather, approval is simply a single-rayed intention of the liking act as evident and correct.
  13. Husserl (2020a: 263) writes that “The approval can be an evident approval or a non-evident approval.”
  14. In this section, I am not arguing that Husserl directly draws from BWE when composing his later essays on feelings, as if his subsequent analyses were only a working out of the insights already presented in 1896/97. Instead, my simpler argument is that BWE prefigures or foreshadows the critical insights from Husserl’s mature essays.
  15. While Husserl does discuss the structures of apprehensions and position-takings in 1913, he focuses his study on the noematic side of intentionality. Simply stated, he concludes that apprehensions constitute noematic-senses, and that position-takings refer to noematic-characteristics (Husserl 1977: 206–10, 238–43; 1983: 217–21, 249–53).

## ABBREVIATIONS

BWE	Husserl (2020a). “Billigung, Wert, und Evidenz” (Approval, Value, and Evidence).
<i>Lectures</i>	Husserl (1988). <i>Vorlesungen über Ethik und Wertlehre</i> (Lectures on Ethics and Value)
<i>LU</i>	Husserl (1984) and (1970). <i>Logische Untersuchungen</i> ( <i>Logical Investigations</i> ).
<i>Studies</i>	Husserl (2020b). <i>Studien zur Struktur des Bewusstseins</i> (Studies Concerning the Structures of Consciousness).

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