



# The Origin of the Phenomenology of Feelings

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## ABSTRACT

This paper accomplishes two goals. First, I present a distinct interpretation of the inception of the phenomenology of feelings. I show that Husserl's first substantial discussion of intentional and non-intentional feelings is not from his 1901 *Logical Investigations*, but rather his 1893 manuscript, "Notes towards a Theory of Attention and Interest". Husserl there describes intentional feelings as active and non-intentional feelings as passive. Second, I show that Husserl presents a somewhat unique account of feelings in "Notes", which is partly different from his later theories of feelings found in *Lectures on Ethics and Value Theory* and *Studies Concerning the Structures of Consciousness*. In contrast to those mature writings, in "Notes", Husserl describes intentional feelings while avoiding cognitivism and he analyses non-intentional feelings without employing the content-apprehension schema. On this basis, I argue that "Notes" is an important untapped resource for constructing original phenomenologies of feelings.

## 1. Introduction

In his *Lectures on Ethics and Value Theory*, Edmund Husserl asserts that his investigation of feelings confronts some of the "most difficult problems" in all of philosophy (Hua = Husserliana XXVIII, 253)<sup>1</sup> and that it explores the "darkest part of the world of knowledge" (Hua XXVIII, 255). These statements are no exaggeration on Husserl's part. Despite the great number of pages that he would dedicate to describing feelings, he never arrived at a fully satisfactory account of them (See Melle 2012, 98). Even though Husserl's theory of the intentionality of feelings remained unsettled, it has become one of the most studied elements of his philosophy in the contemporary literature. Further, continental philosophers today still employ Husserl's insights as the foundation for their own phenomenologies of feelings,<sup>2</sup> such that a change in our understanding of Husserl's observations shifts the terms and methods of ongoing debates.

While many different interpretations of Husserl's theory have emerged over the course of the last 120 years, it has been generally accepted that he first began his rigorous study

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<sup>1</sup> I provide references to the corresponding English translations where available, following a slash after the German pagination.

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, Crowell 2020; Drummond 2009, 365–369; Ferencz-Flatz 2022; Laasik 2018, 747–749; Summa 2015; Rinofner-Kreidl 2014.

of feelings in section 15 of his 1901 “Fifth Logical Investigation” (Hua XIX/1970. Hereafter, *Investigations*). One prominent thinker who endorses this position is Saulius Geniusas, who wrote that “It is only to be expected that the origin of the phenomenology of [feelings] would be identified with Husserl’s *Logical Investigations*. After all, in §15 of the Fifth Investigation we find the first analysis [of feelings] that identifies itself as phenomenological” (Geniusas 2014, 9. See also, Geniusas 2020, 54). While Geniusas’ writings certainly present some piercing insights concerning the development of Husserl’s thought, it is a central contention of this paper that Geniusas – and with him, the vast majority of contemporary commentators<sup>3</sup> – begin their study of Husserl’s philosophy of feelings much too late. As a result, a distorted view of the origin and history of the phenomenology of feelings has propagated.

In contrast to those analyses, the first goal of this essay is to critically engage with some of Husserl’s earliest manuscripts to reveal that he proffers a philosophy of feelings at a much earlier date than recognized. Specifically, I show that Husserl’s often ignored 1893 manuscript, “Notes towards a Theory of Attention and Interest” (Hua XXXVIII, 159–189. Hereafter, *Noten*) is his earliest effort at a philosophy of feelings.<sup>4</sup> By unpacking Husserl’s insights from that manuscript, I present a novel picture of the inception and trajectory of the phenomenology of feelings. I reveal that Husserl develops an account of intentional feelings as active and non-intentional feelings as passive, which prefigures (while still being distinct from) his later analyses of feelings. I accomplish this first goal in the three following sections of the paper. In section two, I examine Husserl’s theory of intentional feelings as active and in section three, I review his discussion of non-intentional feeling states as passive. I then synthesize those foregoing insights in section four, by investigating Husserl’s account of how one object can both motivate feeling states and be the referent of a feeling act.

This essay not only uncovers the origin of the phenomenology of feelings. Rather, I also demonstrate why *Noten* is worthy of study today. Specifically, I show that – even though Husserl’s 1893 insights prefigure his later philosophy of feelings – *Noten* is

<sup>3</sup> For other examples of scholars who conclude that Husserl started his analysis of feelings in the *Investigations*, Quentin Smith writes, “Husserl’s first description of feeling-acts can be found in Chapter Two of the Fifth Logical Investigation” (Smith 1976, 85). Further, Zhang Wei and Yu Xin write, “[T]he issue of intentional and non-intentional feelings [was] initially proposed by Husserl in section 15 of investigation V in *Logical Investigations* ...” (Wei & Xin 2009, 131). Additionally, I highlight that Geniusas only claims that Husserl first addressed the feeling of pain in 1901. Regardless, the point still stands that in his many different essays that explore Husserl’s phenomenology of feelings, Geniusas never mentions the 1893 text, such that he *de facto* treats the *Investigations* as the origin of the phenomenology of feelings.

<sup>4</sup> Even though there are several recent published works, wherein the author mentions that Husserl develops a theory of feelings prior to the *Investigations*, there are still no texts that are exclusively dedicated to examining *Noten*. To provide some examples: James Jardine writes that Husserl’s description of “the peculiar character of emotional experience can already be found in manuscripts dating from the early 1890s” (Jardine 2020, 53). In fact, Jardine refers specifically to *Noten* as Husserl’s earliest analysis of feelings. Yet, Jardine does not discuss the contents of *Noten*, but instead immediately moves on to explore Husserl’s theory from the Fifth Investigation. Similarly, Sonja Rinofner-Kreidl claims that Husserl develops an account of feelings and values in research manuscripts prior to 1901. However, just like Jardine, she does not examine any of these manuscripts, but rather also turns to explore section 15 of the Fifth Logical Investigation (Rinofner-Kreidl 2014, 193). Denis Fiset also discusses Husserl’s insights from *Noten*, but does so sparingly, because his article is dedicated to examining Husserl’s overarching account of feelings and moods (Fiset 2021, 226–228). Similar to Fiset, in his 2012 work, Ulrich Melle only briefly focuses on *Noten*, because he also seeks to elucidate the whole evolution of Husserl’s philosophy of feelings (Melle 2012, 59–62). Ignacio Ramirez provides one of the more extensive investigations of *Noten* (Ramirez 2015, 95–98). Yet, his analysis of the 1893 manuscript still serves as an introduction to his more robust examination of Husserl’s later account of moods. Finally, Antonio Ziri6n Quijano’s analysis of *Noten* is most helpful (Quijano 2018, 43–45). He too, however, quickly turns to examine the *Investigations*.

still distinct from Husserl's mature examinations in interesting ways. I accordingly gesture at the fact that an original phenomenology of feelings could be developed by working from Husserl's 1893 theory, in distinction from – as has often been done – his subsequent works, such as the Fifth Investigation, *Lectures on Ethics and Value Theory* (Hua XXVIII. Hereafter, *Lectures*), and his 1909–1914 *Studies concerning the Structures of Consciousness* (Hua XLIII/2. Hereafter, *Studies*). *Noten* is different from these other works, not only because it avoids the tendency towards cognitivism present in most of Husserl's mature investigations of feelings. Rather, Husserl's 1893 observations are also – in contrast to his later writings – *not* grounded in his content-apprehension schema. In sum, this analysis reveals that *Noten* can function as a distinct scaffolding for constructing an original phenomenology of feelings.

## 2. Intentional Feelings Acts

In *Noten*, Husserl starts by discussing three elementary tenets of his philosophy of feelings. First, in general agreement with Franz Brentano (Brentano 1874, 257/2009, 152), Husserl *initially* concludes that all feelings are intentional. Feelings refer to contents. Husserl writes that feeling intentions, like all psychic acts, “are distinguished by the fact that they have an intentional content, which can either be really inherent in them during their entire duration or also during a part of it or can be merely dispositionally excited in general. The intentional content is that content towards which the act is directed” (Hua XXXVIII, 179). Husserl advances this idea by concluding that these acts are “unthinkable” without their referents (Hua XXXVIII, 179. Compare Hua XIX, 404/1970, 108). Second, in further concurrence with Brentano (Brentano 1894, 311–312/2009, 185–186), Husserl characterizes feeling acts as positive or negative evaluations of referents. As such, he divides feeling intentions into the two opposing groups of liking and disliking (*Gefallen und Missfallen*). For the former, Husserl provides the examples of approval (*Billigung*),<sup>5</sup> positive valuation (*Schätzung*), love, and preferring. Cases of the latter would be disapproval (*Missbilligung*), negative valuation (*Abschätzung*), hate, and disregarding (*Hintansetzung*. Hua XXXVIII, 178). Third, Husserl puts forward the conclusion that – regardless of whether the act is a positive liking or a negative disliking – any feeling intention is active and reactive, not passive or ceding (*gebend*). He writes that in the case of feeling acts, “there is a new character, an aiming, a being-active (*Aktivsein*)” (Hua XXXVIII, 177).<sup>6</sup>

These three insights, while central to Husserl's 1893 philosophy of feelings, concern those experiences in abstraction. To properly account for the intentionality of feelings, Husserl recognizes that he must study them as they actually occur in the larger context of concrete consciousness. Specifically, he examines the intentionality of feelings in whole experiences, which also have cognitive components; He investigates the

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<sup>6</sup> At the same time, Husserl's 1893 account diverges from Brentano's theory in three noteworthy ways. First, while Brentano asserts that feelings can be directed at the secondary object given via inner perception, Husserl instead concludes that feelings refer to what Brentano calls the “primary object” of the act (See Brentano 1894, 179–181/2009, 127–129; Jacqueline 2004, 100–103; Mulligan 2004, 70–72). Second, Husserl claims that feeling acts are either positively or negatively valenced, while Brentano sees that a feeling can also be indifferent (See Chisholm 1966, 165–166). Finally, Husserl distinguishes feelings from volitional intentions, whereas Brentano famously groups them together (Brentano 1894, 333–335/2009, 199–200).

relationship between the feeling part of the act and the cognitive element of the act (the feeling partial intention and the cognitive partial intention).<sup>7</sup>

At first, here in 1893, Husserl concludes that these two partial acts together can refer to one referent, but that they each have a different referential responsibility. The cognitive intention – which he here calls “interest” (*Interesse*)<sup>8</sup> – refers to (is directed at) what he will later call the theoretical object (See Hua XLIII/2, 3–4). In contrast, the feeling refers by colouring (*tingieren*, Hua XXXVIII, 163; *farben*, 166. See Quijano 2018, 43–45; Ramirez 2015, 96) the referent of interest. That is, the feeling introduces an affective ‘hue’. Husserl emphasizes that one must not take this ‘colouring’ to be the adding of another theoretical property to the object. The feeling rather, “brings in a variation in another dimension, which is entirely incommensurable with the course of understanding” (Hua XXXVIII, 164). In line with this, the feeling does not alter the referent in such a way that it would become unrecognizable as the same referent. Using the example of a text, he writes that, “We understand the word equally in affection as outside of it” (Hua XXXVIII, 164).

While these conclusions could give the reader the impression that Husserl privileges cognitive intentions over feeling acts in *Noten*, upon closer examination, such an interpretation becomes untenable. To show why that reading is misguided, in what follows, I discuss three ways Husserl further and more clearly works out his conclusions about the relationship between partial feeling acts and partial cognitive intentions.

First, even though Husserl’s claims might suggest that a feeling presupposes a cognition – as it metaphorically colours the referent of the latter – he repeatedly emphasizes that they mutually presuppose each other. There is no pure intellectual interest devoid of any feeling and no feeling act without any intellectual or cognitive component. Husserl writes that, “the intellectual and emotional sides [of consciousness] can only occur in relatively pure forms. An intellectual state is perhaps never entirely free of emotional colouring and vice versa” (Hua XXXVIII, 164).

Second, the foregoing observations might also incorrectly hint that Husserl believes that feelings are grounded in cognitive interests. Yet, Husserl never describes the relationship between feelings and interests on the model of grounding in 1893, as he rather only characterizes the relationship between them by discussing their “domination”. In *Noten*, Husserl describes domination by using a metaphor, stating that the dominating partial act takes up “more room” in consciousness, while the partial acts that are

<sup>7</sup> My use of the term “cognitive” in this essay is largely equivalent with Husserl’s use of the term, “objectifying” and “doxic” (in both its positive and neutral sense). Cognitive or objectifying components of the act are accordingly non-axiological and non-volitional moments of the intention. To be emphasized is that not all cognitive and objectifying acts are categorial. Indeed, for Husserl, in 1901, only judgments are categorial. My perception of the red ball is not a categorially structured intention, where I am intuiting the red as a predicate of the ball-subject. Even naming, Husserl claims, in the *Investigations*, is not yet a categorial (*kategorial*) act, as it does not have the categorial (*kategorisch*) subject-predicate structure, which all categorial acts (judgments) have (Cf. Hua XIX, 484–495/1970, 152–157; ). While the mature Husserl almost never describes simple perception and imagination as categorial (rather, he later defines them as pre-categorial, as they are structured by types), he does conclude in his *Revisions to the Sixth Logical Investigation* that naming is a categorial act (Hua XX-2, 269–272; ).

<sup>8</sup> Husserl here describes cognitive interests more specifically as *attentive* objectifying (partial) intentions, which includes theoretical acts (Hua XXXVIII, 167. See the previous footnote seven above). An interest can accordingly be an attentive perception, imagination, or judgment. On the one hand, Husserl is thus here using the term ‘interest’ in a fundamentally different manner than Brentano does (See Brentano 1874, 263/2009, 153). On the other hand, Husserl’s 1893 understanding of the term interest is distinct from his grasping of it in his later works. For example, he defines interest as the striving or tendency towards the next consciousness of the object in *Experience and Judgment* (Husserl 1939, 87/1973, 82). These terminological circumstances consistently held in mind, there is no danger of confusion for the reader.

dominated take up less room (Hua XXXVIII, 165). In Husserl's later terminology, the dominating act can be understood as the 'ego act' or the act that is 'lived in' (Hua IV, 173–185/1982, 183–194; Husserl 1939, 83–84/1973, 79–80). For Husserl then, a cognitive act or a feeling intention can dominate, where I respectively live in the intellect or the affect. In other words, in *Noten*, Husserl never proposes a vertical relationship between feelings and cognitive interests, where one stands below the other as its foundation. Instead, he only discusses these partial acts on a horizontal continuum, where – at one end of the continuum – a partial feeling intention could *ideally* become fully dominant or – at the other end – the partial cognitive intention could *ideally* become entirely dominant.

Third, because Husserl concludes that I can still be interested in the same theoretical object when the partial feeling act changes or rescinds, one might think that he believes that the partial feeling act and the partial cognitive intention are only externally linked to each other. The two would then, even in their 'co-execution', be cleanly distinguishable from each other. If this were the case, I could switch from loving an object to hating it, where that change in feeling would not alter my experience of the cognized referent. Yet, Husserl does (and always will) deny an additive model of consciousness (See Rinofner-Kreidl 2014, 61). He instead affirms that a feeling and an interest *co-determine* each other as *moments* of one whole intention (Hua XXXVIII, 164). As co-determining moments, any change to the cognitive interest or to the feeling effects its respective counterpart. Such novel alterations transform the experienced whole in a similar way to how the introduction of a new word can shift the entire meaning of a sentence. Otherwise stated, the Husserl of 1893 recognizes that feelings and cognitions fuse together. When Husserl translates these insights to the objective register, he concludes that the affective colouring is not externally added to the theoretical object. The colouring is "not a dress, which is pulled over the interest" (Hua XXXVIII, 164. See Ramirez 2015, 94). The affective colour does not merely adorn the theoretical object, but is so-to-speak fused with it (Quijano 2018, 43–44).

While these foregoing observations about feeling acts and cognitive interests do help clarify the intentionality of the former, Husserl sees that there are further key insights about the intentionality of feelings that can be uncovered by examining the role that feeling acts play in the establishment of a mood (*Stimmung*). Importantly, this study of feelings and moods will also motivate a shift in Husserl's general understanding of feelings.

Husserl begins this analysis by observing that a mood can emerge over the course of a temporal duration. If a feeling endures for an extended period of time, it is possible that it can become a mood. In this case, the feeling acts, "go over into a disposition" or "transition into an aroused disposition" (Hua XXXVIII, 176. See Fisette 2021, 227). Critically, Husserl claims that via this transition, the intentional feeling loses its intentionality; it becomes a non-intentional mood. He asserts that a mood, strictly considered, does not refer to a particular object (Hua XXXVIII, 166). Yet, moods do motivate other intentional interests or feelings, because moods are self-promoting and self-reinforcing. Husserl employs numerous examples to prove this point. For one instance, he discusses how, when I am experiencing the feeling of sadness because a family member has died, this feeling of sadness can go over into the mood of grief. While the object of my sad feeling is the death, the resultant dispositional mood of grief is not directed to a particular

object (Hua XXXVIII, 176). Instead, the mood passively regulates interest by motivating me to be interested in unlikable objects or events, which will continue and augment the grief. The mood involves a tendency to be interested in contents that will prolong my grief, as they will upset me. Husserl writes that, because of the mood, “He [the griever] does not grieve the objects he is looking at now, yet he may now be inclined to notice what is wrong with them and anything that is suitable for nourishing (*nähren*) his grief” (Hua XXXVIII, 176. See Quijano 2018, 45).

Having so defined moods, Husserl then contrasts them to feeling acts. However, upon doing so, he begins to doubt a grounding tenet of his analysis of feelings thus far. While he has held that feelings are intentional, like interests, he now entertains the possibility that feelings might be non-intentional, like moods (Hua XXXVIII, 177). Husserl’s decision concerning this alternative – to take feelings as intentional or as non-intentional – is critical for the trajectory of his philosophy. He wavers back and forth for some time concerning the possible alternatives, before initially concluding that, “I cannot grasp the matter correctly” (Hua XXXVIII, 177) and observes that all of his possible solutions “do not appear to be correct” (Hua XXXVIII, 178).

### 3. Non-Intentional Feeling States

Despite his frustrations, Husserl still pushes forward with his investigation concerning feelings and their intentionality. To do so, he presents a new account of feelings, which is not a departure from, but rather an expansion of his analysis thus far. He concludes that in addition to intentional feeling acts, there are also non-intentional feeling states (See Melle 2012, 60). There are *both* intentional *and* non-intentional feelings. The latter, Husserl concludes, do not refer at all; “they do not aim at anything, regardless of the kind of object” (Hua XXXVIII, 179). The feeling states – which Husserl divides into states of pleasure (*Lust*) and displeasure (*Unlust*) – simply are not intentionally directed.<sup>9</sup> In sum, Husserl will largely maintain his outlined conclusions about referential feeling acts, while now executing a novel study of the non-referentiality of feeling states. Specifically, he investigates two different ways we can passively undergo feeling states.

First, Husserl recognizes that we can undergo a feelings state, which – although it never has an *intentional* relationship to an object – *can* have *some* relation to an object. A feeling state can be passively aroused by the object, where the feeling then “fills my soul” (Hua XXXVIII, 179). Husserl clarifies this point by presenting some conclusions regarding how the object can passively arouse a feeling state of pleasure in me. He writes that, “The object is the ground of the feeling [state], it gives us the pleasure; the pleasure radiates from it, and I am not turned towards the object, as I am with the will” (Hua XXXVIII, 179). In this example, the subject is not actively executing a feeling intention, but is rather *passively* affected by the presentation of the object. He writes that the experience of arousal is “passive, not active (*passiv, nicht aktiv*),” (Hua XXXVIII, 179).<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> As other concrete examples of pleasure and displeasure, Husserl lists courage (*Mut*), despondency (*Verzagen*), joy (*Freude*), and sadness (*Trauer*) (Hua XXXVIII, 179). To be noted is that Husserl is not fully consistent in his classification of these experiences.

<sup>10</sup> At one point in the manuscript, Husserl executes a non-descriptive analysis of feeling states; He looks at the grammar of the expressions we use to talk about feeling states, as a clue for understanding the nature of their passivity. With regards to pleasurable joy, Husserl writes, “How does it stand, for example, with joy? That is passive (*Das ist passiv*). Something inspires joy in me (*Etwas erfreut mich*). (‘I am myself joyed about something’ (*‘Ich freue mich über etwas’*) is

In fact, he highlights this passivity by describing the feeling state as an undergoing or a suffering (*Erleiden*).<sup>11</sup>

Second, he observes that pleasure or displeasure *can* have *no* relation to an arousing object or objects. For Husserl, “A state without an arousing object truly does not appear absurd. Apparently, such cases do not occur infrequently” (Hua XXXVIII, 180). Husserl advances this insight by claiming that, even in those experiences where a feeling state is first aroused by an object, it is possible that the arousing object could disappear, while the feeling state (*not* a mood) endures.<sup>12</sup> This non-intentional state here persists without any (intentional) relationship to an object.

In sum, Husserl proposes that both kinds of feeling states – those related to an arousing object and those not – should never be characterized as intentional. Instead, he describes these experiences by employing the language of “tuning”. He states that when I am in the feeling state of displeasure, I am “out of tune” (*verstimmt*). Unfortunately, Husserl does not further clarify the metaphor of tuning in the manuscript.

#### 4. Feeling Intentions and Feeling States

To conclude and complete his analysis of feelings in 1893, Husserl synthesizes his insights to describe how the two kinds of feelings can be concretely experienced together. While Husserl employs numerous examples to clarify how he understands the coordination of feeling intentions and feeling states, I focus here on a more limited set of cases.

Husserl begins by investigating the feeling intention of love and the feeling state of pleasure. At first, he simply emphasizes and demonstrates that these two are distinct from each other and he does so, because he believes that other scholars have often incorrectly equated them – or they have at least taken pleasure to be the sole measure of love (Hua XXXVIII, 181). To reveal the divisions between love and pleasure, Husserl executes a two-stage analysis. First, he performs a rather un-phenomenological investigation of how we employ the term love in everyday language.<sup>13</sup> He sees that we talk of love in a fundamentally different way than we talk of pleasure. He writes, “Love can also be an act, and that does not mean merely an act of pleasure. ‘I love you’ does not mean the same as: you are my pleasure; Your existence, your appearance, arouses pleasure in me, or I am so disposed for it to be aroused” (Hua XXXVIII, 181).<sup>14</sup> Second, Husserl

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expressed admittedly in the active form, but in the reflexive form. In any case, there is no presentation of a goal, but rather just the presentation of the arousing object” (Hua XXXVIII, 181).

<sup>11</sup> This description leaves the distinction between this first kind of feeling state and moods most unclear; Husserl has stated that both are non-intentional, yet have certain relationships to objects. Unfortunately, it is only in subsequent works that Husserl would come to pinpoint the divisions between them.

<sup>12</sup> Husserl emphasizes that any feeling state that is not related to an arousing object, is also not related “to everything and anything” (Hua XXXVIII, 180). He writes that this is simply “not the correct way to grasp the state of affairs” (Hua XXXVIII, 180). Rather, my feeling state is just not related to any arousing objects or to any field of experience.

<sup>13</sup> This method is un-phenomenological or rather, non-descriptive, because Husserl is seeking to uncover the essence of love by examining the word’s meaning, which is given to the word by a signitive or inauthentic act. Instead, this goal could only be accurately accomplished by first looking at the “things themselves” as they are given in intuitive or authentic acts.

<sup>14</sup> In *Noten*, Husserl recognizes that there is a second meaning of the word love. In certain cases, when I express, “I love ... this means, I am disposed to experience joy” about this or that (Hua XXXVIII, 181). For example, when I say, “I love research”, I may not mean that I am currently executing a feeling intention that approves of the research I am carrying out (although this could be the case), but rather that I am prone to be joyed when studying Husserl’s manuscripts. Husserl’s recognition of the fact that one word can have two different expressed meanings will be important for his later philosophy of language. See Hua XIX, 51–54/1970, 196–198; .

again highlights the differences between love and pleasure by drawing from his foregoing analyses of the activity and passivity of the different feelings. He reiterates that love is an activity (*Betätigung*) that refers to an object. Love is the positive evaluation of the other as my beloved. Pleasure, in contrast, is the passive experience that can emerge with or without an arousing object.

After discussing these divisions via linguistic and phenomenological studies, Husserl dedicates himself to the central task of describing how love and pleasure can be linked. The grounding insight of this study is that love cannot be executed on its own. Rather, pleasure is the prerequisite for the act of loving, such that the former always accompanies the latter (The reverse does not obtain – pleasure can be experienced on its own. See Hua XXXVIII, 181). He writes that love is “directed to an object, and really towards the object, which arouses the pleasure. The pleasure is a presupposition, and in a certain way the foundation” for the love (Hua XXXVIII, 181). To be certain, active love does not refer to the passively experienced pleasure itself (*a la* Brentano). Rather, love is directed at the object that passively arouses the pleasure.

Equally so, Husserl sees that the object that passively arouses displeasure can become the object of active hate. He writes, “The object that arouses the displeasure is the goal, is the intentional object of hate” (Hua XXXVIII, 181). Husserl then summarizes these points by writing, that when I execute the intention of love or hate that refers to the object that is respectively arousing pleasure or displeasure, “something new comes to pleasure and displeasure. Love, one could possibly say, is the attraction grounded in pleasure, and hate is the repulsion grounded in displeasure” (Hua XXXVIII, 181).

Husserl also investigates the coordination of feeling states and feeling intentions by describing the experiences of hope and fear; He looks at cases where I hope or fear the coming-to-pass of some event. In line with the above outlined conclusions, Husserl states that in both cases of hope and fear, one must first separate the state from the act, before it becomes possible to properly understand the whole complex experience. Concerning hope, Husserl begins by writing that, “the supposition (*Vermutung*) of the wished-for (*Erwünschten*) arouses joy” (Hua XXXVIII, 181). I only execute the act of hope; however, when I direct myself towards the supposed event and desire its coming-to-pass. Husserl writes that this desire is, “in its own particular way, tinged by the supposition; it has lost its longing and anxiety (*Langen und Bangen*) and it is lit up by its joyful supposition” (Hua XXXVIII, 181). Equally so, in fear, there is the supposition of the coming-to-pass of an event. My fear is the desire that this event does not come to pass. The fear specifically refers to and colours that supposed event, which has passively aroused displeasure.

## 5. Importance

This essay not only uncovers the origin of the phenomenology of feelings. Rather, in this final section of the essay, I demonstrate why this 1893 text – even though it prefigures much of Husserl’s mature conclusions about feelings – also represents a distinct theory of feelings, such that *Noten* can function as a unique foundation for constructing an original phenomenology of feelings. While many phenomenologists and continental thinkers have – either directly or indirectly – employed Husserl’s theory of feelings from section 15 of the Fifth Logical Investigation as a part of the foundation for their own



analyses of feelings (see note two above), I hope to show that a different path is also available. By taking *Noten* as a bedrock for the construction of a new phenomenology of feelings, a unique way to think about feelings can emerge. This discussion is broken into two sections.

365 First, I show that Husserl's description of *feeling intentions* from *Noten* is – in part – different from his discussions concerning *feeling intentions* from his mature writings, as the latter promote a form of cognitivism, which I define as the tendency to privilege cognitions over feelings. There are two pertinent tenets of Husserl's cognitivism. Husserl presents the first tenet in the 1901 *Investigations* and he – with some exceptions – continues to uphold that doctrine in his subsequent works. Husserl introduces the second  
370 tenet only after the 1907 transcendental turn.

The first tenet, which Husserl puts forward in 1901, is that cognitions are structurally more fundamental than feeling acts: He concludes that there is a one-sided grounding relationship between cognitions and feeling intentions. When an objectifying cognitive  
375 intention is joined by the non-objectifying feeling act (quality), the latter is entirely dependent on the former, while the reverse does not obtain.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, he concludes that concrete cognitive acts can be executed without any accompanying feelings (or volitional qualities) at all. The latter is an unnecessary accessory to the former.<sup>16</sup> Stated otherwise, Husserl concludes that the cognitive intention is structurally primary, as it is the foundation of feeling qualities, which can shift or disappear without changing the  
380 essence of the underlying cognitive act. The cognitive moment of the act is the principal and necessary component, in contrast to the non-essential feeling. As Rinofner-Kreidl writes, "Husserl's distinction between objectifying [cognitive] acts and non-objectifying [feeling] acts, which gives the cognitive accomplishments of consciousness a clear primacy, possesses a doubtful intellectualism" (Rinofner-Kreidl 2013, 67).  
385

In his later lectures and manuscripts, Husserl would adopt a second tenet, which further privileges cognitions over feelings (see Melle 2012, 96–99). He not only often continues to support the first doctrine – that cognitions are structurally more fundamental, as they are the foundation for feeling acts – but introduces the second guiding tenet, which also favours cognitions. Specifically, Husserl takes cognitive acts as the 'standard'  
390 kind of conscious experience and attempts to account for feeling acts on that model: He describes feelings as analogous to cognitive intentions.<sup>17</sup>

For a concrete example, a central conclusion of *Lectures on Ethics and Value Theory*, is that there is a direct analogy between feeling intentions and cognitive acts. Husserl  
395 describes a feeling on the model of a perception (*Wahrnehmung*) as a kind of value-

<sup>15</sup> In 1901, Husserl believes that feelings refer to the object, which is intended via the cognition, in a new way, but they do not add any new determination or 'value'-property to that object. When I execute a feeling act, I am simply taking a new stance towards the same cognitively-constituted 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).  
400

<sup>16</sup> In his subsequent writings, Husserl would disavow this idea, that a cognitive act can be executed on its own, without feeling and willing. He recognizes that all three components are present in every act of consciousness. Stated in Husserlian jargon, he saw that feelings and the will are moments of acts, not pieces.

<sup>17</sup> In practice, Husserl's 'accomplishment' of this goal amounts to a violent subsumption of affection into cognition. As Steven Crowell writes, Husserl's conclusions about feelings "are not derived from a phenomenology of the 'other dimension' of the passion itself, but from the analogy" (Crowell 2005, 107). At another point, he affirms that the value, which feelings ostensibly refer to, as they are conceived of by Husserl, "are theoretical postulates demanded by the analogical project ... they are not phenomenological data derived from the meaning of affective life itself" (Crowell 2005, 112).  
405

ception (*Wertnehmung*). In the same way that a perception reveals an existent object, the value-ception refers to a value characteristic (or more accurately, as Crowell writes, the value is a “quasi-object”. Crowell 2005, 112).<sup>18</sup> *This conclusion eliminates the critical distinction between cognitive objectifying intentions and evaluative non-objectifying acts* (Hua XXVIII, 323–333), *as the latter are also now taken to be (potentially) objectifying*. As objectifying, feeling acts must also be implicitly cognitive (implicitly doxic) because – as Husserl will claim throughout most of his life – only cognitive moments of consciousness can be responsible for constituting objects and their properties (See Melle 2012, 99).<sup>19</sup> In other words, by accounting for feeling acts on the model of cognitive intentions, Husserl has partly disregarded the structural distinctiveness of the former, so that he can describe them as structurally analogous to the latter. The alterity of feelings is reduced to their sameness with cognitions.

In the manuscripts from *Studies*, Husserl often further develops the second tenet that typifies his cognitivism – that feelings are just analogical to cognitions. For example, while Husserl concluded in *Lectures*, that feelings are structured like perceptions, in *Studies*, he advances that doctrine, by claiming that feelings are validated in the same way as cognitive perceptions. He nearly eliminates all structural distinctions between feeling intentions and cognitive acts when he concludes that – in a similar manner to how a partial empty intention of a perception is fulfilled via the intuitive perceptual intention – a wish is an empty feeling intention that is fulfilled by an ‘intuitive’ joy in the emergence of the wished-for event (Hua XLIII/2, 287–292. See, in contrast, Hua XIX, 465–467/1970, 142–143. See).<sup>20</sup>

In *Noten*, in contrast, there is little trace of these two tenets of Husserl’s later cognitivism. Concerning the first doctrine, the Husserl of 1893 concludes that the cognitive act is not structurally privileged over the feeling, as it does not essentially serve as the ground for the feeling intention. He observes that a cognitive interest can ground a feeling *and* that a feeling act can ground a cognitive intention (Hua XXXVIII, 163). Moreover, as quoted, Husserl observes in *Noten* that intellectual and emotional elements of consciousness “can only occur in relatively pure forms. An intellectual state is perhaps never entirely free of emotional colouring and vice versa” (Hua XXXVIII, 164). Regarding the second tenet of Husserl’s cognitivism, he does not try – in 1893 – to understand feelings by taking them as simply analogical to objectifying interests, but rather emphasizes the uniqueness of feelings. Husserl also does not hint that feelings can be verified or fulfilled in the same way as cognitions. Accordingly, as *Noten* represents a non-cognitivist and thus distinct philosophy of feeling acts, by working from the insights from the

<sup>18</sup> Husserl’s adoption of the analogy between cognitions and feeling acts allows for him to establish – as Brentano had attempted to do previously (See Chisholm 1966) – a formal axiology that parallels formal logic (Hua XXVIII, 36–68. See ).

<sup>19</sup> Husserl echoes this sentiment from *Lectures* in the 1913 *Ideas I*. He writes, “Every act, or every act-correlate, includes in itself, implicitly or explicitly, something ‘logical’ ... *Even emotional and volitional acts – are ‘objectifying’, ‘constituting’ objects originaliter* and therefore necessary sources of different regions of being and their respective ontologies” (Hua III-1, 272/1983, 282).

<sup>20</sup> Husserl presents an *even more extreme* version of this idea when discussing “hedonic identification” in a 1910 manuscript. According to this curious account, there are intuitive and empty pleasures and pains, which fulfil each other in the *same way* that intuitive and empty acts do (See Hua XLIII/2, 395–405). With this conclusion, Husserl has entirely reduced these feelings to cognitive objectifications. The second doctrine of his cognitivism here achieves its full consummation.

1893 manuscript, one might be able to develop a different descriptive account of intentional feelings.

Second, I briefly show that Husserl's theory of *non-intentional* feelings from *Noten* – while laying the groundwork for his mature examinations – is in some important ways divergent from his account of *non-intentional* feelings from his later writings. Looking again first at the *Investigations*, instead of examining feeling states as non-intentional, Husserl now studies non-apprehended feeling-sensations as non-intentional. By way of introduction, it should be noted that, in the *Investigations*, Husserl generally conceives of sensations – which he understands as one kind of content – as unique, unrepeatable elements of experience. They are not intended or perceived objects, as they rather belong to the stream of consciousness (Hua XIX, 397, 610/1970, 104, 235). Sensorial contents are not intentional in and of themselves. Yet, sensorial contents can undergo an apprehension, whereby they become presentational. A *reelly* experienced sensation can undergo apprehension to represent, for example, the blue of the book. Feeling-sensations, like other sensations, are not intentional in and of themselves, yet can undergo apprehension, whereby they become intentionally representative. A feeling-sensation can undergo (cognitive, objectifying) apprehension to represent the pleasing “rosy-gleam” of the object (Hua XIX, 408/1970, 110–111). When feeling-sensations become apprehended, they should not be understood as non-intentional, but can rather more accurately be classified as pre-intentional; they do become intentional in virtue of their apprehension (See Geniusas 2020, 52–62). Critically, Husserl also concludes that feeling-sensations can remain un-apprehended, whereby they are legitimately and fully non-intentional feelings. They are and remain non-intentional. He writes that when we experience non-apprehended – and thus non-intentional – feeling-sensations, “we are moved by obscure drives or pressures towards unrepresented goals”. These experiences “are really lacking intentional reference and so remote in kind from the essential character of intentional desire” (Hua XIX, 409–410/1970, 111. See Lee 1993, pp. 43–45).

Husserl continues to rely on the content(sensation)-apprehension model to understand feelings – both non-intentional and intentional – throughout much of the rest of his life. While Husserl does not particularly focus on non-intentional feeling-sensations in *Lectures on Ethics and Value Theory* (Hua XXVIII, 177–178, 407–410), when composing a large portion of *Studies*, Husserl engages with the questions: what is the difference between non-intentional cognitive-sensations and non-intentional feelings-sensations (XLIII/2, 1–11, 22–32, 59–66, 70–71); how do non- and pre-intentional feeling sensations motivate or ground the feeling acts that can apprehend them (XLIII/2, 47–48, 50–51, 57–59, 92–96, 141–142, 171–177), and what is the distinction between feeling apprehension and cognitive apprehension (XLIII/2, 73–85, 101–105, 136–141)?<sup>21</sup>

Husserl's discussion of non-intentional feeling states in *Noten* is partly distinct from his account of non-intentional feeling-sensations from his later writings, primarily because he composed *Noten* before he adopts and relies on the content(sensation)-apprehension schema to discuss non-intentional feelings. Instead, he accounts for non-intentional feelings on a different model. In 1893, he describes them by unpacking

<sup>21</sup> As Melle points out, Husserl's observations about non-intentional feelings from *Noten* foreshadows his later investigations of drive-feelings as instinctual and passive tendencies from *Experience and Judgment* and his *Lectures on the Life-World* (Melle 2012, 58. See also Bernet 2006).

their passivity and by contrasting that passivity to the activity of feeling intentions.<sup>22</sup> As Husserl, in *Noten*, proposes a different philosophy of non-intentional feelings, which avoids the content(sensation)-apprehension schema, we can draw from his 1893 methods and observations to develop a somewhat distinct and rigorous descriptive account of non-intentional feelings. Instead of trying to talk of feeling-sensations, phenomenologists can trace out how non-intentional feeling states are distinct from intentional feelings, by executing analyses of the passivity and activity of feelings.

In sum, I have argued that *Noten* presents a partially distinct and philosophically interesting account of intentional and non-intentional feelings. Husserl's 1893 analysis of intentional feeling acts avoids cognitivism and his theory of non-intentional feeling states makes no use of the content(sensation)-apprehension schema. At the same time, to conclude, I must ward off two possible misinterpretations of my discussion. First, I never mean to suggest that *Noten* is somehow more valuable than Husserl's later writings. While Husserl certainly presents some interesting ideas in *Noten*, many of his mature insights are more accurate than his 1893 observations. For just one (very important) example, while the Husserl of 1893 largely ignores the role of the body for the experience of feelings, he later comes to recognize that any description of feelings must focus on affective bodily changes (See *Geniusas* 2014, 15–16). Second, this paper naturally does not represent an attempt to present a comprehensive picture of the development of Husserl's philosophy of feelings. Indeed, such would be the task of a much larger project.<sup>23</sup> It was rather the more modest goal of this paper to uncover the legitimate origin of the phenomenology of feelings, to reveal its value, and to set down guideposts for future research.

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<sup>22</sup> I believe that Husserl's descriptions of non-intentional feelings from *Noten* is – in some respects – superior, because his content(sensation)-apprehension schema is largely unjustified. This is for a simple reason. When phenomenologically examining my own experience – and I encourage the reader to do the same – I find it evident that there are no sensations or feeling-sensations (according to how Husserl understood them) swimming in the stream of consciousness.

<sup>23</sup> This point was also convincingly argued for by John Drummond in his 1992 book.

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