**Rationality-Required Values: Reinterpreting Kant, Rawls, Aristotle, Mill and Others.** (Version 2)

Kym Farrand (Adelaide, Australia.)

**Abstract**

‘Rationality’ here only concerns knowledge, e.g., ways to acquire scientific knowledge.

Many factors are required for human rationality to exist and develop, e.g., life and evidence-based thinking. Rationality’s need for those factors, hence their value to rationality, is rationally-unquestionable.

Those factors require certain moral, political, social, legal, health-care etc values to be practised. This implies a pro-rationality values-theory, with one obligatory, general end – a uniquely rationally-unquestionable end.

That theory has deeply-humanly-meaningful, universal applications: the theory has implications for current and all possible moral, political etc issues.

The theory’s sub-values prescribe much prescribed by some other theories, e.g., non-sexism, non-racism, types of liberty, happiness, peace, altruism and fairness. However, other theories lack pro-rationality theory’s maximum possible rational-unquestionability, internal coherence and coherence with rationality.

The theory encourages freedom in a-rationality areas, areas irrelevant to its obligatory end.

The theory inherently requires its advocates to be (self‑)critical, rationally viewing their human-suggested specifics as often fallible or unavoidably approximate.

Kant’s, Rawls’s, Aristotle’s, Mill’s and certain others’ ideal societies or lives fundamentally require rationality. Rationality-required factors and associated practised values are needed here. All societies and lives are rationality-required to be based on achieving that rationally-unquestionable general end.

**Keywords:** ethics,justification, rationality, values, social, political, moral, meta-ethics, peace, education, knowledge, Kant, Rawls, Aristotle, Mill, science, cognitive, epistemology psychology, Hume

**Section 1: Introduction**

(Some comments here are qualified later.)

Basically this paper concerns this: What could ‘justify a value’ coherently mean except to show that rationality conceivably regards it as uniquely unquestionable, as correct and hence as rationally-justified as possible for a value? (Alternatives are shown to be somewhat incoherent and irrational. From any viewpoint, V, the pro-V is deemed unquestionably justified/correct. However, V may not be rational(ity).)

An introductory example of rationality-required sub-values:- When knowing 1+2=3 is rational, we at least implicitly know1+2=3 remains rational if stated by someone with a different sex/race: here we are rationally-necessarily non-sexist/non-racist.

The values-theory involved here needs to be practicable. It is highly practicable, including via being motivating due to it concerning all important human issues. With this, it often requires passionate engagement, dedication, happiness, caring, fair-mindedness, liberality, creativity, flourishing, peace and other positively motivating, emotion-involving factors.

In this paper, the term ‘values’ concerns all evaluations: moral, social, educational, political, health-care, environmental, legal, aesthetic, cognitive etc. And ‘rationality’ only concerns knowledge, e.g., the methods needed to reliably acquire knowledge, and hence the sufficiently-evidenced, hence rational-justification of knowledge. (Notions such as ‘it is rational to be self-interested, or maximise profit, or avoid painful death’, are excluded.)

This paper’s values-theory views rationality/knowledge and related values and moral, social, political etc factors as central. As just suggested, the theory basically agrees with Hume (with qualifications mentioned below) that rationality is purely instrumental.[[1]](#footnote-1) It is the tool which seeks, acquires and cognitively involves what is for us knowledge. Knowledge includes knowledge acquired as the reliable cognitive means to help achieve an end one values, e.g., peace, survival, health, wealth, power or happiness. No such or any end is rational – because only the cognitive means to reliably achieve an end is rational (and hence involves knowledge). (However, later it is argued that one end, a fundamentally different type, can be known to be uniquely rationally-unquestionable, though not in itself rational or knowledge. This end qualifiedly requires peace, survival, health, happiness and much else, discussed below.)

In this paper, ‘knowledge’ only refers to the following areas and areas consistent with them: (knowing how to do) sound reasoning, correct mathematics, empirical observation and objective science[[2]](#footnote-2) – plus, as explained next, meta-knowledge concerning values or ends, and concerning knowledge/rationality.

Meta-knowledge such as outlined in (a)-(g) below is important regarding the theory’s view of knowledge/rationality and values, and regarding the theory’s inherent self-critical aspects:-

(a) Evidence is rational (factual). (Alternative definitions of ‘evidence’ are incoherent, as suggested later. Briefly, e.g., ‘faith as evidence’ and ‘my values as evidence’ allow contradictory faiths and values to be considered right or factual.)

Rationality involves using all the available evidence, which needs to be sufficient for an overall view sufficient to mean knowledge. The overall, rational view inherently involves coherence among all evidence. As shown often below, such coherence is rationality-required, and hence conceivably valued by rationality, meaning such coherence is a pro-rationality cognitive value.

(b) An overall, coherent view is important, as in the overall, sufficiently-evidenced view of the solar system disproving the insufficient, non-overall, Earth-based, Earth-centred view – a view incoherent with the overall view’s evidence/facts. (An overall view involving interrelated evidence and coherence will be shown to be crucial regarding rationally-justifying values as far as possible.)

(c) Knowledge is often only probable, approximate or asymptotic, and sometimes situationally-variable. Evidence can be insufficient. There may be only apparently evidence or apparently sufficient evidence, as with the once common European non-overall view that all swans are white. Skepticism concerning our often-fallible attempts to be rational or knowledgeable can be rational.

(d) Meta-knowledge concerning knowledge also includes knowing about other general problems with rationality/knowledge. These include the induction problem, the criterion problem, Gettier problems, the unavoidable circularity due to our rationality/knowledge being unavoidably entirely within (somewhat-socialised) individual minds, and controversies concerning Kant’s related distinction between things-in-themselves outside our minds and the human rational-mind-interpretation of them which is for us all knowledge can be.

(e) Values-theories ultimately concern practices. Regarding our *practices*, regardless of problems as in (d), we necessarily assume rationality and knowledge exist. E.g., it is for you rationally-undeniable or knowledge that (in-practice) you are now reading this. Even persons denying (or doubting) that rationality/knowledge exist assume in practice that it is rational/knowledge that, e.g., to stay alive, they must, e.g., eat, drink and breathe only certain substances and avoid being hit by fast trucks. And in-practice they treat, e.g., what rational persons know are toilets, as toilets, not, e.g., as shoes, cars, food or as not real and not usable. In their practices, alive rationality-deniers/doubters and all alive persons have used survival-necessary and much other rationality/knowledge. Death by suicide also requires rationality/knowledge – regarding how (in-practice) to die.

(e)(i) In practice we naturally intend to be and are rational thousands of times hourly so that, instead of irrationality, i.e., mistakes, we can reliably successfully, e.g., acquire knowledge, move, think, reason, speak, read, listen, avoid danger, find food and drink, find itches, clothes, toilets, doors, friends, pockets, buildings – and so on. And we need rationality to know a mistake is a mistake. So, at least implicitly, we conscious, practising persons necessarily naturally use and hence value rationality virtually permanently, and view doing so as rationally-unquestionable. (Later it is argued this is one of various notions useful regarding rationally-justifying a values-theory as far as possible.)

(f) So, regarding all reliable achievements (practices), rationality is achievement-necessary, a practical-necessity. If irrationality (a mistake) or chance somehow showed us something correct or useful in-practice, it is only our rationality which could know of the correctness or usefulness.

(g) The most important practical meta-knowledge, discussed next, shows that rationality requires various moral, social, economic, health-care etc factors and related practised values – and shows that their hence rational-unquestionability implies a universally-applicable values-theory.

Rationality’s product, (meta‑)knowledge, can be about moral, social, political, legal, economic and all other values, and hence every choice we make. Negative knowledge here, explained soon, shows that nearly all values are rationally-questionable. Positive knowledge here concerns the exception(s), namely one general, rationality-required value and hence the values thereunder – and the rationality-required factors they prescribe.

The rationality-required is pro-rationality. This paper mostly expands on the next paragraph:-

If a factor is necessary for and hence required by rationality, and hence crucially valuable regarding rationality’s very existence, then rationality cannot self-coherently question whether the factor is required or valuable here. Rationality is inherently coherent. So the factor and its being valuable here, plus the associated values-theory prescribing the factor, are rationally-unquestionable. Only the anti-rationality or irrational can question the factor, its being valuable here and the associated values-theory – and can only do so incorrectly. (Anti-rationality is exemplified shortly.)

First here:-

Some pro-rationality, rationality-required factors simply exist, hence being unprescribable, e.g., astronomical, chemical and evolutionary factors which help(ed) make humanity and its rationality possible. Many factors can be prescribed. Specific prescriptions here come under the general value, ‘Be pro-rationality’, e.g., sub-values such as ‘Supply children’s material needs, e.g., food, or they will not live long enough to become increasingly rational’. (Non-supplying here is anti-rationality.) Those sub-values have further, more specific values under them, e.g., prescribing which specific balances among which specific foods in situation S are optimal for maximising a specific child’s life-long rationality. (Clearly, (inherently rational) evidence is needed for such specifics/balances, which can only be approximate.)

Rationality-required factors often involve degrees and balances. An overall view needs to assess them. E.g., a diet optimal for developing a specific child’s rationality may be only a slight degree better here than certain other diets – diets requiring far less resources, saving resources overall more productive regarding society’s rationality increasing/developing.

Some factors are required for rationality to simply exist in a basic form, others for existing basic rationality to increase or develop, i.e., beyond basic rationality as in infants counting up to 3, into, e.g., sophisticated adult mathematics.

Some factors and associated values are instrumental. Others are internal to or fundamental aspects of our being rational. (Both value-types need including in Kant’s, Rawls’s and other theories requiring rational persons.)

Instrumental factors:-

Numerous factors are instrumentally necessary if one’s rationality is to exist and increase, e.g., whatever keeps one alive, e.g., food, care, peace and safety. And newborns need the necessary potential cognitive ability. Later there needs to be no cognitively-disabling injury, disease, stress, depression or anxiety. Similarly, e.g., in late 20th Century Romanian orphanages, infants never given even minor mental stimulation suffered long-term reduced cognitive ability and hence reduced ability to be rational.[[3]](#footnote-3) A lack of physical affection, a lack of feeling loved by dependable carers, had a similar effect. These infants got their material needs, e.g., food and drink, but were typically left alone in cots. Some such infants died due to that emotional neglect. They lost a basic rationality-required factor: life. (Such neglect is anti-rationality.)

So pro-rationality factors include infant mental stimulation, love and physical affection, e.g., frequent cuddling involving feeling loved. These factors involve psychological effects with physiological (even fatal) effects. Harry Harlow’s work with infant primates further shows cuddling or perceived affection is important for primate mental and physical health and development.[[4]](#footnote-4) The emotions here, and others, will be further shown to be crucial rationality-required, pro-rationality factors.

Some conclusions so far:-

Pro-rationality factors we can affect require practised pro-rationality values prescribing them. Practised values here become pro-rationality factors. Pro-rationality instrumental values involve an at least implicit ‘To help cause/maintain/increase rationality’ or similar prefix or suffix. The values include ‘Show children they are loved’, ‘Stimulate children mentally’, ‘Do not let children suffer or die due to emotional neglect’ and ‘Supply children’s material needs, e.g., food’. (Via evolution, caring for children is normally experienced as naturally intrinsically valuable. Feeling thus is extremely extrinsically (instrumentally) valuable regarding motivating pro-rationality persons to practise pro-rationality values here. The general point here applies in various areas other than child-care, as suggested below.)

There are many pro-rationality factors instrumentally fundamental for, or presuppositions for, human rationality existing. They and the associated values are from rationality’s conceivable viewpoint at least indirectly as-far-as-possible rationally-justified because they are rationally-unquestionable, being instrumentally necessary for rationality’s very existence. Similarly, pro-rationality factors/values are unquestionable by anyone rational wishing to help children’s rationality exist. Related comments apply regarding rationality increasing/developing.

Instrumental factors and practised values, e.g., food and ‘The children are being fed’ are external to rationality-as-such. Next, values (and associated factors) internal to rationality – values practised simultaneously with, and which are aspects of, our being rational. (Various recent comments apply here.)

These internal practised moral, social, cognitive etc values are uniquely directly, non-instrumentally rationally-justified as far as is possible for values. An introductory example follows. (Simplified points are expanded on later.):-

Suppose a sexist, racist and religious student, Chris, holds a certain view concerning evolution dearly, identifying strongly with it. A non-religious student, Sam, with a sex and race different to Chris’s, presents Chris with rational, scientific facts, i.e., evidence, disproving Chris’s view. Chris is rationality-required to cognitively value being rationally critical, including self-critical, namely value being skeptical and fallibilist where this helps achieve knowledge. To be rational, to be correct, Chris also needs to be pro-rationality via practising non-sexist, non-racist and non-egoistic values. Because evidence is rational, Chris needs to value the freedom of all to present evidence and to have evidence considered purely on its merits, and not rejected for subjective, non-evidence-based or irrational reasons, e.g., egoism, faith or the presenter’s sex/race.­ So, practised values promoting freedom to present evidence, and promoting freedom from sexism etc, are pro-rationality factors.

Even if Sam or anyone did not present such evidence at the time to Chris (due to Chris being alone then), Chris is still rationality-required to have socially-relevant, non-egoistic, non-sexist etc values This is not only because Sam or others may sometime present Chris with such evidence. Also, e.g., solitary Chris may be irrational because of Chris’s egoistic, arrogantly sexist, religious etc values. So those non-egoistic, non-sexist etc values are always at least implicitly necessary for human rationality. E.g., again, when knowing 1+2=3 is rational, we at least implicitly know1+2=3 remains rational if stated by someone with a different sex/race: here we are rationally-necessarily non-sexist/non-racist.

As far as is possible for values, those non-sexist etc values are directly rationally-justified via being *internal* to or *necessary* *functional aspects* *of* rational science, and of our rationality generally – including regarding us as both social and rational beings. We practise them whenever we are rational. When we correctly evaluate a scientific (or mathematical etc) notion as rationally-justified, we at least implicitly correctly evaluate the required pro-rationality values necessarily involved as rationally-justified (as far as possible …). Being internal to or inherent in our rationality, they are intrinsic for/within rationality. and in a sense intrinsic values for/within rationality, and in that sense intrinsically justified for rationality (as far as is possible for values). With this, any intrinsic values for/within rationality are of intrinsic value to a rational mind. We can have or primarily be a rational mind. So such values are here intrinsically valuable to/for us. No other values can rationally (correctly) be described and justified in such ways (or to that degree).

That paragraph obviously applies to the cognitive values involved, values inextricably associated with those moral, social etc values.

Pro-rationality instrumental and internal-to-rationality values/factors involve emotions. E.g., to overrule emotions involved with egoism, faith and disliking a certain sex or race involves (soon-discussed) powerful pro-rationality emotion associated with the pro-rationality knowledge that egoism etc are rationally-unjustified. And feeling that children are intrinsically valuable and lovable is another powerful pro-rationality emotional factor when it motivates pro-rationality child-care. (That feeling could also motivate, e.g., Nazis to care for Nazi children. This is not pro-rationality child-care, as suggested soon.)

Next, introductory comments concerning Sections 2-3’s further justificatory, complementary arguments, initially concerning coherence. (A-rationality, discussed later, is ignored here.):-

Pro-rationality factors/values cohere uniquely maximally with rationality: they have a supportive, causal or positive and sometimes intrinsic relation to/within rationality, i.e., a pro- relation. All pro-rationality factors and values inherently cohere with each other. Any factor/value not cohering thus would be anti-rationality, i.e., incoherent with rationality via conflicting with rationality existing or developing, as with sexist irrationality and neglecting children’s need for love. It will soon increasingly be further shown (see (a)-(b) above) that coherence is crucial for rational-justification. It will be shown that every values-theory except one is at least somewhat internally incoherent and incoherent with rationality. Any incoherence means mistakes, i.e., irrationality, i.e., being rationally-unjustified. Being incoherent is being wrong, as with believing the inconsistent 1+2=4, or that 1+1+1 or 3 is not 1+1+1 or 3, i.e., both 3 and not-3.

Of course, as well as consistency, coherence also requires positive, supportive or pro- relationships. These will be further shown to fully exist, regarding a system involving practised values and, necessarily, rationality, only if the values are pro-rationality.

In a limited sense, other coherent systems exist. There can be coherence among false or irrational notions. However, they do not cohere maximally with rationality. Nazis had an in-part-coherent system using rationality but merely as a necessary means to help practise non-pro-rationality racist, sexist, murderous values. It will be shown that any mutually-coherent non-pro-rationality values cannot be coherent in that full way in relation to *rationality*. This is compounded by the fact that, as will be shown, *non*-pro-rationality values *require* much rationality, e.g., in order for them to be knowable and practised reliably. Similarly, any false or irrational notion, or any coherence, requires rationality if the coherence or notion can be even known to exist or thought of. So any coherence among false, irrational or rationally-unjustified values/notions is limited in that it only applies when their necessary involvement with rationality is ignored. Maximum overall possible coherence involves maximum coherence with the rationality necessarily involved.

Concluding the Introduction:-

The Chris and Romanian examples relate to A.P. Griffiths’s (1957-8) suggestion that the choosable conditions needed for rationality, namely certain practised values and factors, are necessarily uniquely immune from rational criticism. (This paper is partly a reinterpretation and development of his and other work.[[5]](#footnote-5))

This rational-unquestionability implies that, from rationality’s conceivable viewpoint, it would be obvious that pro-rationality is correct. (This is parallel to the fact that, from, e.g., a Nazi viewpoint (or any moral etc viewpoint V), being pro-Nazi (or pro-V) is correct). With this, rationality cannot self-coherently view, and hence inherently cannot view, any other value as correct. So no other, non-pro-rationality value is rationally-unquestionable.

At the very least, unlike other values, pro-rationality values are uniquely close to or coherent with rationality, because coherence involves a supportive, *pro*- relationship. Or, as with the Chris example, cognitive and many other pro-rationality values are necessary aspects *of* human rationality: we cannot be rational without at least implicitly simultaneously practising those values. And they are coherent with instrumentally pro-rationality factors and the values prescribing them.

It will be further shown that the theory is highly practicable, including via being motivating and deeply humanly-meaningful. A dull, narrow or cerebral life is not pro-rationality-optimal. (It will be further shown that, regarding humans and their practices, ‘Be pro-rationality’ solves problems involved with the too-narrow, cerebral, ‘Be rational’ and ‘Be knowledgeable’.) Passionate emotional engagement, happiness, love, freedom, flourishing, diversity and imagination are often needed – within the liberal, fair, caring, humanly-meaningful, peaceful society and life further exemplified below. The Chris and Romanian examples imply that pro-rationality values/factors involve society, emotions and individuals' lives generally. It will be further shown that pro-rationality theory is universally applicable.

There is also the a-rationality, namely the irrelevant-to-pro-rationality and hence permissible according to pro-rationality theory. A-rationality is later shown to involve fairness and equality, great diversity, peace, total freedom to do whatever you like here, and hence much happiness.

Various value-theorists insist rationality (or reason/knowledge) is fundamentally necessary. E.g., Kant’s ultimate moral aim, his Society of Ends, is only possible if rational persons constitute it.[[6]](#footnote-6) Rawls insists that only rational persons could make the correct crucial societal/moral decisions behind his Veil of Ignorance.[[7]](#footnote-7) The good, flourishing life Aristotle advocates is only achievable via rational and hence knowledgeable persons directing the needed character-habituation.[[8]](#footnote-8) J.S. Mill primarily valued rationality/knowledge, as shown by him arguing that a rationally-critical, hence dissatisfied (unhappy) Socrates was more morally valuable than a happy pig.[[9]](#footnote-9) Similarly for various other value-theories. Fundamentally presupposed among such values-theories are the required pro-rationality factors and practised values. These are necessary for those required rational persons or their rationality to even exist. Such theories do not make this fundamental necessity explicit.

Kant, Rawls, Aristotle, Mill and others who value rationality (reason/knowledge) need to have pro-rationality values as the explicit foundation of the values-stheories, societies and lives they advocate. This would alter their theories fundamentally and hence in other ways.

**Section 2: Further Regarding Rationality, Values, Knowledge, Emotions and Coherence.**

‘Be rational’ is the appropriate general aim for rational computers in that rationality is their only possible, internal, general aim. That aim is inadequate for humans. (Explaining this leads to explaining why ‘Be knowledgeable’ is inadequate.):-

Very unlike rational computers, we are living, reproducing, consciously believing and choice-making beings with intentions involving various and varying values – and emotions. We hate, love, fear, desire, hope and so on. We have biological instincts, drives and needs, and parents, a nation, sexuality, race and gender, plus senses, inconsistencies, irrationality, sociability, socialisability, rewards/punishments, humor, health-concerns, variable will-power, gullibility, imagination and plans. And we are aware of death and our mortality, of time, causability, consequences and much else.

Important here is the need to make choices, especially regarding values and hence how to treat others, and hence (un)selfishness, power, freedoms, rights, fairness, responsibility, violence, caring, sexual behaviour and much else. For us choices/values are unavoidable because while conscious we must do something, i.e., practise, including just be still, rest or think. And conscious practices involve the at least implicit choice to do A rather than B or C etc. All choices involve values. Even if A is the choice to choose via chance, e.g., coin-tosses, this involves valuing chance-made decisions rather than having to decide among B and C etc.

Rational computers do not and cannot concern themselves with such things (except in that *we* can be concerned with such things and get computers to give us information regarding our concerns, as discussed soon).

Our differences from rational computers, and the coherence crucial for rationality and rational-justification, require that regarding our *practices*, including thinking, speaking and choosing, the fundamental value/prescription for us cannot be ‘Be rational’. Various arguments below show why. A simplified example follows, introducing various notions explained further soon, and further showing that emotions are important for pro-rationality theory. The example also relates to Kant regarding whether one should lie, including to an intending murderer:-

Sally knows about a psychopathic, highly-irrational, irredeemable mass-murderer of children. He asks Sally where his next intended victims are, and Sally knows where. Here it would be pro*-rationality* to lie and hence be *irrational* in that lies are false. This lie would send the murderer where Sally hopes police can capture him. Sally does this, overruling her fear that he may escape and vengefully kill her. (His emotions are anti-rationality.) Sally teaches these children, and has evidence they are potentially more pro-rationality and rational than the murderer could ever be. Here Sally’s pro-rationality, via her chosen irrationality (lying), will as far as she could know mean probably more rationality long-term. (The previously-mentioned normal natural feeling that children are intrinsically-valuable is an associated extrinsically-valuable, instrumental pro-rationality factor for Sally here.)

If Sally’s aim was simply ‘Be rational’ as in ‘Always be truthful’, her aim would in-effect be anti-rationality, i.e., overall (e.g., over practices, time and persons) incoherent with the children’s probable future (pro‑)rationality. A truthful Sally would be only partly or incompletely coherent with rationality, namely coherent only from a limited, narrow, extremely-short-term (computer-like) viewpoint. Long-term, the children, if alive, would probably produce more rationality in the world than if murdered. Faced with the murderer, it is rational (correct) that irrationality via lying is the more pro-rationality alternative overall. Here, unlike a simply ‘Be rational’ (always truthful) computer, Sally can and does know and care about the children, and about their probable future – if alive. The fully rational human view is an overall view, which includes a long-term view and a concerning-all-relevant-possible-practices view. The rational view is also a realistic (objective) view, which includes knowing that one can only do what is possible. Regarding intending to be pro-rationality, it was only possible for Sally to make what was at the time probably the most pro-rationality choice as far as she could know.

Here the cognitive rational values discussed in the Chris example were applied at that overall, higher or meta- level involving a long-term-view, not just at the overviewed, simple ‘Be rational’, immediate, ‘Always be truthful’ lower level.

In sum:- For reasons such as those in the previous few paragraphs, humans need a general aim or value different from computers’ very limited, simple ‘Be rational’. Humans need ‘Be pro-rational’ if they aim to be as rational and as coherent with rationality as possible long-term. Rationality would conceivably question or reject whatever means less rationality or the incoherent-with-rationality.

(Kant’s ‘Never-lie’ rational persons do not fully fit with recent points.)

Here, again, human coherence with rationality and pro-rationality needs to involve emotions. These need knowledge: Sally’s unselfish caring here is an indirectly pro-rationality emotion associated with meta- or highest-level (overall-viewing) pro-rationality knowledge. Here that overall view includes knowledge regarding the children and murderer contexted by knowledge that being pro-rationality is rationally-unquestionable. This meta-pro-rationality knowledge decides which emotions (and other moral etc practices/factors) are situationally appropriate (as far as can be known). And, helped by the brain’s pre-frontal cortex and the frontal lobes’ connections with the brain’s emotional areas, this knowledge helps train (hard-wire) one’s brain to promote such emotions – e.g., Sally’s unselfish caring and ‘direct pro-rationality emotion’. Direct pro-rationality emotion, via those connections, is associated with meta-pro-rationality knowledge, becoming the emotion directly motivating human rationality to know what is (as far as one can know) most pro-rationality in a certain situation. This emotion then helps that training.

Instead of Sally’s motivation here, her rationality, being purely instrumental, could have been primarily motivated otherwise, e.g., by her fear of being vengefully murdered. Yet her meta-pro-rationality knowledge and associated coherent-therewith pro-rationality emotions, involving her will-power, ruled that they should rule. This involved over-ruling any competing, anti-rationality emotion, e.g., her fear here. (As exemplified later, some fears are pro-rationality.)

Pro-rationality values include valuing pro-rationality emotions/motivations. Emotions such as Sally’s dominant ones have an in-practice supportive, positive, pro- relation to rationality, crucially helping to maintain/develop it long-term. So pro-rationality emotions and anti-rationality emotions are crucially important issues for pro-rationality educational, moral etc values-theory. As explained further soon, conscious emotionally-desired aims, which are informed by knowledge (at least of what the aims are), (and often by mere beliefs,) are the only intended aims we can have. This paper involves the pro-rationality-knowledge-informed emotionally-desired aim of working towards a rationally-unquestionable values-theory. To continue doing that, more concerning emotion and rationality:-

Human rationality’s general end-aim is knowledge. Emotions, say greed, can direct rationality to acquire the specific knowledge needed to achieve aims or ends valued by the emotion, e.g., here, wealth. Such aims are external to those of our rationality-as-such. ‘Rationality-as-such’ means ‘rationality internally’. Rationality-as-such is as in a computer correctly doing sums, lacking emotion, unable to feel greed or value the wealth or anything a human using the computer feels/values and hence aims at via the sums. Again, rationality is purely instrumental. Similar to the evolution of muscles, our rationality exists due to humans having evolved to incorporate (emotionally-directable) rationality-as-such as a useful tool to help achieve, here via knowledge, the (naturally-normal emotionally-desired) survival (of one’s and/or one’s group’s genes). To reliably achieve that emotionally-desired (and other) end(s), only rationality can reliably show/give us the correct means to achieve the end(s). The correct cognitive means is knowledge. If chance or a mistake somehow showed us a correct means, it is only our rationality which could know the correctness and know how to correctly make use of the means. Ultimately, rationality and hence knowledge is needed, not ignorance or mistakes.

If rationality sought to be mistaken, i.e., irrational, it would contradict its internal, fundamental nature. This is impossible. Relatedly, humanity could not have survived via being always or mostly mistaken. (Later it is argued that rationality’s survival-necessity for us relates to one way to rationally-justify certain values as far as possible.)

Importantly, being a very open capacity, rationality can be directed to achieve much else besides survival. It can be directed to know about values, though arguably these often relate at least indirectly to survival, e.g., via helping the group coherence without which its individual members, especially infants, cannot survive. Rationality can also be directed to acquire obviously non-survival-related knowledge, e.g., of all footballers’ names, and to-be-practised knowledge of how oneself or one’s group can suicide. Rationality-as-such is neutral regarding which knowledge to acquire. Emotions are inherently not neutral, as in desiring to survive, or to know correct values, or to know all footballers’ names, and as in suicidal depression.

Unless turned on, human rationality is only an inactive potential, like a turned-off computer or resting muscle. As Hume suggests, to do its work, human rationality needs to be turned on, i.e., motivated, via emotion. Rationality-as-such can be conceptually separated from emotion, and is physically separated as in a computer-operator’s emotions (and their aims) being physically external to the computer’s purely internal rational functioning. Both can obviously connect as a system involving the human operator’s emotions directing the computer to be turned on and achieve emotionally-desired aims. With human rationality-as-such, presumably something parallel happens within brains. (Something like Fodor’s (1983) notion of separate but connectable brain modules seems applicable here.)

Human rationality can be motivated by various emotions, e.g., fear and hatred, involving desiring knowing how to achieve a highly-valued end, e.g., an enemy’s death. Yet sometimes we are simply curious, motivated just to know something, e.g., crossword or riddle answers, without any at-the-time intention and hence motivation to use the knowledge. Curiosity is often a powerful emotion/motivator. And, sometimes, with no conscious intention, we simply acquire knowledge, e.g., that a bird flew past. Here presumably there is an unconscious motivation to initially notice/know things somewhat in general, because some things affect our survival or may do. E.g., it is survival-helpful to notice where food, water, danger and shelter are. We need and intend to know much, in case it is useful. So rationality is a very open capacity. This involves directing curiosity.

Further here, regarding coherence:-

Rationality is so open or unrestricted it allows one to choose to acquire knowledge about anything knowable, from knowledge about a vast number of facts/areas, or just a very narrow area. The knowledge need not be pro-rationality knowledge, i.e., knowledge used to maintain/increase (pro‑)rationality. So ‘Be knowledgeable’ or simply ‘Acquire knowledge’ is a rationally-questionable human value/aim. As in the Sally example, it is only a meta‑pro-rationality knowledge’s overviewing which understands that issue, via understanding arguments such as the following:-

Importantly, regarding human practices, coherence requires that being dedicatedly coherently pro-rationality cannot simply mean one must only be rational-as-such, and hence acquire simply *any* knowledge. Of course, no knowledge as such can be incoherent with or contradict rationality or any other knowledge. However, it is rationality/knowledge *related* *practices* which can be incoherent with rationality/knowledge – practices such as acquiring, storing, teaching and using knowledge, and other practices affecting rationality/knowledge. The latter practices include murdering Sally’s students and emotionally neglecting those Romanian orphans. The former include dedicatedly acquiring non-pro-rationality knowledge, e.g., learning all footballers’ names. This is incoherent with our acquiring and practising pro-rationality knowledge. The time, energy and other resources used could be used in pro-rationality ways. (Section 3 (and Farrand (2016)) discuss(es) numerous ways, e.g., promoting the education, care, safety, intellectual and political freedoms and the mental and physical health optimal for acquiring and practising pro-rationality knowledge.)

Acquiring etc knowledge and affecting rationality/knowledge are practices. It is practices which are the ultimate concern of values-theories. Regarding our knowledge-*related* *practices*, it is acquiring etc and practising pro-*rationality* knowledge, i.e., pro-knowledge knowledge, i.e., pro-rationality rationality, which is the only fully coherent, self-coherent end-aim for rationality. This is because here rationality produces more rationality/knowledge which produces more rationality/knowledge, and so on, over time. (0r, at least, rationality/knowledge is maintained over time.) This implies we should be acquiring, storing, teaching and using only pro-rationality knowledge. (One also may (not should) use rationality in a-rationality ways, suggested soon.)

Concluding/summarising recent discussions, and introducing further discussions:-

Knowledge is the product of rationality, but being pro-rationality does not simply mean acquiring knowledge merely for the sake of being rational or having knowledge as such. Anyway, it would be completely unclear (incoherent) regarding which knowledge to acquire among the infinite possibilities. Those possibilities include counting every pebble and similar pointless or trivial overall in-effect anti-rationality knowledge. Knowledge-as-such is the product of rationality-as-such or the simple ‘Be rational’. Comments above concerning the latter two can be adapted to apply to knowledge-as-such or the simple ‘Be knowledgeable’ or ‘Acquire knowledge’.

Only a meta‑pro-rationality knowledge’s overviewing can see what uses of rationality/knowledge are fully or overall pro-rationality and hence overall coherent over time etc.

Recent paragraphs exemplified how rationality can be used in indirectly anti-rationality ways. Rationality can also be used in directly anti-rationality ways. This can involve non-trivial uses of non-trivial knowledge. E.g., Nazis used rationality to acquire advanced chemical, weapons etc knowledge to destroy millions of at least potentially pro-rationality people and their rationality. (War, the only way to stop Nazism and achieve peace, was here the most pro-rationality alternative.)

Nazis were only *partly* pro-rationality, only to the necessary minimal, purely instrumental, limited degree (discussed further soon). Similarly regarding uncritically teaching/learning (socialising) primarily what various present societies/governments want taught/learnt, e.g., knowledge and un-evidenced beliefs useful for, e.g., fascist, racist, sexist, religious, nationalist and/or socio-economic-classist societies/politicians.

So, like computers, human rationality-as-such need only be pro-rationality to that very limited, partial, instrumental degree. Here there is no acted-on, overall, meta‑pro-rationality view concerning practices, aims, emotions etc over time, persons etc, i.e., the view needed to be pro-rationality in an overall-coherent way. Being partly or inconsistently pro-rationality involves incoherences discussed above (and below). This is because the other part(s) involve(s) non-pro-rationality, or the inconsistency does (as shown further shortly).

Non-pro-rationality aims/values vary greatly among and within persons and values-theories, and hence conflict. They are also incoherent with rationality via not being fully or only pro-rationality. Such pluralistic and other incoherence cannot be in rationality’s nature or rationally-justified.

Logically and hence rationally-justifiably, there can only be one right general, fundamental value. Plural fundamental right values would contradict each other, and the non-pro-rationality ones would contradict pro-rationality and hence the rationally-unquestionable – and hence question the rationally-unquestionable. The right cannot contradict the right or the rationally-unquestionable. That would be incoherent, irrational.

Coherence is rationality-required, and hence conceivably valued by rationality, meaning coherence is a pro-rationality cognitive value.

In sum, if something is incoherent or does not fit overall with(in) rationality, it cannot in any rational, meaningful, intelligible, non-delusional, coherent sense be considered right.

To avoid such incoherence, Kant, Rawls, Aristotle, J.S. Mill, and all persons, need ‘Be pro-rationality’ as their single general fundamental value.

Next, (temporarily ignoring a-rationality,) arguments showing that other contradictions or incoherences occur with non-pro-rationality:-

Persons accepting non-pro-rationality theories must use rationality as the cognitive means to achieve the survival needed to even have a theory, to know of their theory and its end(s), and to reliably achieve the other means to their end(s). Knowing is the product of our rationality. Non-pro-rationality theory-accepters must use rationality to know what each word, phrase etc in their thinking here is and means, and how to think, write, say or read it. Otherwise they would not know what or how to think etc. All would be meaningless. Similarly regarding persons using rationality to reject pro-rationality theory, which all non-pro-rationality theory-accepters unavoidably do at least implicitly. They must at least use rationality to know what they are accepting, and this acceptance-knowledge implies what they reject. And they use rationality to implicitly or explicitly know how to accept/reject. Now, to use rationality is to at least implicitly choose to use it, i.e., to be pro-rationality here. Various points above show that along with rationality, being at least minimally pro*-*rationality is a survival-necessary means, indeed a universally reliable-achievement-necessary means. Theory-accepting and theory-rejecting are achievements. Therefore, non-pro-rationality theory-accepters are pro-rationality regarding means but not regarding their end(s). This is means-end incoherence, a type of self-contradiction or internal-incoherence. And this involves incoherence with rationality and with rationality’s inherent coherence: here theory-holders are only *partly* rational(ly-justified) or only partly coherent with rationality, only partly pro-rationality. Elsewhere they are anti-rationality: if one is not pro-rationality (or a-rationality), one is anti-rationality. There is no other option.

Means-end incoherence seems even more a major error when we further consider that pro-rationality is a *necessary,* *fundamental*, extremely common human value:-

Again, when we value being rational, which happens whenever we at least implicitly intend to be rational, or use rationality, we necessarily at least implicitly value being pro-rationality. That is, we value the factors/values making our rationality possible. As Section 1 (e)-(f) shows, we intend to be and are rational thousands of times hourly, to avoid being irrational, i.e., mistaken. When we are mistaken, ‘mistake’ means we intended to be rational (right), but unintentionally missed being right. And intentionally being wrong means using rationality to know how to be wrong. So, at least implicitly, we conscious, practising, here-rational-beings necessarily value being pro-rationality virtually permanently/universally, and do not question this. We view this as rationally-unquestionable.

That applies to using rationality to achieve whatever one’s highest-priority end is. (Plural highest-priority ends increase the incoherence discussed next.)

Valuing one’s highest-priority end is necessarily to at least implicitly value the means necessary to achieve the end. (Otherwise the end is not highest-priority.[[10]](#footnote-10)) Here the cognitive means is rationality. And when we are rational we at least implicitly necessarily value pro-rationality as the means to our rationality. That is, being pro-rationality is *fundamental* regarding intentionally reliably achieving one’s highest-priority end – or anything. Yet when we are rational and hence pro-rationality merely to achieve knowledge to achieve a valued non-pro-rationality end, we contradict that for-us necessary, pro-rationality fundamental value. We contradict part of ourselves, being hence self-incoherent, internally-incoherent, incoherent with (our) rationality. Here we are necessarily wrong.

In sum:- ‘Be pro-rationality’ is uniquely inherently rationally-justified as a means, so no other means is. And ‘Be pro-rationality’ is also as far as possible rationally-justified as an end, and uniquely so. This proves there is only one way to be fully coherent and hence as right as possible – by choosing pro-rationality as one’s end, rationality as the cognitive means to that end, pro-rational emotions as the motivational means thereto, and so on. This is the only way to be coherent with what for us is a fundamentally-necessary value. Coherence with the necessary also seems right as in being parallel to us cohering (agreeing) with the logically-necessary 1+2=3 or 1+1+1 is 1+1+1.

Recent discussion relates to a former point concerning coherence and values-theories: with all values-theories except pro-rationality theory, one part of a theory at least implicitly claims that its at least implicit value/standard is right and another part’s is wrong, and vice versa. So the theory in effect claims it is both right and wrong. Such coherence is further exemplified next:-

Comments concerning means-end incoherence apply relatedly to ‘form-content’ incoherence. Consider a valid reasoning form, e.g., ‘All Ps are Qs; R is a P; therefore R is a Q’. Suppose one uses that form to advocate a non-pro-rationality value. (E.g., ‘Everything that causes happiness is morally right. My (non-pro-rationality) political party makes me happy. Therefore my party is morally right.’) Here one’s form of thinking is rational, hence involving one being pro-rationality here. Yet this is incoherent with that valid form’s *content*, namely non-pro-rationality. All non-pro-rationality values-theories’ formally-valid arguments are incoherent here. Their formally-invalid arguments are obviously also wrong.

Further regarding coherence:-

The general rational requirement for coherence also applies regarding *believing* values-theories. ‘I believe theory X’ means ‘I believe X is true’*.* The ‘is true’ aspect of believing is unavoidable. (One reason for that is: ‘I believe X is false (or may be)’ is equivalent to ‘I believe it is *true* that X is false (or may be)’.)

To believe X is to believe X is rational, i.e., true (as in ‘1+2=3 is rational, i.e., true’). With this, to believe X is to at least implicitly be pro-truth or pro-the-truth-of-X and to assume oneself is rational in that it is rational to believe what is true – and because it is rationality which discovers or recognises truth. This all assumes one is pro-rationality here, or pro-one’s-rationality via one believing X (is true). Anyone believing a non-pro-rationality values-theory is unavoidably pro-truth here and hence pro-rationality. This contradicts their theory not being pro-rationality overall. Their theory’s end(s), not being pro-rationality, must be anti-rationality, as explained above. Here too their mind or its theory is self-contradictory, irrational, as with other recently-discussed incoherence. And, as recent points suggest, those believers’ internal incoherence means their anti-rationality end(s) imply, irrationally or incorrectly, that pro-rationality and hence rationality are wrong. (This implication implies it is wrong to believe X (or anything) is true, including that implication etc.) Such incoherence is rationally-unquestionably a cognitively and values-theoretical fundamental error. How could rationality or the rational, the right, be wrong, i.e., irrational? How could the rational and relatedly the pro-being-rational, i.e., the pro-rationality, be irrational or incorrect?

(Recent paragraphs can be adapted to apply to Kant, Rawls, Aristotle, J.S. Mill and others regarding their valuing rationality.)

Concluding Sections 1 and 2:-

Regarding recent and other points, a central issue is rationality’s uniquely *overall*, coherence-investigating view. As with the above-mentioned overall view showing that Earth orbits the sun, not vice versa, rationality is that which oversees all the available needed evidence – in all applicable areas. This includes the values area. Only critical rationality’s overall view sees the incoherence and hence irrationality and hence unintelligibility in all value-theories except inherently coherent pro-rationality theory. Via lacking that overall critical view, theories or theorists not seeing that incoherence are not as rational as possible. Such theories only seem intelligible or correct via a partial view of the theory – as with the partial, Earth-bound view making it seem correct that the sun orbits Earth.

In sum, critical rationality’s disproving of all value-theories historically or presently (2022) believed does not mean we are left with no correct reason to do this rather than that, e.g., live rather than die, care for children rather than selfishly neglect them, and so on. The method via which critical rationality does such disproving is the method involving or implying correct, coherent reasons to do this rather than that. It alone as far as possible correctly answers ‘How should one live?’ – via its inherent hence rationally-unquestionable values-theory. Here alone, rationality finds a coherent values-theory.

With practised pro-rationality knowledge/rationality, along with other factors rationality is a means to increase/maintain rationality overall as an end, e.g., long-term. Here means and end mutually support each other, i.e., are coherent over time. Here rationality is used in pro-rationality ways. Coherence is rationality-required. Pro*-*rationality rationality is obviously coherent. It coheres perfectly with (supports and causes more) (pro‑)rationality (and so on), or at least maintains (pro‑)rationality. Because practised pro-rationality rationality means this unique coherence with rationality, it is hence uniquely rationally-unquestionable. It would conceivably be uniquely valued and advocated by rationality. This is also because rationality inherently seeks knowledge and is hence pro-knowledge – and being pro-knowledge means being pro-rationality.

As explained before those recent discussions of coherence, the coherence uniquely involved with pro-rationality values is evidence for them being rationally-justified (as far as possible …). Many other points above are further evidence. Also, the related fact that only rationality concerns evidence has important implications concerning values. Rationality’s inherent involvement with evidence includes acquiring, storing and using the evidence. In a sense this is another way in which pro-rationality values-theory is uniquely maximally evidence-based. Relatedly, pro-rationality theory is also uniquely inherently rationality-based and knowledge-based.

The combination of all such evidence for pro-rationality values implies that rationality would conceivably regard them as uniquely unquestionable, i.e., as correct and hence as rationally-justified as possible for values. What could ‘justify values’ coherently and intelligibly mean except to show that rationality would regard them thus?

Relatedly, as the Chris example showed, various practised pro-rationality values are inherent, internal, essential, functional aspects *of* rationality – and this also suggests those values are rationally-unquestionable and as rationally-justified as possible for values. It also suggests that, from rationality’s viewpoint, in a sense pro-rationality is self-evidently correct or justified due to various pro-rationality values being inherent aspects *of* rationality it*self* and hence of rational-justification. Rationality would conceivably rationally (correctly) view aspects of itself as self-evidently correct. Similarly regarding the other practised pro-rationality values being instrumentally necessary *for* rationality and rational-justification (and for these increasing).

Similarly regarding the only knowledge and practices rationality could self-coherently view as overall of value to it*self –* pro-rationality knowledge and practices. It is conceivably evident to rationality that they are *self*-evidently correct. With this, Section 1 showed that various pro-rationality values are necessarily intrinsic within/for oneself as a rational being, and relatedly intrinsically-valuable to/for rational minds.

It is only a rational, overall view which knows such things.

**Section 3: Other Representative Practical Applications, and A-Rationality**

Pro-rationality theory concerns all our intended practices and our whole lives, because the theory is fundamentally rational – and the rational applies universally. With this, it is logically (rationally) necessary that, as with any end (or thing), all else is either positive, negative or neutral in relation to it. The end prescribes the positive, forbids the negative, and permits anything neutral. So pro-rationality theory has universal practical applications. It rationally concerns which practices affect rationality and which do not, and promotes those with positive effects, opposes the negative, and liberally permits all that does not affect rationality, namely the a-rationality.

This paper will further show that rationality is affected by a vast range of emotional, social, educational, health-care, political, economic, environmental and so on factors.[[11]](#footnote-11) First, emotions need more discussion. This will clearly further exemplify the deep human-meaningfulness of the theory:-

Various emotions (motivations) in certain situations are pro-rationality. Direct pro-rationality motivation is our curiosity instinct or drive, associated with meta-pro-rationality knowledge, thence driven to acquire only pro-rationality knowledge (except that this meta-knowledge includes knowing that acquiring a-rationality knowledge is permissible). Again, via natural selection we are often naturally powerfully driven (motivated) to be curious, and this means curious about the truth, i.e., we are driven to acquire knowledge. This needs rationality. In sum, we are naturally normally emotionally drivable to acquire pro-rationality knowledge.

This natural motivation, combined with that meta-pro-rationality knowledge, would rule (out) competing motivations/emotions, as with Sally. That combination would also rule that other emotions are needed to help that normal emotional drive. These are indirectly pro-rationality, e.g., a compassionate desire to help make the world a rationally-unquestionably better place, and sympathy for children and others lacking pro-rationality resources, as in those Romanian orphanages, and in many places world-wide.

Various emotional factors are needed for human curiosity to optimally acquire pro-rationality knowledge. E.g., because depression can be so disabling that one lacks curiosity and is often not rational, whatever helps avoid that is needed. Happiness or less unhappiness is a general emotional need here. Happiness-promoting factors here could include types of exercise, humor, love, friendships, pets, music, meditation, diet, nature, sunshine, sex, medication and family psychotherapy. These mean practising associated pro-rationality sub-values, say ‘Graham should exercise with friends in fun ways in nature (to help maximise his pro-rationality)’. Various other subjective experiences, including certain artistic experiences, could be important happiness-increasing factors.

Happiness is a factor potentially helpful for improving many other pro-rationality factors, including the general motivation and ability to practise pro-rationality knowledge. (Happiness-as-such is not a pro-rationality aim.) The pro-rationality-optimal on-average degree of happiness seems flexibly somewhere well between suffering so disabling that rationality is impossible, and medium-to-long-term drug-induced or other extreme bliss meaning ignorance and/or lack of pro-rationality motivation and focus.[[12]](#footnote-12) However, such issues are complex and somewhat uncertain. E.g., being (non-disablingly) unhappy can motivate searching for pro-rationality knowledge, e.g., unhappiness regarding diseases which disaffect pro-rationality can motivate persons to search for cures. Along with such unhappiness there is arguably a type of happiness due to self-respect via knowing oneself is at least doing one’s best or intends to. And there is potentially more pro-rationality happiness overall, long-term, via acquiring the knowledge, e.g., cures for brain cancers.

For those potentially highly pro-rationality beings, young children, pro-rationality physical and mental health involves many emotions in the children and their carers. Children need to be normally at least moderately happy here. This requires humor, other fun, non-abusive, sympathetic, secure, altruistic caring and love, including physical affection. As exemplified by Section 1’s discussion of Romanian orphanages, to not get such factors seriously disaffects emotional, cognitive and other brain development. This disaffects children’s pro-rationality potential permanently.

Adults often have emotional needs similar to children’s, and need other factors involving emotions, e.g., avoiding a frustrating, mentally-consuming lack of fulfilling sex, and avoiding mentally-disabling workplace stress. Similarly, workplace pro-rationality health and safety are needed to help parent/carer workers be in the emotional state needed to raise optimally pro-rationality children. Achieving such health and safety may require pro-rationality (non-disabling) fear – of illness, danger and of inability to be optimally pro-rationality parents/carers. And so on.

In sum, pro-rationality factors often crucially include emotions. Other examples of pro-rationality emotions are those involved in the resilience, will-power, rationally-confident open-mindedness, non-egoism, non-sexism, non-racism, friendliness and sometimes humor needed for rational positive pro-rationality criticism of oneself and others.

More examples of the theory’s practical applicability, not primarily focusing on emotion:-

To value and have pro-rationality mental and physical ability requires valuing and having, e.g., a certain diet and health-care system, and hence a certain environment, agriculture, economy and society. These require clean water and air, avoiding temperature extremes, avoiding disease and so on. Such factors require many political, child-raising, housing, sewerage, transport, employment, emotional and other factors. (Their combination requires a complex situationally-flexible balance, the precise nature of which we can only approximately know. That sentence obviously applies elsewhere too.)

Crucially, achieving those factors and a rationally-unquestionable society requires a certain type of education. This would focus primarily on promoting pro-rationality factors and the pro-rationality-optimal flourishing of persons.

Pro-rationality theory also concerns a-rationality. This has important implications for that society etc. It is rational(ly-justified) and hence pro-rationality to accept that much in life is a-rationality. Anything a-rationality does not affect anyone’s pro-rationality. Here it does not matter whether one is or does any of various alternatives in numerous areas. So total societal, personal etc freedom is appropriate here. This means much individuality.

As the Chris example shows, it is pro-rationality (and hence rationally-unquestionable) to treat the sex and race of someone being rational as irrelevant, i.e., a-rationality. In some other situations one’s sex can be relevant, e.g., regarding producing the future generations without which pro-rationality would die out. This is separate from sex*ism*. In the Chris (and all) situation(s), to be sexist would be a mistake and means mistakes. If, e.g., someone writes 1+2=3, this sum obviously remains rational regardless of whether a male or female or other writes it. (This is basically like the pen’s color with which one writes 1+2=3 being irrelevant to that sum’s rationality.) So it is of pro-rationality value to treat the a-rationality, here one’s sex, as irrelevant, and hence as neither right nor wrong. Obviously it is a mistake or irrational, and anti-rationality, if one views 1+2=3 as wrong if stated by anyone with a sex one views as wrong/inferior. Further, from a pro-rationality, rationally-unquestionable viewpoint, an inherently universalising viewpoint, in *any* situation it is wrong to treat anyone’s sex as such as inherently wrong, or right. The same applies to sexuality, as long as there are no anti-rationality effects (e.g., via rape and paedophilia), and that future-generation-need is fulfilled. It can be fulfilled along with non-heterosexuality.

And so on, for race and much else. Everyone has the rationally-justified right to be free from rationally-unjustified discrimination.

So, regarding a-rationality aspects one unchoosably has, say being born an Asian female, there needs to be freedom from racism and sexism. And so on. Regarding choosable a-rationality, many freedoms are appropriate, say regarding choosing among certain family-types, appearance-types and sexual options. Here, say, persons choosing to live communally, who like unusual hair-styles and prefer certain sexual foreplay should be treated the same as others differing here, all else pro-rationality-relevant equal. Here there is no effect on (pro‑)rationality whether one is or does this or that a-rationality thing. Freedom here is rationally-unquestionable.

So, along with prescribing just one end, pro-rationality theory permits whatever choices have a neutral (zero) causal relation to that obligatory, primary end. This means plural a-rationality, secondary ends, irrelevant (orthogonal) to the primary end. These are liberally permitted, not prescribed.

Some such ends will conflict, but only need do so “in theory” or “on-paper”, not in-practice. Again, values-theories ultimately concern practices. A simplified example:- Pro-rationality person P1 wants to go to restaurant R1 tonight, and pro-rationality P2 wants R2, and it is pro-rationality-happiness-producing for them to peacefully go together. The choice between these restaurants is a-rationality. In *practice*, pro-rationality persons inherently do not personally conflict, because that would be anti-rationality. E.g., conflict may make them less rational, less pro-rationality-happy, and would use mental, time, energy etc resources which could have been used in pro-rationality ways. Pro-rationality, peaceful P1 and P2 could choose via coin-tossing, or agree to go to R1 tonight and R2 another night. Pro-rationality persons would be unselfish, and hence wish to please others, be fair, choose via chance or take turns, reciprocate, compromise and so on. So such on-paper-conflicting options need not mean conflict in practice. Each a-rationality option would in-practice be viewed and treated by pro-rationality, rational persons as rationally neither right nor wrong. Anti-rationality persons would irrationally regard their choice as right, which is wrong.

Importantly, whether something is a-rationality can vary situationally, including across time, persons etc. The same applies regarding the pro-rationality. E.g., suppose for Jim it is pro-rationality to include certain nuts in his diet, and it is a-rationality (irrelevant) whether they are type 1 or 2. Jane is allergic to nuts. Eating them would severely disaffect her capacity to be rational and pro-rationality. She may die. For Jane there are no pro-rationality nuts or a-rationality nut choices, only anti-rationality nuts. Due to such situational relativity, evidence is needed regarding whether something is either a- or pro- or anti-rationality in a specific situation. Such evidence is rationality usable as a means to increase or maintain pro-rationality and hence rationality.

Finally here, a-rationality freedoms (and related rights) are not a purely a-rationality issue. They are also indirectly pro-rationality in that it is pro-rationality and rational to regard and treat the a-rationality as a-rationality – as rationally (truly) neither right nor wrong, as neither rationally-justified nor rationally-unjustified.

There are also numerous directly pro-rationality freedoms (and related rights), i.e., those not focusing on anything a-rationality. E.g., to have rationally-unquestionable, pro-rationality free speech requires various political, social, legal etc freedoms. E.g., we need the freedom (and right) to seek evidence and have our evidence-based, rational, pro-rationality statements seriously considered by others. Our statements here should not be ignored, ridiculed or censored if others disagree with our statements as such. (This paragraph can be adapted to apply to sometimes-fallible speculative hypothesising when seeking pro-rationality knowledge, i.e., to the imaginative freedom, diversity and creativity often needed to hypothesise here.)

Freedom to state non-evidence-based, irrational statements with anti-rationality effects, e.g., race-hate statements, is ruled out by pro-rationality theory. This ruling-out means freedom from such anti-rationality and from associated unhappiness, conflict and so on.

Such a-rationality and pro-rationality freedoms from racist, sexist etc discrimination, from (often-anti-rationality) free speech as such, from irrational censorship, and so on, would help motivate the freed potentially/actually pro-rational persons to (further) accept the theory rationally-justifying the freedoms (as far as possible…).

Various points above imply that all such freedoms (and related rights) apply universally among persons. This means considering all persons. Generalising this pro-rationality requirement requires types of world-wide fairness. (Here, in a very general sense, Rawls fits with pro-rationality theory.) E.g., pro-rationality theory forbids rich persons/nations paying for their children to have education or health-care that poor persons/nations cannot afford. This fairness and related sympathetic altruism (plus various other points) means a unique type of democratic socialism here. This would enable all to pro-rationality-flourish as far as possible consistent with maximising society’s overall pro-rationality. This peaceful world-society would involve all unselfishly sharing resources and everyone otherwise caring for society’s members in ways meaning all can be as pro-rationality as possible overall. (Rawls’s specifics here do not fully fit here, and neither do Kant’s, Aristotle’s, J.S. Mill’s and others’ ideal societies.)

Further regarding persons/society and fairness:- It is rational (correct) or knowledge that individual and other situational differences exist. So, e.g., the rational, pro-rationality-fair view here recognises that for some persons pro-rationality practices often need to be largely non-intellectual. E.g., that view accepts that some person cannot manage anything more difficult than cleaning parks and streets – and this unavoidability means they cannot rationally be viewed as responsible for their capacities and as morally faulty/inferior. Anyway, clean parks and streets are needed for everyone’s pro-rationality health, safety and aesthetic experiences. Not everyone needs to be a pro-rationality engineer, philosopher, scientist or similar.

The pro-rationality overall view realises that various pro-rationality balances among and within persons and vocations are needed. What is required regarding knowledge is that society overall has the at-the-time greatest achievable balanced quantity and quality of pro-rationality knowledge – used to educate and otherwise help society generally regarding being pro-rationality in practice.

Here, if persons are as pro-rationality as individually-maximally possible, inherently realistic (rational) pro-rationality theory accepts all as rationally-unquestionably of equal maximum moral value. (E.g., this includes infants, who cannot possibly be highly rational and pro-rationality.)

Relatedly, the theory does not expect extreme long-term effort by students/researchers to acquire knowledge. Too much time and effort trying to acquire pro-rationality knowledge means too little other practising of pro-rationality knowledge. This is a lack of rationality-required balance. In-effect this is anti-rationality. Here persons would study so hard it would be impossible to have the leisure, fun, happiness, exercise, health, sex, love, personal relationships, rest and hence cognitive ability they need to pro-rationality-optimally acquire pro-rationality knowledge and be individually-maximally pro-rationality overall. Such balance, rest, leisure etc are pro-rationality practices/factors.

**Section 4: Concluding Comments**

(Sections 1-2’s concluding comments are relevant here.)

Rationality-required factors imply a universally-applicable values-theory with one general obligatory end and many sub-values thereunder.

If a factor is required by rationality, and hence valuable regarding rationality’s very existence, rationality cannot self-coherently question whether the factor is required or valuable here. Rationality is inherently coherent. So a prescribable factor and its being valuable here, plus the associated value prescribing the factor, are rationally-unquestionable. Only the anti-rationality or irrational can (incorrectly) question the factor, its being valuable here, and the value prescribing it. Practised values here are rationality-required, pro-rationality factors.

(Similar comments apply regarding pro-rationality factors which help existing rationality increase or develop.)

Without rationality, and hence pro-rationality factors, humans could not reliably survive. Pro-rationality factors/values were also shown to concern everything else normal humans find naturally important and deeply meaningful, e.g., love, pleasure, various other emotions, peace, fairness, and raising happy, healthy children – and truth or knowledge. (Various qualifications are needed here of course.)

For such reasons pro-rationality theory is highly practicable, including via being naturally highly motivating. A dull, narrow or cerebral life is not pro-rationality-optimal. Passionate emotional engagement, much freedom, enjoyment, dedication, flourishing, diversity and creativity are often needed. And in a-rationality areas total freedom is appropriate, adding to the liberty and happiness involved in being pro-rationality.

Various pro-rationality practised values, e.g., non-sexism and non-racism, were shown to be necessary for or functional aspects of scientific (and all other) rationality. This, plus other points in Sections 1-3, provides sufficient evidence for pro-rationality values-theory being uniquely rationally-unquestionable. Such points were shown to be the only possible evidence, the only available evidence, for a values-theory. This paper shows that all values-theories except pro-rationality theory are at least somewhat internally-incoherent and incoherent with rationality, hence not rationally-justifiable. So they cannot be correct. Some other theories’ values, including non-racism and non-sexism, come under ‘Be pro-rationality’, but those other theories lack the evidence pro-rationality theory has for its sub-values.

The non-sexism and non-racism, and many related points above, e.g., concerning fairness, unselfishness, caring and co-operation, mean a pro-rationality world would be peaceful.

Pro-rationality theory’s values inherently include prescribing a rationally-critical approach. This includes the theory requiring its advocates to be self-critical, rationally viewing their human-suggested specifics as often fallible or unavoidably approximate. Yet via increasing knowledge here we can increasingly have a theory on-average clear enough to be a practicable work-in-progress.

To achieve what Kant views as the best society, rational persons are required. Similarly for Rawls, Aristotle, J.S. Mill and others. Fundamental to the existence and rationality of rational persons are rationality-required, pro-rationality factors and practised values. The values Kant etc can rationally-unquestionably include in such societies need to be pro-rationality.

**Appendix: Pro-rationality and the Is-Ought Issue**

This paper suggests a unique, as-sound-as-possible argument going from factual premises to conclusions concerning values. This suggests an as-far-as-possible solution to the is-ought or fact-value problem:-

(Each sentence in this argument can be correctly preceded by ‘It is a fact that’.)

There are rationality-required factors, factors necessary for human rationality. (These are an ‘is’.)

Practised values are required to achieve the prescribable factors. (These values are an ‘ought’.)

Those practised values are hence rationality-required (factors). (This means a rationality-required, rationally-unquestionable inextricable connection between that ‘is’ and that ‘ought’.)

Some practised values, e.g., non-sexism and non-racism, were shown to be at least implicitly necessary during rational thought. Others are necessary before rationality can exist.

All those values/factors are conceivably viewable by rationality as rationally-unquestionable.

With this, they are required for rational-justification, i.e., for the (as-far-as-possible) known-correct to exist (cognitively).

Therefore those values are aspects *of* rational-justification, *of* our knowing-the-correct.

That all means those values are as rationally-justified and hence as right as is possible for values. (Other values cannot rationally claim that.)

A value which is right (as possible) is by definition one we ought to practise. (There is no other rationally-unquestionable definition and alternative.)

Being necessary *for* or inherent aspects *of* rationality, certain practised values are from rationality’s conceivable viewpoint an ‘is’, not just an ‘ought’.

(Related points apply to practised values/factors helpful regarding increasing our rationality.)

To question those conclusions is to in-effect ask: ‘Is the right thing to do the right thing to do?’ (This is equivalent to ‘Is X X?’, ‘Is three three?’ and ‘Is something what it is?’.) The question implicitly assumes the answer is yes, i.e., that there is a right thing to do, which is the right thing to do.

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1. “Reason is …the slave of the passions” (Hume, D. “*Treatise*” III, 1.1) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. # Couvalis, G (2012) gives good explanations of much of what this paper means by rationality and knowledge.

   [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. apa.org/monitor (2014/06),

   [Wolfe and Hildyard, (2002), and Nelson and Zeanah (2014)](https://www.livescience.com › Health )  [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. [Harlow, Harry (June 1959](https://pages.uoregon.edu/adoption/archive/HarlowLIM.htm)). Those infants normally preferred a cuddly non-food-providing mother-substitute to a non-cuddly food-providing mother-substitute. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. The other work is Farrand (2016) [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Kant, I. (1785a [1996]) E.g., 4:433 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Rawls, J. (1971/1999) E.g., Sections 25,45, 63, 87. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. E.g., “*Nicomachean Ethics*” (1103a1–10), (1139a, 34, b, S-7), (1114b, 29), (1139a, 24-6, 31-2) [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Mill, J.S. “*Utilitarianism*”, beginning of Chapter 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. E.g., suppose violence is a necessary means to valued end E, a means one considers unjustified and refuses to implement. Here one values non-violence as an end and views it as of more value than end E, and hence as a higher priority than E. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. For a much more detailed discussion see Farrand (2016) [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Gaudry and Spielberger (1971) present research suggesting an on-average moderate degree is best regarding rationality/knowledge. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)