Indignation, Appreciation, and the Unity of Moral Experience

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Introduction/Abstract

Our moral experience of the world comes in many flavors. Is there any phenomenal unity definitive of moral experience? Several philosophers have contested this, notably Walter Sinnott-Armstrong. In this paper, I argue that paying close phenomenological attention to our moral emotions, and to what separates them from other emotions, paves the way to a promising hypothesis about the unity of moral experience.

1 The Diversity of Moral Experience

Some of our mental states embody moral commitments, some do not. Thinking that the table is brown and deciding to read this rather than that novel, for instance, have no obvious moral dimension; believing that genocide is wrong and deciding to donate to an anti-corruption charity, in contrast, do. Of our morally committal mental states, some are consciously experienced but many are not. For most of our lives, the belief that genocide is wrong is not consciously entertained; in contrast, a decision to donate to charity is typically taken consciously. Just to fix ideas, let us call the domain of mental states which both embody moral commitment and are consciously experienced 'moral experience' – and the study of this domain of phenomena 'moral phenomenology.'

Is there anything common to all moral experiences that moreover distinguishes them from other mental states – a kind of phenomenal signature of moral experience? One is forgiven for being antecedently skeptical, and several philosophers have developed explicit arguments for a negative answer (e.g., Yasenchuk 1997, Gill 2008, Sinnott-Armstrong 2008). In the remainder of this section, I discuss Sinnott-Armstrong's argument against the unity of moral experience. The discussion will issue in a clear challenge for any unitary account.

Sinnott-Armstrong's argument is in two parts. In the first instance, Sinnott-Armstrong claims that moral experiences fall into two separate categories: moral thinking and moral deciding. Moral thinking is the process whereby we come to form a *judgment* about a moral matter – to endorse some 'moral belief content' (2008: 87). Once we have formed such a judgment, however, there is still the matter of deciding to act in accordance with this judgment – to do the right thing. This is a separate and independent form of moral experience, since 'moral judgment can be made without any such decision, and the decision can be made without any conscious moral judgment' (*Ibid.*). The independence of moral thought and moral decision represents for Sinnott-Armstrong a first aspect of disunity in moral experience.

At the same time, in reflecting on what might unite moral thinking and moral deciding, we should consider what might separate each from its nonmoral counterpart. Something distinguishes moral from nonmoral thinking and moral from nonmoral deciding. And whatever that is, it might very well represent a measure of similarity between moral thinking and moral deciding. Suppose, for instance, that moral thinking is distinguished from nonmoral thinking by the fact that it is thinking about right and wrong, and that moral deciding is distinguished from nonmoral deciding by the fact that it is deciding about right and wrong. Then although moral thinking and moral deciding are clearly different, insofar as thinking and deciding are, they are also importantly similar, insofar as both concern right and wrong. (Here 'right and wrong' is used as simplistic illustration. We may replace it with whatever more textured notion we think separates both moral from nonmoral thinking and moral from nonmoral deciding. It is possible, of course, that what separates moral from nonmoral thinking is *different* from what separates moral from nonmoral deciding. But there is no antecedent reason to suspect this and some positive reason would have to be provided to suggest it.)

In any case, the more central part of Sinnott-Armstrong's case against the unity of moral experience pertains to the considerable phenomenal disunity he finds even within the circumscribed domain of moral thought. Sinnott-Armstrong tentatively adopts a theory of morality popular from the social psychology and anthropology of the day, according to which societies everywhere are governed by four kinds of moral rule, violations of each of which are met with a distinctive emotional reaction (Shweder et al. 1997, Haidt and Joseph 2004). The four moral spheres are: the morality of autonomy (forbidding, e.g., the gratuitous harming of another), the morality of community (demanding, e.g., respect and deference to parents), the morality of purity (forbidding, e.g., incest even among consenting adults), and the morality of reciprocity (requiring, e.g., that we keep our promises). Violations of autonomy, the theory claims, are met with anger, violations of community with contempt, of purity with disgust, and of reciprocity with resentment.

Although Sinnott-Armstrong endorses this framework only very partially, he draws from it the following lesson:

> Details aside, the main point is that various areas of morality feel very different. Anger does not feel anything like disgust, contempt, and distrust [or resentment]. Just consider what it is like to . . . be the victim of a violent robbery. Now imagine eating human flesh or witnessing adult consensual sex. Next consider spitting on your father's grave. . . When I introspect on this variety of cases, it is hard for me to find anything interesting that is common or peculiar to these moral experiences. (2008: 89)

Here is the core of Sinnott-Armstrong's case against the unity of moral experience: introspective reflection on the variety of our experiential reactions to moral states of affairs reveals no evident similarity but on the contrary a wide phenomenal diversity.

In response, the first thing I want to point out is that although Sinnott-Armstrong is surely right that 'Anger does not feel anything like disgust, contempt, [etc.],' it is not clear that anger is more phenomenally different from disgust and contempt than visual experience is from olfactory and tactile experience. Seeing a tree does not feel anything like smelling coffee or touching velvet. Yet few among us would deny that there is some phenomenal unity to *perceptual* experience, which moreover distinguishes it from (e.g.) conscious thought or emotion. It is just that the phenomenal similarity among perceptual experiences is likely very subtle, and probably structural

rather than content-based (i.e., not a matter of *what* perceptual awareness presents to us, but of *how* perception makes us aware). Personally, I find quite compelling Husserl's notion that perceptual experience is distinctive in presenting its objects *in the flesh* ('in persona,' he writes). Seeing the tree in my backyard is phenomenally dissimilar to thinking about the same tree, inter alia, insofar as it presents the tree 'in the flesh.' This appears to mean that while both the thinking and the seeing represents the tree, the seeing represent the tree as in some sense *present here at now*, whereas the thought does not (more on this in §3). Similar phenomenal differences can be discerned between smelling coffee and thinking about coffee, touching velvet and thinking about velvet, and so on. Thus although seeing a tree feels evidently very different from smelling coffee and touching velvet, there is nonetheless a subtle structural similarity between them: they all present their objects in the flesh, *hic et nunc*.

By the same token, now, there may well be a subtle structural similarity between the experiences of ager, contempt, and disgust that constitutes an important measure of phenomenal unity. Nothing Sinnott-Armstrong says rules out this kind of subtle phenomenal commonality. The considerable phenomenal dissimilarity across our experiential reactions to moral issues is perfectly compatible with the existence of a delicate thread running through them.

At the same time, we can read Sinnott-Armstrong as posing a challenge to the proponent of unity: *show us* the subtle, potentially structural feature that might unite the domain of moral experience. In the next section, I take a first step toward meeting this challenge. Importantly, however, I accept even less than Sinnott-Armstrong the fourfold psycho-anthropological account of morality and the moral emotions. I will work toward my own characterization of moral emotions, which will bring out a first layer of phenomenal unity within moral experience. I will later consider non-emotional moral experience.

2 The Phenomenal Unity of Moral Emotion

Imagine, if you can, that you receive a rejection email from a journal. If you are anything like me, your first reaction will feature prominently a coalition of painful feelings: disappointment, certainly, with a sharper or milder sinking of the heart,

perhaps tinted with a subtle sort of shame or sheepishness, an inward shrinking that says 'the truth is I'm just not good enough for this journal.' But imagine you then go on to read the basis of this rejection: a single report from a referee who completely misunderstood even the most basic elements of the paper and the issue it engages with.[1] Again if you are like me, your initial pain is likely to morph into something more in the nature of anger: the inward shrinking gives way to a more aggressive, outward-flowing feeling. Your angry feeling is at least as unpleasant as pain, disappointment, or shame, but its form of displeasure also incorporates an element of grievance: it *blames* – the referee, the editors, *someone*.

This seems an essential difference between pain and anger. The kind of emotional transition just described – broadly, a transition from painful to angry experience – surely varies in detail across persons and occasions. But a core feature is that while the initial pain involves centrally the sense that *something bad happened to me*, the anger goes beyond it in involving also the sense that *someone is responsible for this bad thing happening to me*. This is why anger *blames*: it assigns responsibility for something bad. It is also why anger *presupposes* pain, insofar as it is at least psychologically impossible to experience anger without being pained: it is at least nomologically impossible to feel that someone is blameworthy for something bad for me without the sense that something bad in fact happened to me. (I say 'at least' because I want to leave open the possibility that anger presupposes pain not just causally but constitutively, so that it is in fact *metaphysically* impossible to experience anger without being pained.) My suggestion is that this is an essential difference between pain and anger: pain casts its object as bad for me, anger casts its object as *blameworthy* for something bad for me.

Different frameworks are available for understanding this difference between the bad-for-me and the blameworthy-for-something-bad-for-me. Some will see these as aspects of pain and anger's cognitive or representational *contents*, some will see them rather as built into the very modes or attitudes characteristic of pain and anger, and some will advert to something called the 'formal objects' of pain and anger (see Kenny 1963). I am a partisan of the second, 'attitudinal' approach (Kriegel 2017). In my framework, *what* my pain represents is simply the fact that my paper was rejected (this is the pain's 'content'). The fact that this is bad for me is 'baked into' the pain's very mode or manner of representing the rejection (this is the pain's 'attitude'). We might

say that the pain represents-as-bad-for-me the rejection, where 'representing-as-bad-for-me' is one determinate manner of representing. Similarly, the anger represents-as-blameworthy the referee (say), where representing-as-blameworthy is a manner of representing. But this is just one theoretical framework. Regardless of framework, the difference between pain and anger must reflect, I would insist, the difference between the presence and absence of emotionally felt attribution of responsibility ('emotionally felt' as opposed to 'disinterestedly judged').[2]

Pain and anger are negative emotions, but a parallel difference can be found, in the sphere of positive emotions, between *pleasure* and *gratitude*. Pleasure refers only to a benefit ('something good happened to me'), gratitude also to a benefactor, that is, to someone *responsible* for this benefit – someone who is therefore *praiseworthy*. Junior is pleased to eat ice cream, but is grateful *to grandma* for buying him ice cream. His pleasure represents-as-good-for-him eating the ice cream; his gratitude represents-as-praiseworthy grandma. Where anger blames, gratitude praises. This is why gratitude presupposes pleasure in somewhat the same way anger presupposes pain.

I now want to explore another kind of emotional transition. Suppose you come off an airplane and get into a taxi, only to realize to your horror that you had lost your wallet, probably in the plane. In the grip of anxiety, you rush to the airport Lost & Found office, where a woman takes down your information, tells you that these cases take typically an hour or two to resolve, and asks you to return approximately an hour later. After forty minutes of anxious meandering, you return to the office, where she hands you your wallet – everything in it – with a kind smile on her face. 'It was indeed on the airplane,' she tells you. You cannot help but feel a gush of tremendous gratitude to this stranger, who after all was just doing her job. As you leave the office and wait for the elevator, however, a guy from the Lost & Found office tells you that his coworker actually went through quite an ordeal to get your wallet. Apparently she personally went to the gate, insisted somewhat tensely with the crew that the airplane must be searched before it takes off again, and eventually went in herself and retrieved your wallet from the side of your original seat. She did all this, you are told, because she saw how distraught you were. As you hear this, a new feeling dawns on you. It is not *only* an intensification of your gratitude. There is also a quality of *appreciation* for the person

herself, independently of how she relates to you. She didn't *have* to do all that, you feel, but she is just a good person. Her actions did not just benefit you, but exhibited or embodied a measure of moral excellence. This new feeling, this *appreciation* of the person, does not bend toward the person the way gratitude does, but on the contrary moves back from her, as it were to take the measure of the objective goodness of the person. What this new feeling of appreciation 'says' is not just that something good happened *to you*, but that something good *exists in the world*. (The name 'appreciation' is suboptimal, but bests all alternatives – more on this at the end of this section.)

The main contrast I want to draw here is between gratitude and (this kind of) appreciation: although both present their object as responsible for some good, gratitude presents its object as responsible for something good-*for-me*, whereas appreciation presents its object as responsible for something good-*simpliciter*. This explains the following striking asymmetry between gratitude and (the relevant kind of) appreciation: while you can feel grateful only for an act of beneficence in which you yourself are the beneficiary, the relevant kind of appreciation is something you can feel toward an act of beneficence between two third parties. If you see someone go out of his way to help a blind stranger cross the street, then pending some projective identification on your part, you cannot quite feel grateful for this act, but you can certainly appreciate it in the relevant sense. Where gratitude says – so to speak – 'someone benefited me' (and a certain type of moral pride may say 'I benefited someone'), this kind of appreciation says 'someone benefited someone.' It detaches itself from one's own involvement in the situation and presents an act of beneficence in an 'objective' light.[3]

My phenomenological hypothesis, if you will, is that when you move from feeling gratitude to feeling appreciation toward your Lost & Found helper, you are moving from experiencing her as responsible for something good for you to experiencing her as responsible for something 'objectively' good. Because you too are a 'someone,' it is possible for you to experience her help not only as an instance of someone benefiting you, but also as one of someone benefiting someone. You happen to be the accidental value of the variable 'someone,' but this is not what appreciation appreciates, so to speak, and in this it differs essentially from gratitude. Both your gratitude and your appreciation evaluate the wallet help positively, but what gratitude

values is tied up with the fact that you yourself were benefited; whereas the appreciation values the fact that someone was benefited. The appreciation takes distance from the act of beneficence and considers it in an objective light, and the warmth you consequently feel toward the Lost & Found lady has a newer, somehow 'nobler' quality than sheer gratitude for having been benefitted. Such gratitude can be felt toward a slimy car salesman who proves willing to cut some shoddy corners to save you a cool grand; but the kind of appreciation of which I am speaking cannot take such a man as its object.

I want to suggest that it is in this kind of transition from felt gratitude to felt appreciation that we enter the realm of the *moral* emotions. From the perspective of your gratitude, the Lost & Found helper is responsible for a *prudential* good; from the perspective of your appreciation, she is responsible for a *moral* good. This is why it is possible for you to feel grateful to the slimy salesman (whether or not you endorse this feeling!) but impossible for you to appreciate him. The essential difference between gratitude and appreciation, on my suggestion, is that the experience of gratitude toward *x* represents-as-prudentially-praiseworthy *x*, whereas the experience of appreciation toward *x* represents-as-morally-praiseworthy *x*. Thus the relevant kind of appreciation is by its nature a moral emotion in a way gratitude is not.

Here too, there is a counterpart in the domain of negative emotions. Suppose you receive a rejection based on a referee report which is not incompetent but somehow dismissive and vaguely malicious. Months later, you learn from a mutual friend who the referee was, and learn also that she knew you were the author. From interactions with her at various conferences, you have long suspected that she resented you, because of what you can only surmise is that grant you obtained at her expense fifteen years ago. Your anger about that rejection will likely acquire a new quality – a quality we might call 'indignation' – whereby you take a step back and see in a new, more objective light that rejection. It is now experienced as something bad simpliciter, not just bad for you. More precisely, I propose, while your original anger at the rejection involved experiencing the referee as responsible for something *prudentially* bad, your indignation involves experiencing the referee as responsible for something *morally* bad. Within my attitudinal framework, this amounts to a difference in manners of

representation: anger represents-as-prudentially-blameworthy whereas indignation represents-as-morally-blameworthy. Accordingly, indignation in this sense is something you can feel toward an instance of harming between third parties, whereas with anger this is only possible through a kind of projective identification with the harmed party. In the metaphorical terms used above, while anger says 'someone harmed me' (and guilt says 'I harmed someone'), indignation says 'someone harmed someone.'[4] Here too, of course, indignation *can* involve oneself, since one is always a 'someone' and can be morally and not only prudentially harmed (cf. Bommarito 2017: 18). Nonetheless, true indignation is insensitive to the fact that the morally harmed person is oneself; when it seems thus sensitive, it is better thought of as an admixture of anger and indignation (a commonplace cocktail!). It is thus crucial to the difference between anger and indignation that the latter involves a detachment of one's felt evaluation from the specificity of one's own involvement in the situation, with the result that its evaluation is experienced as objective in a way anger's is not.

The distinctively moral character of indignation explains why, after stubbing one's toe, it is only human, if somewhat silly, to get angry *at the table*, but totally incongruent to feel *indignant* about the whole thing; why failure to feel indignation when presented with the facts about some moral tragedy (the "trail of tears," say) is suggestive of a moral shortcoming in a way failure to feel angry is not (cf. Drummond 2017: 22); and why the fantasies of revenge – including violent, morally pyrrhic revenge – so characteristic of anger are absent in typical indignation.

A similar claim of distinctive moral character in indignation is made by Peter Strawson (1962) in his discussion of the contrast between indignation and *resentment*. Like anger, resentment casts its object as responsible for something bad for one – it, too, *blames*. But where anger's blame is aggressive and engaging, resentment's has a more withdrawn, bitter quality to it. The resentful has resigned herself to the relevant evil, the angry nurses visions of restored justice through retribution. Despite these differences, both attribute to their object responsibility for a prudential evil – for harm to one's interests. Indignation is in contrast unmoored from the narrow perspective of self-interest and thereby acquires its moral dimension. Strawson (1962: 15) writes:

> [O]ne who experiences the vicarious analogue of resentment is said to be indignant or disapproving, or morally indignant or disapproving. What we have here is, as it were,

> resentment on behalf of another, where one's own interest and dignity are not involved; and it is this impersonal or vicarious character of the attitude, added to its others, which entitle it to the qualification 'moral'.

Some commentators have wondered why Strawson should treat the 'vicariousness' of an attitude as a mark of its moral character (e.g., Mason 2003: 243). But our parallel phenomenological contrast between gratitude and appreciation makes that clearer. The vicariousness of appreciation and indignation is really not what matters here, since both can be experienced toward acts directed at oneself. Rather, what matters is that in such experiences one's own involvement in the situation is accidental, and it is the very nature of the act that is evaluated, not its effect on one's own interests.

In other words, indignation and appreciation bear an important phenomenal resemblance in the dimension of felt objectivity they share, the independence of their concern from the pertinence of one's involvement. This is central to the status of indignation and appreciation as genuinely moral emotions. (Rationalists have tended to think that the objectivity of morality is something we need to call upon cognitive states to capture; I think the present phenomenological analysis shows that this discrimination exists already in our emotional experience.)

Here we can see a significant measure of phenomenal unity across distinct moral emotions: insofar as the essential characteristic of appreciation is representing-as-morally-praiseworthy, and that of indignation is representing-as-morally-blameworthy, both represent-as-morally-responsible (since moral blameworthiness and praiseworthiness are two species of moral responsibility). Accordingly, indignation and appreciation are two species of a single genus – moral emotion – somewhat as visual, olfactory, and tactile experiences are three species of a single genus – perceptual experience. There is no less unity in the former group than in the latter. Therefore, to the extent that we are willing to consider perception a 'phenomenal kind,' we should extend the same accommodation to moral emotion.

Before moving on, I want to free the above discussion from the shackles of *words*. Doubtless one could, with no undue infelicity, use the word 'anger' to denote instances of the kind of feeling I called indignation, or the word 'indignation' to denote instances

of the feeling I called anger. And certainly the word 'appreciation' can be used for any number of mental states other than the essentially moral feeling I have attempted to isolate here (including notably a variety of *aesthetic* experiences). Language is messy, and language use messier yet. But the underlying phenomenal reality may be far more orderly. It may be systematically structured, for instance, by a nested web of genus-species and determinable-determinate relationships, albeit ones no easier to discern in the phenomenal than, say, in the biological realm (see, e.g., Dupré 1981 for some of the empirical and principled complexities involved in the latter case). It is not my goal here to make a case for the general idea that phenomenal reality is more disciplined than phenomenological language. What I want to stress is only that the above claims are claims about certain emotional experiences, about their distinctive characters and their essential similarities and dissimilarities; they are *not* claims about emotion *concepts*, much less about emotion *words*. It is, of course, impossible to talk about emotions without using emotion words, and this opens the above discussion to objections which are not really pertinent to it – objections of the form 'Here is a case where Joe Sixpack describes a feeling as indignation that is not specifically moral.' I have no desire to forbid Joe Sixpack his usage of the word, but would insist that the feeling he therewith picks out is not the one of which I speak.

Importantly, this does not render my thesis trivial, since I am not pegging my use of 'indignation' to whatever feeling would conform with my thesis. My approach has been rather to zoom in on specific kinds of emotional experience through consideration of certain experiential transitions, where a certain new phenomenal element comes into introspective relief and is established to pertain distinctly to the experiences one transitions *into*. This is, in a way, a variant of the 'phenomenal contrast method' commonly used in phenomenological discussions (Siegel 2007). In standard applications of the method, we simultaneously juxtapose two phenomenal *states* in something like simulative imagination; in the present variant, we contemplate a phenomenal *process* and try to focus the mind on the phenomenal difference between the beginning and end states of the process. Using this method, I have attempted in this section to isolate two essentially moral emotions and show the phenomenal unity they exhibit. What English words it is most natural to use to pick out these two emotions is the least important aspect of the discussion.

It is not my intention to suggest, of course, that these two are the *only* moral emotions in our psychological repertoire. On the contrary, in §4 I will discuss several others. But the discussion in this section is meant to generate the suspicion that despite the evident heterogeneity in our emotional life, careful phenomenological analysis can bring out subtle structural commonalities across moral emotions. This should be taken as prima facie support for the bolder idea that there is a single phenomenal feature, likely of great subtlety, that runs through our emotional orientation on moral reality.

3 Moral Emotions and Moral Beliefs: What Manner of Unity?

One of the central metaethical debates of the past century has been between cognitivist and noncognitivist accounts of 'moral judgment.' Cognitivists hold that moral judgments are beliefs, or at least belief-like: they are truth-apt, inferentially integrated mental states. For noncognitivists, moral judgments are not truth-apt and their functional profile is motivational more than inferential. In a slogan, they are not so much in the business of getting the world right as in the business of righting the world. Obviously, in this literature the term 'judgment' is used in such a way that it carries no commitment on the ultimate nature of the relevant mental states: a desire or emotion could qualify as a 'moral judgment' just as well as a belief. Although this strikes me as an aberrant use of the term, I indulge it in what follows.

Elsewhere, I have defended a pluralism that recognizes two kinds of moral 'judgment' in our psychological repertoire, one cognitive and one noncognitive (Kriegel 2012). On my view, some moral judgments are bonafide beliefs: they represent their contents under the guise of the true (hence, are truth-apt) and are integrated into mental processes governed by the laws of 'rational psychology' (hence, are inferentially integrated). But other moral judgments are instead emotional or affective states that represent under evaluative guise (hence truth-inapt) and are implicated in processes governed by the laws of 'associative psychology' (hence not inferentially integrated). For instance, the kinds of indignation and appreciation discussed in the previous section qualify as moral judgments on my view, the former representing under the guise of the morally blameworthy, the latter under the guise of the morally praiseworthy.

This pluralism creates a new challenge to the unity of moral experience: even if moral emotions exhibit a certain unity, surely they are very different from moral beliefs. Of course, if one takes beliefs to be non-experiential states utterly lacking in phenomenal character, the introduction of moral beliefs would be irrelevant to the domain of moral experience. But I concur with many others in thinking that there are occurrent conscious beliefs, including moral, that have a distinctive phenomenal character (see Horgan and Timmons 2008: 214-17 for an intricate phenomenology of moral belief). Accordingly, I accept that the domain of moral experience does include moral beliefs, and therefore that there is a real challenge as to what if any phenomenal commonality they might share with the kinds of moral emotion discussed in §2.

As soon as we admit both cognitive and noncognitive moral judgments, the question arises of what can be said about the relationship between them. Perceptual theories of emotion draw support from an apparent epistemological link: they note that just as perceptual experiences provide prima facie justification for perceptual beliefs, emotional experiences appear to provide prima facie justification for evaluative beliefs (see de Sousa 1987, Elgin 2008). For instance, my fear of the horse provides prima facie justification for believing that the horse poses a potential threat to me. This epistemological link is perfectly reasonably taken to suggest that emotions just are value perceptions. And in particular, presumably, moral emotions are just perceptions of moral values.

I am not a partisan of the perceptual theory. An initial worry is that it raises the specter of global error theory, in case there are no such things as mind-independent moral values. But the underlying problem is that the perceptual theory mischaracterizes the essential characteristic of emotional experience, including moral emotion. I mentioned in §1 that although experiences in different perceptual modalities are phenomenally very different, they all seem to represent their objects *in the flesh*, that is, as present here and now. Within my attitudinal framework, this means that perceptual experiences, by their nature, represent-as-here-and-now (Kriegel 2019). This is different from the attitudinal character of indignation and appreciation, for instance, since what characterizes the latter is that they represent-as-morally-responsible. Emotion, including moral emotion, does not by its nature have to do specifically with

the here and now – just as perception in the familiar sensory modalities does not inherently have to do with the evaluative. These are just different attitudinal profiles.

For these reasons, and others like them, I prefer thinking of emotions as sui generis mental states irreducible to perceptions, beliefs, desires, or any other type (or combination of types) of mental state.[5] Still, the epistemological link pointed out by perceptualists is hardly deniable. I think what the link shows is that emotions are in some sense *evaluative seemings*, and moral emotions in particular are *moral seemings*. In what sense are they 'seemings'? Precisely in the sense that you can form an evaluative belief simply by *endorsing* your emotional experience. If you have a perceptual experience as of a table, and endorse this experience, you have *thereby* formed a perceptual belief, and a prima facie justified one no less (do note the 'prima facie'); by the same token, if you feel indignant about the murder of Trayvon Martin (I am *not* over it!), and endorse your feeling, you thereby form a prima-facie-justified moral belief.

Endorsement is often understood in terms of content identity: to endorse a perceptual experience is to take it at face value, which means committing to the truth of whatever content the experience has. I think the psychological reality is slightly more complicated. When you endorse your experience as of a table, the perceptual belief you thereby form is *that there is a table before you* – that is, *here and now*. The 'here and now' information thus shows up in the representational *content* of the perceptual belief. But in the perceptual experience it is rather built into the very attitude; what shows up in the content is only the table (and whatever else you perceive, of course). After all, here-ness and now-ness are invisible, inaudible, have no smell, and so on. They are not perceived in the way the table is perceived, but are rather structural features of the perceiving. We might say that the here-and-now information is carried *implicitly* in the perceptual experience but *explicitly* in the ensuing belief. Thus endorsement involves something more complicated than simple identity of content. It involves the migration of information from attitude to content (cf. Recanati 2007 Part 2). The same goes for other cases of endorsement. Arguably, it is possible to form a (prima-facie-justified) belief about the past simply by endorsing a recollection or 'episodic memory.' On my account (Kriegel 2015a: 411-12), what happens there is that the recollection represents-as-past a certain event and endorsing it produces a belief *that* the relevant event occurred in the past (alternatively: that the relevant past event

occurred). Here the information about the pastness is explicitly or representationally carried by the belief, but only implicitly or structurally carried by the recollection. What the endorsement effects is the 'explicitation' of information, that is, the migration of that information from attitude to content.

I want to apply the same model to moral emotions. By endorsing my indignation about the murder of Trayvon Martin, which represents-as-morally-blameworthy Martin's killer, I form a belief *that* the killer is morally blameworthy. This is a moral belief, one prima facie justified by the indignation. What the endorsing effects is a migration of the information about moral blameworthiness from attitude to content, and therefore, in a sense, from implicit to explicit commitment. It is in this sense, I want to suggest, that the indignation is a moral seeming the endorsing of which produces a moral belief. Both the indignation and the belief morally blame, but the blaming is slightly different in each. In the belief, it is explicit in the content and 'affectively cold'; in the indignation, it is implicit in the attitude and *affectively felt*. We may capture the difference in intentional structure as follows (using hyphenated locutions for attitude and chevrons for content):

indignation ::	represent-as-morally-blameworthy <*x*>
corresponding belief ::	represent-as-true <*x* is morally blameworthy>

Because in indignation the blaming is baked into the very attitudinal nature of the experience – what makes it the type of mental state it is – this form of blaming is affective through and through. In the belief the blaming is simply registered in doxastic content and is for that reason 'affectively cold.' The affective character of indignation's blame is nicely put by Elizabeth Beardsley (1970: 165):

> 'Moral disapproval' may in any case sound detached and Olympian – in short, unemotional. Out of our own experience in blaming and being blamed, we are bound to ask 'What about the way it *feels* to blame someone?' . . . We know that those who blame often do 'feel something,' at times very strongly, and we can say that this seems most accurately characterized as 'indignation.'

Without taking into account this 'element of wrath' (*Ibid.*), argues Beardsley, we cannot reach an accurate understanding of what blame amounts to.

Interestingly, this account of the *difference* between indignation and the moral belief produced by endorsing it brings out – indeed, presupposes – a conception of the *similarity* between the two. Both are forms of moral blaming, after all. Both carry, each in its own way, information about moral blameworthiness. Moreover, the belief's representation of moral blameworthiness is precisely what makes it a *moral* belief, while the indignation's attitudinally encoded attribution of moral blameworthiness is, as we saw in §2, what makes it a *moral* emotion. Thus their status as moral experiences is bound up with this commonality between them. Obviously, the same applies to appreciation and the belief produced by endorsing *it*. Both morally praise, though each in its own way, and it is this moral praising that separates them from certain nonmoral emotions and beliefs (e.g., from gratitude and from empirical beliefs).

My suggestion is this, then. To recognize the commonality of moral emotion and moral belief, all we need to do is abstract away from the question of what information is conveyed by content and what by attitude. By disregarding this architectural detail concerning informational division of labor, we form a clear conception of what *unifies* moral emotion and moral belief. We come to see that both types of moral experience – emotional and cognitive – concern moral responsibility. This defines a certain experiential genus. The genus may then speciate by different principles, of which we have brought up two: whether the responsibility attributed is blameworthiness or praiseworthiness, and whether the attribution is attitudinally encoded or explicit in content. There may well be further principles of speciation, either at the same taxonomic level or at finer levels of granularity (e.g., distinguishing subspecies of indignation).

It might be objected that we have many more (conscious, occurrent) moral beliefs than those formed by endorsement of either indignation or appreciation. Nothing that has been said so far sheds any light on what commonality those other moral beliefs might exhibit with the types of moral experience discussed thus far.

I will partially address this concern in §4, when I discuss three other types of moral emotion, each potentially giving rise to a different endorsement-based moral belief. Some of our moral beliefs, however, seem completely general and a priori, not based on any endorsement of specific moral feelings. Take the belief that genocide is

wrong. Mastery of the concepts of genocide and wrongness seems sufficient for justified adoption of this belief, which moreover does not seem based on any encounter with specific instances of 'someone harmed someone.'

My response is admittedly programmatic. Suppose you feel indignant about the holocaust. Your indignation morally blames the Germans for attempted extermination of the Jews. If you then endorse your indignation, you thereby acquire a belief: that the Germans are morally blameworthy for their attempted extermination of the Jews. This belief is very similar to the belief that the German genocide of the Jews is wrong, given certain straightforward conceptual connections between (i) attempted extermination and genocide and (ii) moral blameworthiness and moral wrongness. And the belief that the German genocide of the Jews is wrong bears an important content similarity to the belief that genocide as such is wrong. The former has the logical form <*a*'s genocide of *b* is wrong>, the latter the logical form <for any *x* and *y*, such that *x* commits a genocide of *y*, *x*'s genocide of *y* is wrong>. Despite this difference in 'form,' the conceptual 'matter' of these two contents is very similar: the concepts of genocide and wrongness are central constituents of both. Thus we see that a priori, general genocide beliefs still bear an important content similarity to endorsement-based specific genocide beliefs. For those who take conscious beliefs to be experiential states, this content similarity will translate into a phenomenal similarity. (And for those who do *not* take beliefs to be experiential states, recall, the existence of moral beliefs poses no threat to the unity of moral experience.) The upshot is that although many moral beliefs are not produced by endorsement, they may bear important phenomenal similarity, grounded in shared central conceptual constituents, to moral beliefs that *are* produced by endorsement (and which in turn bear significant phenomenal resemblance to the moral emotions they endorse).[6]

(The objector may press that the a priori belief that genocide is wrong is still *epistemologically* very different from the endorsement-based belief that the German genocide of the Jews is wrong. But setting aside the fact that the latter belief is a priori derivable from the former, this difference is just epistemological. A defense of the phenomenal unity of moral experience is compatible with any number of important epistemological, metaphysical, and other differences among distinct moral experiences.)

4 More Questions than Conclusions

Through phenomenological analysis of certain experiential transitions, and further analysis of the intentional structure of conscious states, I have tried to show that we can identify certain far-from-obvious commonalities across diverse kinds of moral experience, which moreover are peculiar to them and separate them from other experiences. In particular, I have argued that indignation, appreciation, and certain moral beliefs produced by endorsement thereof exhibit a subtle feature common and peculiar to this group of experiences: they all attribute moral responsibility. They thus constitute a phenomenal kind of sorts.

I mentioned in §2 that there are certainly other moral emotions. In particular, I want to say, moral emotions come in two main kinds: some are grounded in the value of certain *doings*, others in the value of certain *beings*. Indignation and appreciation respond to the *actions* of persons, but some emotions respond to the persons themselves. Paramount among these is *respect* – not any kind of respect, perhaps, but the kind of Kantian respect for persons that Darwall (1977) called 'recognition-respect' and distinguished from 'appraisal-respect.' Appraisal-respect is directed at individuals in virtue of their accomplishments, virtues, or other distinctive merits; it is not inherently a moral emotion. Recognition-respect is in contrast an undiscriminating kind of respect directed at any person purely because he or she is a person. The phenomenology of recognition-respect is extremely rich and subtle (Kriegel and Timmons forthcoming), but a core feature is experiencing another as possessing dignity equal to one's own, an intrinsic and irreplaceable worth that demands treatment as an end rather than mere means. This *is* an inherently moral emotion, though responsive to beings rather than acts.

Insofar as the counterpart of respect in the sphere of negative emotions is something like *contempt*, we may also identify a variety of contempt whose very nature is to *deny* a person dignity. In this kind of elemental contempt we experience a violent annihilation of the other's very personhood, his or her fundamental dignity and worth.[7] This, too, is clearly a moral emotion.

Presumably, corresponding to these varieties of respect and contempt are also moral beliefs formed by simple endorsement of them. And a story about the phenomenal unity of respect, contempt, and these corresponding beliefs could be told that would parallel the story elaborated in §§2-3 about indignation, appreciation, and their corresponding beliefs. But this raises an important question: Is there any phenomenal commonality to be found *between* the two groups? Plausibly, this depends on whether there is any commonality between the themes of moral responsibility and intrinsic dignity, since one group revolves around the attribution of the former and other around the attribution of the latter. The question is obviously difficult and not one we can hope to broach here. (Might the act-responsive emotions be our 'consequentialist' moral emotions and the person-responsive ones our 'Kantian' moral emotions? And what consequences would that have? Something to think about.)

Even within the sphere of action-responsive moral emotions, indignation and appreciation are unlikely to be exhaustive. I mentioned that unlike anger and gratitude, which say (so to speak) 'someone harmed/benefited me,' indignation and appreciation say 'someone harmed/benefited someone'; and in passing I mentioned two other emotions, guilt and a certain sort of pride, which say 'I benefited/harmed someone.' Instinctively, a certain asymmetry imposes itself here: guilt seems to be an inherently moral emotion in a way pride is not. Pride may happen to take a moral action for its object, but we can be proud of any number of things of no moral significance. While the object of pride is always experienced as a good, it need not be a moral good and is in fact more often a aesthetic, prudential, or other good (Kauppinen 2017). In contrast, guilt seems more intimately to target the *morally* bad: we may feel sheepish or even ashamed of producing prudential or aesthetic disvalue, but guilty we seem to feel only about our responsibility for *moral* disvalue.

Fortunately, the account of the phenomenal unity of moral emotion from §2 extends naturally to guilt, insofar as guilt too concerns moral responsibility (casting *oneself* as morally blameworthy). And presumably, the account of endorsement-based moral beliefs from §3 will apply here as well. Nonetheless, the case of guilt raises a number of complicated questions. Is there really no counterpart in the sphere of positive emotions which by its very nature targets one's responsibility for a moral good? And if not, why is there this asymmetry?

A different asymmetry reveals itself, incidentally, in the sphere of person-responsive emotions. I mentioned respect and contempt as a positive and negative moral emotions directed at *other persons* rather than their acts. But there are also positive and negative emotions directed at *oneself* rather than one's acts: we can feel pride not only of our acts, but also of ourselves, and can likewise feel *shame* about ourselves (Kauppinen 2017). And sometimes these are morally grounded: we can feel proud of ourselves for our moral strengths and ashamed of ourselves for our moral failings. (I note in passing that pride in particular seems to come in two varieties, which we may call *act-pride* and *I-pride*, one act-responsive and the other person-responsive.[8]) Arguably, though, these kinds of pride and shame are not *necessarily* tied to the moral self, so to speak; some people are proud of themselves for their athletic excellence or ashamed of oneself for being poor. And while sometimes athleticism and poverty may be experienced as reflecting moral superiority or inferiority, sometimes they may not.

Figure 1 presents an orderly classification of the emotions discussed in this paper that seem involved in our moral life. The classification may be *too* orderly, however, imposing more order on the experiential phenomena than they truly admit (though it may nonetheless be *heuristically* valuable for an encompassing grasp of the domain of phenomena as a whole). As I survey the emotions therein classified, only five strike me as *inherently* or *essentially* moral – the five already mentioned: respect, contempt, appreciation, guilt, and indignation (all in a rather specific use of those terms). The others seem to be sometimes moral but sometime amoral, depending on the specifics of their object and how it is experienced. Why are just these inherently moral and the others not? Why are there the various asymmetries involved in the scheme as whole? What if anything might be entirely left out of this scheme? These are among the questions left entirely open by our discussion here.[9]

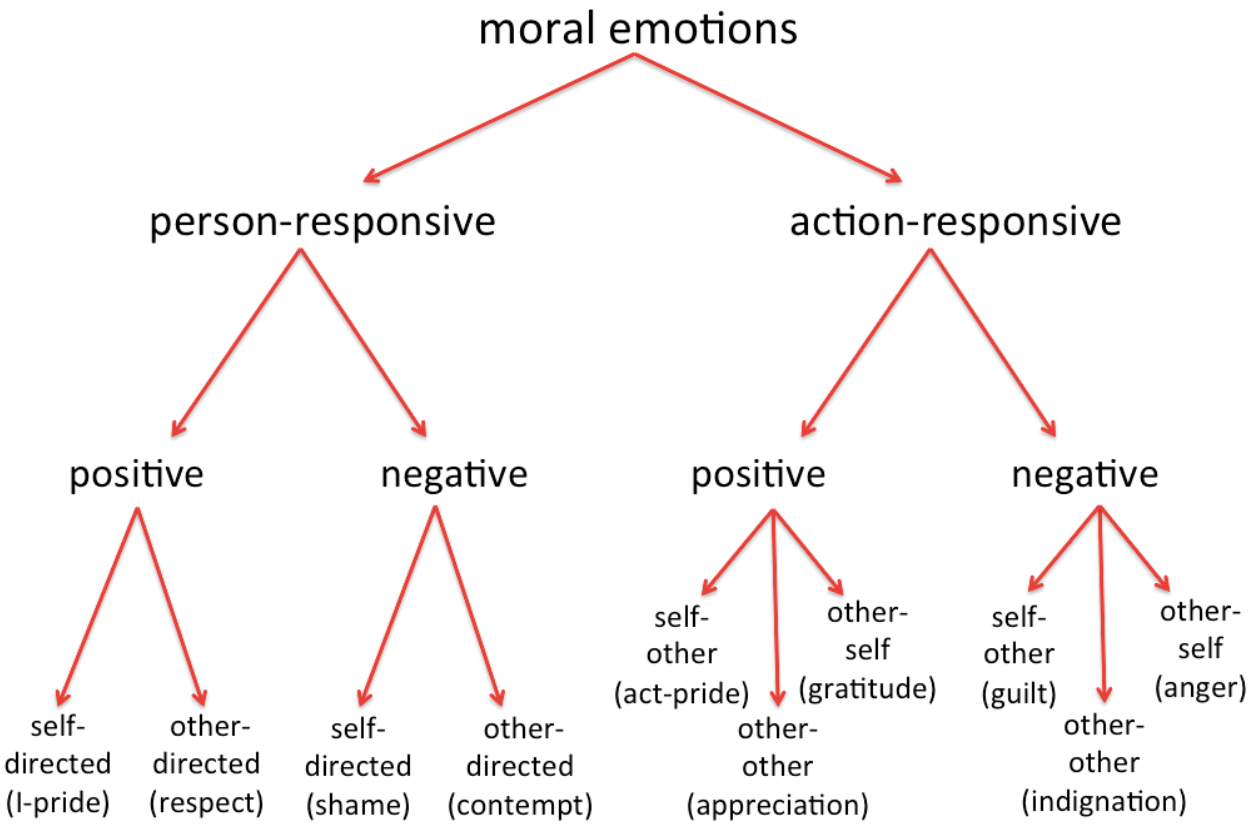

Figure 1. A structurally idealized representation of the domain of moral emotions

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[1] To be clear, this is not my standard experience. By far most rejections I receive – and most of what I receive is rejections! – are based on reports I learn something valuable from, if only about 'pitching' and presentation. Nonetheless, 'bad experiences' have happened to me.

[2] The reason I favor the attitudinal framework is that attitudinal differences seem to reflect essential differences between different kinds of mental state. For instance, if one holds, with Hume, that imagination differs from perception only *in degree* (e.g., of richness or 'resolution'), then one should construe the difference between them as pertaining to content; but if one holds, with Sartre, that imagination differs from perception *in kind*, then one should expect the perception/imagination distinction to be 'attitudinally encoded' (see Kriegel 2015b). The notion of 'formal object' is also supposed to reflect essential differences, but I think it involves a confusion between (briefly put) what belongs on the object end and what on the subject end of the intentional relation.

[3] Manela (2016) presents a pair of different distinctions between gratitude and appreciation, but he uses the term 'appreciation' to denote a different kind of mental state, what he calls 'propositional gratitude,' such as we would report with a the locution grateful that. I have no doubt that the mental state Manela is interested in is a legitimate referent of 'appreciation' – more on this toward the end of this section. It is just a different mental state from the one I am interested in.

[4] This kind of projective identification certainly appears to be much more pervasive for anger than for gratitude. The contingent causes of this asymmetry are something we can only speculate about. But the upshot is that anger about 'allocentric states of affairs,' so to speak, is in fact quite common. All the same, it is notable that this kind of identification is necessary for our ability to feel anger about matters that do not remotely concern us, whereas indignation does not require any such identification. That said, we should keep in mind that even in the absence of any identification there is substantial phenomenal overlap between anger and indignation, which makes labeling tricky – more on that soon.

[5] I do think, however, that emotions and desires bear an important attitudinal similarity, insofar as both represent under evaluative guises. This raises the question of what the relationship between desire and emotion exactly is. I find this a very difficult area, but I am *not* tempted to reduce emotion to desire. I am far more tempted to consider both species of a single higher genus. For relevant discussion, see Kriegel 2017.

[6] The objector may press the fact that the belief that genocide is wrong is at least in one way very different from the belief that the endorsement-based German genocide of the Jews, namely, in that the former is a priori and the latter a posteriori. But setting aside the fact that the latter belief is a priori derivable from the former, this difference is just epistemological. A defense of the phenomenal unity of moral experience is compatible with any number of important epistemological, metaphysical, and other differences among distinct moral experiences.

[7] This kind of contempt, counterpart to recognition-respect, may be distinguished from the kind which is rather the counterpart of appraisal-respect, where one responds to a particular person's failings, sometimes of action but typically of character. Philosophical treatments of contempt have focused on this second variety (see, e.g., Mason 2003: 250), but the first is arguably morally more fundamental – in the same way recognition-respect is morally more fundamental than appraisal-respect.

[8] Kauppinen draws a similar distinction, but follows certain psychologists in calling 'authentic pride' and 'hubristic pride' the emotions I am calling act-pride and I-pride respectively. I dislike that terminology for two reasons: first, it is not purely descriptive (authenticity seems good, hubris seems bad), and secondly, it does not go simply and directly to the essential ontological distinction between the 'formal objects' of the two emotions. On both scores, I find 'act-pride' and 'I-pride' better.

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