Happiness: The Role of Non-Hedonic Criteria in Its Evaluation

Irwin Goldstein

HAPPINESS has been one of the more interesting but difficult subjects to philosophize about. A great variety of different types of questions and issues arise in its discussion. Many questions about one's happiness will be purely hedonic—i.e., the issue is whether or not or to what degree the man is pleased or satisfied with his life, or whether or not or how much he enjoys himself or finds pleasure in his existence. 'Purely hedonic' questions are entirely *psychological* in nature; it is only the *descriptive meaning* of words in the question that is being attended to here. Many non-hedonic questions also arise; e.g.: Is the man's satisfaction dependent on some false belief he holds? Do *we* approve of his pleasures? Do *we* think he *should* feel satisfied with himself? In what way may one man's happiness be *superior* or more desirable than another's? The most conspicuous non-hedonic questions are the *evaluative* ones. 'Evaluative, non-hedonic' questions are moral questions, in which case the *prescriptive* meaning of words in the question is the object of concern and the answer to the question is a value-judgement.

In this essay, I will discuss some of what seem to be the more perplexing issues of both major types. I will primarily be concerned to show the significance of the non-hedonic, evaluative aspects of those questions since these have been practically ignored in much of the recent literature.

I will begin by discussing the questions that take the form "Is so and so 'really happy' or 'truly happy'?" Issues of 'true happiness' will arise. The significance of such expressions is peculiar and less than obvious. But they have a key role in controversies on happiness, bringing out some of the major issues, both hedonic and non-hedonic.

I. WHEN IS A PERSON 'REALLY HAPPY'?

When do we ask whether a person is 'really', 'truly', 'genuinely', happy?

When is happiness 'spurious' or 'unreal'? What is 'true happiness' or 'real happiness'? The import of such expressions will vary in different contexts.

1. To deny (or affirm) that some thing is a 'real' x or 'true' x is usually equivalent in truth value to simply denying (or affirming) that it is an x. Someone denies or affirms the thing is a *real* x in situations when he has reason to believe one might have supposed otherwise. Rhinestones are not *real* diamonds—people will sometimes be fooled into taking the former for the latter. There's little occasion for saying "Houses aren't real diamonds." Few people would ever suppose otherwise. One will often contrast 'real fights' with 'staged fights' and 'real anger' to 'feigned anger'.

A person will often have reason to feign, in some way, happiness. To convince his friends or enemies of his personal success or to divert their attention from his problems, he may 'put on a happy face' or simply *pretend* that all is going well. Someone who knows the person well or is simply perceptive will have reason to say "He's not really (truly) happy." He questions whether the person has met the hedonic criterion of happiness.

A person may believe he is happy when he 'really isn't' or believe he is more happy than he 'really is'. There are different ways in which one might misjudge his own happiness, and, arguably, some in which he couldn't. It is difficult, though, I believe, not impossible, to imagine someone erring in 'sincerely' answering the following question, "Are you at this moment happy with your life?" This is the sort of paradox that gives self-deception its name. It is less difficult to imagine someone being mistaken in his sincere answer to the following question, "Are you usually happy?" Such a judgement tests one's memory, not an infallible faculty. The possibility of error in memory is increased if there is a motive for erring (deceiving oneself). One might judge himself as being more (or less) happy than he, in fact, is or may simply judge himself as being 'usually happy' when he isn't. Another person of clearer vision will have reason to say "He thinks he's happy, but he's not really as happy as he thinks." Or "His happiness is 'basically spurious' or 'unreal'." Or, at a later date, the person might say "I thought I was happy, but I wasn't." In all these cases, the 'reality' of the happiness might be challenged on the basis of 'hedonic miscalculations'—a mistake in the estimate of degree of satisfaction or pleasure.

The question "Do you feel happy at the present moment?" is a bit different from the above. But even 'sincere' answers to this question seem to be subject to error in *degree* of happiness. The answer "I am *very* happy at the present moment" is implicitly a *comparison* with other periods of happiness and is in this way subject to errors in memory. The general question "Can one be mistaken about his own happiness?" I find ambiguous in that it could be interpreted in any of the ways just discussed. The type of error and its likelihood would differ according to what in-

terpretation is given this question.

Real happiness was denied or affirmed in the above cases because one was countering other beliefs or suppositions. When it is obvious that John is happy and no one doubts his happiness, there is no reason to say he is *really* happy (in this sense of 'really'); one would simply say "John is happy."

Plato and some recent philosophers[1] distinguished true and false pleasures. One might make similar distinctions in the case of happiness.

2. One might wish to call one's happiness 'false' when one is mistaken as to the cause of his happiness. A young man might believe his happiness is due to the wisdom of maturity when, in fact, it is brought on primarily by an active sex life. The 'falsity' here is the falsity of a *belief* whose object is the cause of the happiness. There is no error in 'hedonic-calculus': one has not mistakenly estimated the degree of some pleasure or satisfaction. The falsity of the happiness is judged on a non-hedonic criterion.

3. One might speak of 'false happiness' in those cases where the satisfaction or pleasure rests on a false belief: if the person were to be informed as to the truth of the situation, the satisfaction would end. For example, consider the scientist who, believing himself to have discovered a cure for cancer, takes great satisfaction in his work. If it is the case that he has only succeeded in affecting the *symptoms* of the disease but has left the real problem untouched, we might say "He enjoys a false happiness." In general, any person, believing the world to be other than it is, might live in 'ignorant bliss'. Nietzsche has said "Untruth is the condition of happiness," meaning that no one could be happy who was aware of the facts of the world. For Nietzsche, all happiness is 'false happiness'.

The falsity here is a non-hedonic attribute of the happiness. The degree of satisfaction or pleasure is no different when the happiness is 'false' from what it is when the happiness is 'true'. A 'pure hedonist' moralist wouldn't care if his happiness was false in this sense.

Terence Penelhum, with insight, notes that "since pleasure can depend on false judgement, this very fact supplies an obvious *motive* for self-deception."[2] By self-deception, I may protect myself from complete misery that would come to me should I 'fully believe' my wife was running around with another man. Concurrent with such a false belief, there would often be found a *second* false belief as to the degree of satisfaction one is receiving. In addition to deceiving himself about the nature of his wife's acts, he will also deceive himself about how happy he in fact is. If he is 'deceiving himself' about the first fact, he must in *some way* know the truth. If his happiness *depends on* his not knowing the truth, then his

[1] D. Gallop, "True and False Pleasures," *Philosophical Quarterly*, 10 (1960), 331-342; I. Thalberg, "False Pleasures," *Journal of Philosophy*, 59 (1962), 65-74; T. Penelhum, W. E. Kennick, A. Isenberg, "Pleasure and Falsity," *American Philosophical Quarterly*, 1 (1964), 81-100: a symposium.

[2] T. Penelhum, *ibid.*, p. 89.

happiness must in some way be lessened by his 'underlying awareness' of the truth. It is likely that the man will deceive himself about this 'lost happiness'; he will think himself happier than he in fact is. For this reason, one will be inclined to think the self-deceived man can not be 'truly happy' where 'truly' is used as in section 1 above. Thus, the happiness of the self-deceived man will likely be false in two ways.

4. Happiness is sometimes said to be 'false' or 'unreal' when it is 'unnatural' or 'artificial'. Instant milk made from powdered milk is not 'true milk' ('real milk') no matter how it looks or tastes. Many would argue a similar case for any pleasures that are induced 'artificially' with drugs; artificial happiness is not true happiness. Whether or not such happiness is to be considered 'natural' or 'artificial' depends on one's general views on man and the world and the meaning he assigns to the terms 'natural' and 'artificial'. One of the central issues to arise here is a moral or, what I have called, a 'non-hedonic, evaluative' one; artificial happiness, in the eyes of many people, is bad happiness. Moral criticisms of types of happiness will be discussed further on.

5. In those cases where x is a *scale word*—one that allows of the distinction of 'more' and 'less'—the claim that some thing is a 'true x' or that it is 'really x' is often equivalent to saying it is an x *high in degree*. A 'really fast car', 'truly strong man', 'really happy winter' is a *very* fast car, very strong man, etc. In the following claims, "Your car will see some real speed if you fill your tank with Texaco," "He's a man of true strength," "He found real happiness in married life," 'real' and 'true' function like 'much'.

That some x is high in degree may be conveyed verbally in different ways. "I certainly am happy today," "This is what I call happiness!," "You'll find happiness in Christ"—all refer to high degrees of happiness. 'Happy' and 'happiness' sometimes carry the meaning that 'very happy' and 'much happiness' carry at other times. How happy is 'happy'?

All the above references to a high degree of happiness may be based on a hedonic calculation. They may be ways of saying the person's satisfaction or pleasure is high in degree or 'quantity'. References to a high degree of happiness may also result from an evaluative, non-hedonic calculation; the application of such criteria will be discussed later on in this essay.

A denial that someone is 'really' or 'truly' happy may be just a denial that he has found a high degree of happiness. But what is not present to a high degree may be present to a lesser degree. A person while not being 'fantastically happy' may be at least satisfied or content in life; one might say of such a person that though he's not 'really happy', he is 'happy in some sense of the word'.

The type of claim that was discussed here in section 5 might be considered a special case of 6 below.

6. To call a particular example of the general class 'x' a 'true x', 'real x',

'genuine x' (or some equivalent phraseology) is often to claim that the example is *paradigmatic,* i.e., that it is exemplary or a good paradigm. In such cases, to assert that someone is a 'true soldier', 'real American', 'authentic man', 'true philosopher' is to offer an example one believes to be paradigmatic.

To offer a particular x as a 'good paradigm' is to claim that it shows well the essential qualities of x's, that it is representative of the whole class of x's, or that it is a significant or important example of an x, and, perhaps, one worthy of imitation. The assertion is often *morally evaluative.*

A person, in claiming "A true artist does not concern himself with material comfort," announces a quality he believes to be both essential and important to an artist. "A true soldier is a gentleman at heart" describes an example of a soldier 'worthy of admiration'. "Any genuine Canadian knows how to dress for winter" jokingly proposes a characteristic representative of, and essential to, Canadians.

Such statements when interpreted as being simply *descriptive* of the world or as *analytical* statements of the meaning of a word are trivially false. 'An artist doesn't concern himself with material comfort' is not as a matter of fact true of all artists, and is certainly not analytically true by virtue of the meaning of the word 'artist'. Taken as a *definition* of the word 'artist' the statement is a poor candidate.

Claims about 'true happiness' should often be interpreted as giving paradigmatic status to a particular kind of happiness. For example, "True happiness lies not in all pleasure, but in only that pleasure that is good and honest"—a paraphrase of a similar claim made by Thomas More in his *Utopia.* What is offered here as *true happiness* is what the author believes to be exemplary or worthy of imitation. The happiness is judged to be *true* by its conformity with certain non-hedonic, evaluative criteria.

The treatment one should give to such claims to 'true happiness', etc., should be the same as that which he would give to any proposal that some thing is 'exemplary' or 'worthy of imitation'. For example, should he disagree that the offered case is 'worthy of imitation', then he might *deny* that such a case is true happiness; he might go on to offer what he thinks is exemplary; he might offer whatever comment he thinks relevant to a discussion of such paradigms.

The *status* one should assign to such a value judgement should be the same status he assigns to evaluative statements in general. For instance, a person who believes moral judgements can be assigned a truth value should treat evaluative claims of 'true happiness' as being either true or false. Someone who interprets the prescriptive aspect of moral utterances *emotively* should do the same with evaluative claims of 'genuine happiness'. I will not take it as part of my task to propound a particular theory of the status of moral evaluations.

Statements containing 'true happiness' or similar expressions, *prima facie,* are open to any of interpretations 1-6. A question as to whether or

not a certain person could be 'truly happy' may turn about both hedonic and non-hedonic criteria; there's no reason to suppose that an utterance of this form must be in meaning specifically *one* of 1-6. "Hitler couldn't have been truly happy" may be a way of saying *both* that any happiness he might have seemed to have had would, in fact, have been largely only appearance (as in 1), for example, and that whatever pleasure or satisfaction he did experience would not have been an *exemplary* state of happiness. "Any person living that sort of life would have to feel guilty" is a denial that Hitler could have experienced much pleasure; the statement is a psychological hypothesis whose truth is dependent on some *empirical* fact. "I wouldn't call Hitler truly happy even if he were satisfied with himself and really did enjoy life a lot" is a non-hedonic, evaluative comment on Hitler's state.

"A man who rejects Christ will never find true happiness" is subject to the same double interpretation as the above. One might here be denying the possibility of such a person enjoying himself to any extent or being very satisfied in life living a non-Christian life while, at the same time, denying the 'validity' or 'significance' of any enjoyment the man may have had. One should answer such a claim as he would answer the denials embodied within it.

The question of whether one can find true happiness in drugs or in living the life of an electric oyster (one with electrodes implanted in the brain to stimulate pleasure areas) is primarily an evaluative issue.

The significance of such claims as were discussed in 6 is often overlooked. Statements containing references to some x as a 'true x' or 'real x' or similar phraseology are often interpreted as empirical claims of a far more obvious variety or as analytic statements poor in analysis. They are seen as at best poetic but essentially irrational. For instance, "There are definitions, frequently improvised in the heat of debate, which can be said to beg the question of the *truth* of the debated proposition. Thus, if I try to dispute your claim that all philosophers are impractical people by citing instances, and you then save your generalization by saying 'But I wouldn't call anybody a real philosopher unless he were impractical', your definition (or rather, partial definition-criterion of adequacy!) begs the question at issue. . . ."[3] But what is 'the question at issue' here? The author, Arthur Pap, thinks it is the simple empirical generalization 'All philosophers are, in fact, impractical'. But would the person consider his claim *refuted* upon presentation of a single, live, counter-example? It appears to me 'the question at issue' here is whether or not it is a significantly characteristic trait of philosophers that they are impractical. Is Pap's opponent 'begging the issue' or is Pap misinterpreting the issue?

In a discussion on happiness John Wilson, too, overlooks the significance of the expression he discusses. After (correctly) saying "Many

[3] A. Pap, *Semantics and Necessary Truth* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1966), pp. 222-223.

different criticisms of the ways in which men live have been made under the aegis of the concept of happiness," he goes on to list various criticisms. He sums them up in the following way: "The criticisms in 3-6 amount to saying that the man's life is narrow-3, somehow 'inferior'-4, precarious-5, or amoral-6." He goes on to say: "it is tempting but wrong to use 'he isn't really happy' for one or more of 3-6, for the criteria here have nothing directly to do with happiness."[4]

But *why* is it "tempting" to say such things here? Is the temptation merely, simply, a result of wishful-thinking? Does the presence of something 'inferior' or 'amoral' always 'tempt' us to say false things? We are tempted to say "The man isn't really happy" because one of the meanings given to this expression is that he isn't 'significantly happy' or 'happy in a way worthy of imitation'.

II. Degrees of Happiness

We often judge some states of happiness superior to others. Sometimes, we judge on the basis of a hedonic criterion and at other times on the basis of non-hedonic criteria. (Within the latter, I include cases where I judge A's happiness superior to B's because in his happy life A is considerate to others—he brings pleasure to other people. I include this under the title of a 'non-hedonic' criterion since it is not the degree of *his* pleasure that makes his happiness superior to B's.)

1. We often speak of 'deep happiness', contrasting this state with 'shallow' or 'superficial' happiness, where the former is usually judged superior to the latter. A man's happiness is deep if he has a *disposition* to be happy. Often, to deny that one's happiness is deep is to disclaim any permanency or dependability. A preference of a deep happiness over a 'shallow happiness' might be hedonically grounded: one may expect more pleasure and satisfaction from a dependable state than from a precarious one and judge the deeper happiness *superior* for that reason. However, if one prefers the reliable state over the unreliable one regardless of where the greater pleasure lies, his preference of a 'deeper happiness' is not hedonically grounded.

Also, the happiness of a man will be said to be 'deep' if he leads a life one judges as 'meaningful' or 'significant' and is very happy doing so, just as a person is a 'deep thinker' if his thoughts are on 'significant topics' and he thinks quite frequently about them. Children are not deeply happy in this sense. For this reason the happiness of adult life has been judged superior to that of children. Both hedonic and non-hedonic criteria may be offered in support of such a preference. One might believe children are not capable of experiencing as much pleasure or satisfaction as adults are and/or that in some important way their life cannot be 'meaningful'.

---

4 "Happiness," *Analysis*, 29 (1968), 19-20.

2. Another state of happiness frequently highly valued is that of being 'fully happy'. A 'full happiness' is usually thought of as a particularly desirable kind of happiness.

Being 'fully happy' is a particular way of being 'very happy'. A man may be 'basically happy' but not 'fully happy' if he has outstanding grievances with life. He is distant from 'full happiness' to the extent he is dissatisfied in his life. One may value 'full happiness' on the basis of its high hedonic value.

It seems a person not 'fully happy' might experience as much pleasure or satisfaction as one who is 'fully happy'. He has grievances but he also has joys and the latter are very great indeed. Another person might be 'fully happy' on a less intense level, e.g., 'perfectly content'. To the extent the 'full happiness' is valued over the more tumultuous state just described, the preference is not hedonically grounded.

3. The expression 'higher happiness' has been used to refer to the happiness in the 'higher faculties'. 'Higher' in the expression 'higher happiness' also carries the meaning of 'higher in degree', and refers to a happiness high in degree of pleasure. In speaking of 'higher happiness' a person may be using either (or both) of these two criteria. Should one prefer the state of 'higher happiness' over another state of happiness equal in degree of pleasure, his preference is not hedonically grounded.

4. The following is a list of various phrases which describe mental states valued both for their degree of pleasure and satisfaction and for other non-hedonic reasons: 'greatest happiness'; 'perfect happiness'; 'rich', 'pure', 'lasting', 'total', 'complete', happiness. The list could be extended. All the previous expressions describe states high in degree of pleasure. In meaning, they are distinguished from each other by the non-hedonic criteria they embody.

Should one wish to build a system of ethics resting solely on a hedonic criterion of happiness, he must handle the above expressions with great care or he ought not to use them.

III. ROLE OF NON-HEDONIC CRITERIA

Many recent philosophers have discussed happiness as if it were a concept solely hedonic in meaning whereby non-hedonic considerations were really irrelevant in a discussion of how happy a person is, whether or not he is happy, or 'what happiness is'. It is a fact, however, that many people (perhaps all) use happiness words ('happy', 'happier', 'happily') in such a way that they will judge one person happier than another or they will deny that some person is happy on the basis of some *non-hedonic*, evaluative criterion. There seems to be enough reason to say that *while being hedonic, happiness words are also non-hedonically evaluative.*

Throughout the whole of this paper I have discussed many ways in which non-hedonic judgements do enter into our discussions about hap-

piness. Up until this point they have arisen only in the context of discussions of 'true happiness' or 'higher happiness', etc., but not in reference to 'happiness' alone. But it is a fact that people frequently apply these same non-hedonic criteria in calling a person 'happy' as they might in speaking of him as 'truly happy', 'deeply happy', etc.

The same hesitation people have in saying Hitler might have seen 'true happiness' they would have in saying that he had lived a 'happy' life. Many people would deny that idiots or madmen could be 'happy', even if they do enjoy life and are satisfied in their situation. Some people have even said that disasters after one's death or in one's life, though unknown to the person, would be reason to say the person did not have a happy life. Some refuse to call a man happy whose wife has been carrying on with another man; they deny happiness even if they know the man will never find out. It is an unappreciated fact that, at times, happiness words retain much of their earlier non-psychological meaning of 'fortunate' or 'lucky'.

Richard Hare recognizes this evaluative nature in claims of happiness.

> Suppose that we ask whether a mental defective is happy . . . Suppose he in fact gets all the things which he likes and none of the things that he dislikes (he satisfies all *hedonic* criteria of happiness); are we supposed to call him happy? . . . although we should admit that in a sense he was happy, we should then say 'Look what he's missing' . . . 'He's not *really* happy' or 'He's not happy in the fullest sense of the word'.[5]
>
> Before we call a man happy we find it necessary to be sure, not only that his desires are satisfied, but also that the complete set of his desires is one which we are not very much averse to having ourselves.[6]

There is no need to say that *all* references to happiness are evaluative in this way; it seems we sometimes do use happiness words in a morally neutral way. But it should be recognized that there is an important use of these words which does include a non-hedonic value judgement. Indeed, this value judgement is often more extreme than that which Hare acknowledges. Before calling a man happy it is not just that we mustn't be *averse* to having his desires; many people would also require that his desires be *good* or *commendable* ones.

Other contemporary philosophers, while recognizing the fact that non-hedonic criteria are in fact frequently employed in discussions of happiness, assume the introduction of such criteria to be really irrelevant to the issue. In making an issue of *explicitly denying* that the concepts of 'inferiority', 'precariousness', and 'immorality' have anything 'directly to do with happiness', John Wilson seems at least implicitly, to have noted that people do in fact apply such criteria. He offers no reasons to support his denial, nor does he offer an explanation why people in fact do tend to use

---

[5] *Freedom and Reason* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), p. 127.
[6] *Ibid.* p 128.

these criteria. There is a recent tendency in philosophy to interpret the history of philosophy of happiness (Aristotle and Spinoza included) as having been merely a sporting ground for the airing of prejudices, as philosophers continually make 'irrelevant' value judgements in their theorizing about happiness. Roger Montague, for instance, begins his recent paper on happiness with the following interpretation of the ancient philosophers: "Different schools recommended different forms of happiness under the guise of saying what it is."[7] Contrary to this school of thought, I find that a theory of happiness that assigns non-hedonic evaluative criteria a role in the *logic* or *grammar* or *meaning* of happiness words better accounts for past and present thought about happiness.

IV. Happiness as Utopian Concept

". . . With regard to what happiness is [people] differ, and the many do not give the same account as the wise. For the former think it is some plain and obvious thing . . . (but) they admire those who proclaim some great ideal that is above their comprehension." (Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*, 1095a)

It is a fact that we *idealize* about happiness quite frequently. (We also frequently idealize about friendship, love, art, and many other things.) Throughout history, discussions entitled 'happiness' or its non-English equivalent have been creations of ideal states. Until the Renaissance, the words we generally translate as 'happiness' were often equated with the *Summum Bonum*. The term 'happiness' often suggests ideals of pleasing states and conditions of perfection never in fact realized on Earth. There seems to be sufficient reason to say that in *meaning* 'happiness' is often ideal in character. One might say 'happiness' often denotes a *utopian concept;* one might *define* one sense of 'happiness' as a *(the) utopian hedonic mental state.*

Throughout history, a search for a *definition* of happiness, (love, or art, etc.) has been a search for a description of the ideal state; in the case of happiness, the search was for an explicit description of a (the) utopian hedonic mental state. The definition offered would describe a mental state thought to be high both in hedonic and non-hedonic value. References to such valued states as 'deep', 'pure', 'full', 'higher' happiness are frequent because of their great relevance. Aristotle's discussion of happiness is packed with references to a 'higher', 'better', or 'more noble' state. If he wasn't searching for the *best* of its kind, the most *ideal* state, what could lead Aristotle to add to his definition of happiness as "activity of soul in accordance with virtue," the additional direction "and if there is more than one virtue, in accordance with the best and most complete"?[8]

---

[7] "Happiness," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, 67 (1966-67), 87.
[8] *Nichomachean Ethics*, Bk. I, Ch. 7, 15.

Utopian uses of 'happiness' words are not, of course, restricted to pre-Renaissance philosophy. Thus John Cowper Powys in his book on happiness[9] understands his subject to be dealing with questions of "the purpose of life," "the good life," "the ideal life."

Discussions of ideal states will take quite a different form from discussions, say, of 'the ordinary meaning' of some word. For example, in the case of the former and not the latter it will be relevant to criticise another's views if they describe a state 'unattainable', 'immoral', or 'imperfect'. The following criticism is only relevant to the discussion of the utopian concept. "The fourth and most fundamental criticism of the humanistic conception of happiness . . . [is that] happiness attained in this manner would not be the highest possible for man."[10] It should be emphasized that discussions of ideal states, by their very nature do not take place on a morally neutral, purely *descriptive* level; non-hedonic value judgements are intrinsic to a utopian discussion of happiness.

Descriptions of ideal states will differ dramatically from one person to another, from one social group to another, and from one period in history to another. This fact partially explains the great variety of things that have been said about happiness. It is awareness of this great diversity of, often conflicting, claims that leads D. A. Lloyd Thomas in his recent article on happiness to discuss the word 'happy' rather than the word 'happiness' since "the term, not being an abstract noun, has been less prejudiced by past philosophical usage than 'happiness'."[11] It is true that the great variety of past claims appear under the title of 'happiness' but I think one would find this same 'prejudice' in the usage of 'happy'. The 'prejudice' he speaks of I'm inclined to believe is the utopian character of the term. To treat a word *usage* as 'prejudiced' is at least to confess one doesn't see what people mean by the word. Thomas' article entitled "Happiness" is liable to leave many people disappointed, particularly those for whom it remains a 'prejudiced' utopian term.

It is a noticeable fact that philosophers today are not particularly interested in constructing utopian systems; perhaps, they are not confident enough in their moral judgements. But they ought not to let their reluctancy to idealize lead them to overlook the fact that many words in our language remain utopian in meaning.

It seems to me that lying behind much of this recent tendency in philosophy to treat happiness as a solely-hedonic concept where no other evaluations are relevant is the tendency to focus in on what is often considered 'the ordinary use' of the term. Here, as in other areas in philosophy, what is taken as 'the ordinary use' of the term is not 'that use

---

[9] *The Art of Happiness* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1935), p. 3.

[10] G. Thomas, *Christian Ethics and Moral Philosophy* (New York: Scribner, 1955), p. 415.

[11] *Philosophical Quarterly*, 18 (1968), 97.

found outside academic circles', but 'that use which is *least controversial* and *most mundane.*' The happiness *least* 'ordinary' in this sense is the especially controversial utopian state.