

Suffering Pains

olivier.massin@unine.ch

Revised 07.01.2019

[to appear in *The Philosophy of Suffering: Metaphysics, Value, and Normativity*
Bain, D., Brady, M. and Corns, J. (Eds.) *The Philosophy of Suffering: Metaphysics, Value, and Normativity*. Routledge]

Abstract. The paper aims at clarifying the distinctions and relations between pain and suffering. Three negative theses are defended:

1. Pain and suffering are not identical.
2. Pain is not a species of suffering, nor is suffering a species of pain, nor are pain and suffering of a common (proximate) genus.
3. Suffering cannot be defined as the perception of a pain's badness, nor can pain be defined as a suffered bodily sensation.

Three positive theses are endorsed:

4. Pain and suffering are categorically distinct: pain is a localised bodily episode, suffering is a non-localised affective attitude.
5. Suffering can be expressed, pains cannot. As a consequence, we can have compassion for the suffering of others, not for their pains.
6. The relation between pain and suffering is akin to the relation between danger and fear, injustice and indignation, wrongdoing and guilt: suffering *is the correct reaction to pain*.

One upshot is that both the influential view that the experience of pain is incorrigible and the influential view that the ordinary conception of pain is paradoxical are false.

Within contemporary philosophy of mind, pain gets a lot of attention, suffering very little.¹ This stands in contrast with other research areas:

- Theories of *retributive justice* and punishment put the concept of suffering at their core.² Wrongdoers, some claim, deserve to suffer. Punishment should therefore consist in making wrongdoers suffer in return: inflicting pain is rarely ever mentioned.
- *Torture* is standardly defined in terms of suffering.³ Torturing essentially involves making one's victim suffer, but does not essentially involve inflicting pain on them. Waterboarding, sensory deprivation, disorientation cause intense suffering but no pain. Asymbolics can be tortured, although not pain can be inflicted on them.
- *Compassion* is typically characterised in terms of suffering (e.g. suffering for someone's else sake).⁴ Likewise, *Schadenfreude* is understood as a delight in the suffering—not in the pain—of others.
- Discussions about the *moral status of animals* typically hinges on their capacity to suffer.⁵
- Within *Christian theology*, Christ is said to have suffered for humans and sinners are promised eternal suffering.⁶
- *Clinicians* assume that is the suffering of their patient that needs to ultimately be dealt with, not—or not just—their pains. “It is suffering, not pain, that brings patients into doctors’ offices in hopes of finding relief”, writes Loeser 2000 (see also Cassel 1982; Cassell 1995).
- Although *utilitarians* sometimes speak of our duty to diminish the amount of pain, utilitarianism is arguably better spelled out in terms of a duty to relieve suffering.⁷

How is it then that philosophy of mind focusses mostly, if not exclusively, on pain? One reason, I surmise, is that pain and suffering are assumed to be very closely related phenomena. That is, one tends to

¹ See however Klein (2015a), Brady, (2018a).

² Zaibert (2017, 2013); Fingarette (1977); Gray (2010); Hart (2008) ; Walen (2015).

³ Roberts (2011a).

⁴ Nilsson (2011—more on compassion below).

⁵ DeGrazia, & Rowan, (1991).

⁶ Roberts (2003); Talbott (2013).

⁷ Mayerfeld (1996; 1999).

assume either that pain and suffering are one and the same phenomena under different names, or that one is a species of the other, or that they both belong to a same genus, or that one can straightforwardly be defined in terms of the other. If pain and suffering are such close cognates, then it is quite natural to assume that studying pain is not overlooking suffering, but rather laying the basis for a proper understanding of suffering.

The view defended here, by contrast, is that pain and suffering are not only distinct, but utterly distinct: they neither belong to a common kind, nor does the one figure in the essence of the other. Suffering is an attitude, pain is a sensation located in our body. Their relation is not subsumptive or essential but rather psychological and normative: suffering is the usual and correct reaction to pain.

Section 1 rebuts an argument to the effect that the pain/suffering distinction is a distinction without a difference. Section 2 points out four key differences between pain and suffering. Section 3 objects to the view that pains are just suffered bodily sensations. Section 4 rejects the view that suffering is ever perceiving pain's badness. Section 5 proposes a positive account of the pain/suffering relation, dubbed the "reactive account". Section 6 answers three objections to the reactive account. Section 7 argues that the reactive account undermines both the influential view that pain is incorrigible and the influential view that the ordinary conception of pain is paradoxical.

A methodological comment is in order before we start. The following is an essay in *descriptive psychology*: it intends to describe the distinctions and relations between pain and suffering *as we ordinarily speak about, think about and experience them*. This means, first, that any questions about the relation between pain (or suffering) and brain states will be bracketed. This means, second, that the ordinary understandings of pain, suffering, and their relation is assumed to prevail by default: we need to give reasons if we are to abandon or revise them.

1. A distinction without a difference?

Ordinary language distinguishes between having pain, feeling pain, suffering pain, and still other attitudes or psychological episodes one may entertain towards pain (enduring pain, enjoying pain, being indifferent to pain, etc.). But do these linguistic distinctions capture genuine psychological differences? Perhaps the grammatical complexity of "having a pain", "feeling a pain" or "suffering a pain" does not reflect any metaphysical complexity. One influential consideration to this effect pertains to so-called *cognate accusatives*, such as "feeling feelings",

“dreaming dreams” or “thinking thoughts”.⁸ In such expressions, it is claimed, the verb and its direct object are so closely related that their grammatical distinction corresponds to no metaphysical difference.⁹ The argument against the pain/suffering distinction then goes as follows:

- P1 In “suffering a pain”, “a pain” is the cognate accusative of “suffering”
- P2 The distinction between verbs and their cognate accusatives does not correspond to a metaphysical distinction.
- C There is no metaphysical distinction between pain and suffering.

I believe that both premisses are false. “Pain” is not a cognate accusative of “suffering”. Things other than pains might be suffered from: one can suffer from a loss, an injustice, a disease, a discomfort...

Second and more importantly, even if “pain” were a cognate accusative of “suffering”, it would not follow that pain and suffering are identical. Contrary to the prevailing assumption, the presence of a cognate accusative does not entail the lack of an underlying difference. Consider: “loving a beloved”, “tasting a taste”, “smelling a smell”. Trivial as they are, such expressions certainly do not point to an identity of the loving and the beloved, of the tasting and taste, of the smelling and the smell. One may in fact construe cognate accusatives for all intentional states: e.g. seeing visibilia, hearing audibilia, etc. Such expressions are trivial not because of the absence of an act/object distinction, but rather because of the lack of any substantive information about the object: all we are told about the object of such attitudes is...that they are the objects of such attitudes. Thus, the triviality at stake here is akin to that found in “I see what I see”, “I know what I know”: it arises from the violation of the Gricean maxim of quantity, not from there being a distinction without a difference.

Cognitive accusatives therefore provide no reason to reject the view that, in “suffering a pain”, the pain is distinct from the suffering.¹⁰

⁸ The terminology varies: Ryle (1990) speaks of “cognate accusatives”, Kenny (1966, 133) speaks of “cognate objects”, “nominalization accusatives” or “internal accusatives”, and Twardowski (1999) speaks of “internal complements”.

⁹ See Dummett (2014, 103), Hall (1956), Kenny (1966), Ryle (1990).

¹⁰ Essentially the same point is made by Twardowski (1999) with respect to agentive expressions such as “racing a race” or “jumping a jump”, which, he claims, reflect two phenomena: the action and its product.

2 A distinction with four differences

If cognate accusatives provide no argument against the pain/suffering distinction, can we find arguments in favour of the distinction? And then how should we account for the relations between them?

A first proposal is that *pain is a kind of suffering*, namely physical suffering.¹¹ A second proposal is that *suffering is a kind of pain*, namely, mental pain. A third proposal is that pain and suffering are both of the same general kind (e.g. negative affect; unpleasant sensation...) —see Fig. 1. What these three proposals have in common is the idea that pain and suffering stand in some sort of subsumptive relation (genus/species, determinable/determinate...) to each other. In this sense, pain and suffering are held to be of the same kind.

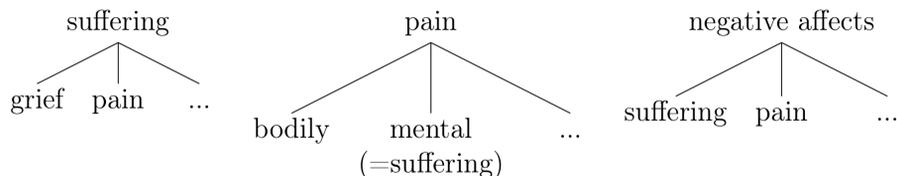


Fig. 1

I believe, on the contrary, that pain and suffering do not stand in any subsumptive relation: one is not subsumed under the other, and they are not both subsumed under the same genus. This is because *suffering is an attitude while pain is a non-intentional episode*. The first essential difference between pain and suffering is then this:

Intentionality: Pains are non-intentional episodes, whereas suffering is intentional: it is an attitude directed towards something distinct from itself.

Which kind of attitude is suffering? Suffering has a negative hedonic valence, which suggests that suffering is an *emotion*.

Although this way of construing the pain/suffering distinction is rather unusual within analytic philosophy, Feldman (1997b; 2004) has worked out a cognate distinction between two kinds of *pleasures* – attitudinal pleasures and sensory pleasure – that has been influential. The chief thing that distinguishes sensory from attitudinal pleasures, Feldman claims, is that sensory pleasures are non-intentional sensations or feelings

¹¹ See Carruthers (2004), Brady (2018a).

(the feelings we get from a massage, from an orgasm, from a fresh beer), while attitudinal pleasures (“taking pleasure in” or “enjoying”) are intentional: they are attitudes directed towards something distinct from themselves. Some quibbles aside,¹² I suggest that we model the pain/suffering distinction on Feldman’s distinction between attitudinal and sensory pleasures —although I shall disagree with Feldman’s account of the *relation* between attitudinal and sensory affects.

Importantly, Feldman’s distinction between attitudinal and sensory pleasures is not a distinction between two species of the same kind. Hence, the fact that we use the word “pleasure” to refer to both kinds of phenomena is somewhat misleading. There is indeed a link between attitudinal and sensory pleasures but the link is not that of having something in common. What Feldman’s calls the “*heterogeneity problem*” — the problem of spelling out what pleasures have in common in virtue of which they are pleasures— is restricted to sensory pleasures (and, he might have added, to attitudinal pleasures). But sensory *and* attitudinal pleasures have nothing in common. (More cautiously, since they may fall under the genera *temporal beings, phenomena, affects...*— they do not fall under a same proximate genus.) The question that arises with respect to these two kinds of pleasures is not what they have in common, but how they are related —what Feldman calls the “*linkage problem*” (to which I shall come back to later). The same applies, I submit, to pain and suffering. They belong to different categories, and the question is not what they have in common (Feldman’s “heterogeneity problem”) but how they are related (Feldman’s “linkage problem”).

Many philosophers will object to *Intentionality* that pains are widely agreed to be experiences or mental states, and that these are intentional. Representationalists, for instance, equate pains with the perception of bodily damages; evaluativists equate pains with the perception of some bodily disturbance as bad; equates it with a mental state directed towards some *sui generis* bodily quality.¹³

I do not wish deny that there is an extended sense of the word “pain” in which it is used to denote mental states. Nor do I wish to deny that pains are systematically experienced in a way colours or sounds aren’t (the strength of the necessity at stake here is a tricky issue). However I do believe that the view that word “pain” *primarily* refer to a mental states is a philosopher’s invention. A first argument to this effect is that one finds no intentional constructions with the word “pain” in ordinary language. One cannot “pain” something. While “taking pleasure in something” arguably expresses attitudinal pleasure, it jars to say “taking pain in

¹² See Massin (2013) for discussion.

¹³ See again Massin (2013).

something”.¹⁴ I can think of four possible counterexamples to this claim, none of which are conclusive.

First, one may reply that we speak of the “experience of pain”. However the “of” here is not specificatory (as in “a book of economics”) but intentional (as in “a perception of a tree”). An experience of pain, is not an experience of the pain sort, but an experience directed at pain.

Second, one may point out that when we say of a person that she *is in pain*, we mean that she is in some specific mental state. I agree that *being in pain* is mentalistic. But this is not because “pain” here refers to a mental state. This is because “being in” stands for “experiencing”, “suffering”, “being absorbed in”, “enduring” or some other mental attitude one may entertain towards pain. Something similar may hold for “having a pain” which is often used to mean “experiencing a pain” (an extended use which is understandable, given that having a pain typically goes along with experiencing that pain). In this respect, it is quite telling that many representationalist and evaluativist theories of pain take as their explanandum not “pains” but “pain experiences” or “having a pain”. By doing so, I suspect, they change the explanandum from *pains* to *experiences of pain*—and should therefore consistently equate *pains* with the bodily damages, or bad bodily damages, such experiences are allegedly about.

Third, one may stress that although “taking pain *in* something” is indeed incorrect, “taking great pains *to* do something” is correct. And this, one may then press, is clearly an intentional pain-construction. But note first that in many translations of the construction “taking pain to”, the word “pain” disappears (e.g. “se donner du mal/de la peine” in French, “sich bemühen/sich Mühe geben” in German). Second and more importantly, “taking pains to do something” does not mean that pains are mental states directed at the action, but that the action is accomplished with great care. It is not that pain are directed at the action, it is rather the action is effortful.

Finally, one may press that common constructions such as “her marriage pained me”, or “the pain of losing a child” are clearly mentalistic. But these are presumably extensions of the primary meaning of “pain”, such as when we say that we are have an itch to do something, that we are burning with curiosity, that an idea tickles us, that we are

¹⁴ While Feldman (2002b, 2004, 84) uses the expression “attitudinal pains” to refer to the polar opposite of attitudinal pleasures or enjoyment, I think “suffering” is the right term. Unlike “attitudinal pain” (and “disenjoyment”, which Feldman also uses), “suffering” has the advantage of not being a term of art. Besides, “attitudinal pain” is unfortunate, for pain primarily refers to a kind of bodily sensation (unlike “pleasures”). The view adopted here —“suffering” is the opposite of “enjoying”— is endorsed by Scheler (1973, 27 n. 23) and Mulligan (2008).

touched by a compliment, that our conscience pricks us, that we feel a pang of guilt, or that remorse stings. Brentano (1995: 84) claims that the primary sense of “pain” is mental, and that it is only by equivocation that we come to call “pain” the bodily state corresponding to it —an equivocation akin to one at play when we say that our nose is our shame, or that the loss of a friend is a great sorrow. I maintain that exactly the reverse is true. Brentano is right that in some cases (shame, sorrow), primarily mental locutions come to apply, by extension, to physical objects. But he fails to notice that in other cases, we come to apply to mental episodes terms that originally apply to bodily states. This is precisely often the case with bodily sensations, as just suggested: “tickles”, “itches”, “prangs”, “burns”, “stings”, “pricks”...and “pains,” primarily refer to bodily states but can, *by extension*, be used in a mentalistic fashion.

Ordinary language therefore clashes with the view that pains are intentional mental states. The second argument in favour of the view that pains are not mental states directly stems from the second essential difference between pain and suffering, which, I submit, is this:

Location: Pains have a bodily *location*, whereas suffering has no location.

We experience, think and speak about pains as being located in our body, even if sometimes diffusely. Pains are not the only negative sensations than have bodily location: itches, hunger pangs, nauseas, general bodily feeling such as fatigue or being cold are also felt as located in our body. But suffering is not one of these. We do not experience suffering, nor do we think and speak about suffering as being located. Like enjoying and other attitudes, suffering is not given as located.¹⁵

While common sense, ordinary language and experience unhesitatingly ascribe bodily location to pains, philosophers have been reluctant to take the idea that pains have a bodily location at face value. Two main worries have been raised. The first directly follows from the philosopher’s view that pains are mental:

P1 Pains are mental phenomena.

P2 Mental phenomena lack bodily location (from the standpoint of descriptive psychology).

C Pains lack bodily location.

I have already suggested that P1 is false on linguistic grounds. Assuming the truth of P2 is true, I consider this argument to be in effect a *reductio* of P1. If a philosopher’s view entails that pains lack bodily location, then that view is probably false. Faced with a choice between

¹⁵ See also Scheler (1973: 333, 413).

pains being mental or pains being located, we should unhesitatingly embrace the later.

The second objection commonly raised against the location of pains stems from a failure of transitivity: from the fact that I have a pain in my finger, and that my finger is in my mouth, it does not follow that I have a pain in my mouth. Tye (2017) draws the conclusion that ordinary talk about pain as bodily located, taken literally, is false: “In saying that the pain is in a leg, we speak as if the pain itself is inside the leg, when in reality it is a representation that represents something else inside (or on the surface of) the leg.” While this sounds like a dismissal of our ordinary way of speaking, Tye suggests that it is not, for talk about pains as located is not meant to be taken literally: “Such talk is common. A drowning feeling is not itself drowning. Rather it is a feeling that represents to its subject that he or she is drowning. [...] Correspondingly, a pain in a leg is a feeling that is in a leg only in the sense that it represents something (to wit, a disturbance) in a leg.” The expression “the pain in my foot”, Tye suggests, is a mere *façon de parler* that is not intended to be taken literally.

I disagree. While there is no doubt that “a drowning feeling” is a *façon de parler*, when we speak of the pain in our foot, we do mean it literally: we mean that the pain is really there in our foot –and that it is really a pain. This corresponds to our experience: we also feel the pain as being located in our foot, and we can feel a pain move up our thigh. From both the standpoint of ordinary language and descriptive psychology, pains are really located in our bodies. On the other hand, considerations about what pains represent –if pains represent anything– are utterly absent from our naïve picture. Thus Tye's proposal that pain is not bodily located is *volens volens* strongly revisionary.¹⁶

What then should we say about the intransitivity of pain's location? That is, how should we handle the following inconsistent triad:

- i. Pain is located in body parts.
- ii. *Being located in* is transitive.
- iii. If pain is located in a body part, and if that body part is located in some container, the pain is not necessarily located in the container.

The correct answer is not to reject (i), pace Tye, but (ii): *being located in* is not always transitive.¹⁷ True, from the fact that Paul has a pain in his finger and that his finger is in his mouth, it does not follow that he has a pain in his mouth. But from the fact that Paul has a tumour in his finger

¹⁶ For a full defence of the view that pains are genuinely located in our body, see Hyman (2003).

¹⁷ Noordhof (2001, 2005).

and that his finger is in his mouth, it does not follow either that he has a tumour in his mouth. Yet his tumour clearly has a bodily location.¹⁸

How is it that *being located in* is not transitive in such cases? The sense in which pains, tumours, but also holes, pressures, vibrations etc. are located is peculiar in two respects. First, these phenomena are located not in empty space but in other bodies. Second, for these phenomena, being located in another body is not just being located at the place where a part of this body is located. To be located, for pain, holes or vibrations, is also to *modify* or *affect* the body in which they are located. Following Hyman (2003) and Noordhof (2005), pains belong in the category of *modes* or *states*: they are not merely located at the place occupied by body parts; they modify those parts. Pain location, I submit, must then satisfy two conditions:

Pain location: a pain *p* is located in a body part iff:

- (i) *p* occupies a place within that body part;
- (ii) *p* modifies that body part at that place (i.e. the body part is *hurting* as a result).

The reason why pain location is non-transitive lies in (ii): the location of pain, holes, tumours, vibrations, pressures or flaws (unlike the location of bodies, persons or cities) is a kind of “modifying location”.

There appears to be no good reason to give up the common sense view that pains are located in body parts. A more exotic way of challenging the location criterion of distinction between pain and suffering, is to grant that pain is located, but to argue that suffering also is. One may think of two arguments to that effect. First, materialists may retort that suffering is located in our brain. But recall that the view defended here is meant to be *descriptive*: in our *natural understanding*, enjoying, believing, seeing, remembering, suffering... are mental episodes that have temporal location, but lack spatial location. How far is your seeing of a dog from your pride at having won a game? In which direction? Such questions make no sense. Besides, even if it were granted that suffering is located in our brain, it would remain true that pains, by contrast to suffering, can be located in other parts of our body.

Finally, one may try to defend the location of suffering by relying on expressions such as “suffering in the flesh” and “suffers in her body”. I rejected Tye’s suggestion that “I have a pain in my foot” was a mere *façon de parler*. Yet it seems clear that “suffering in the flesh” and the like are

¹⁸ One might reply that there is a sense in which we do have a tumour in our mouth when we have a finger with a tumour in our mouth. But in *that* sense, I submit, we also have a pain in our mouth when our painful finger is in it.

mere *façons de parler*. The “in” here does not indicate the place of the suffering but rather the place of what we suffer from.

The third distinction between pain and suffering pertains to expressibility. The proposal is that while pains, being sensory, cannot be *expressed*, suffering can. Expressing one’s state is not the same thing as reporting it. One can indeed *report* that one has a pain in the toe. But one cannot express that pain. Isn’t the grimace on our face or the exclamation “ouch!” expressions of that pain? No: these express our suffering from that pain. To see the plausibility of this proposal, consider a tinnitus. One can report having tinnitus, but one cannot express one’s tinnitus. One can however express one’s *annoyance* at it. Or consider a slight sensation of pressure on one’s neck. One can report having such a sensation, but one cannot express pressure sensations. One can however express one’s delighting in it. Likewise for pain: pain being a non-intentional bodily episode, like tinnitus and bodily pressures, one cannot express one’s pain, one can only express one’s suffering it.

Expression: We cannot express our pain, but we can express our suffering.

This third difference between pain and suffering helps explain the fourth and last difference: one cannot have compassion or sympathy for the pain of others –that is, one cannot have pain *with* them– but one can have compassion for their suffering –that is, one can suffer *with* them. When someone has an intense pain in the foot, one cannot have a pain with him, but one can suffer with him: it is with the suffering arising from his pain that we sympathise, not with his pain. Likewise, Julie cannot sympathise with Paul’s tinnitus, but she can sympathise with the annoyance that the tinnitus causes to Paul.

This is not to say that we can have no representation of the pain of others. Rather, the best one can do here is it to *imagine oneself having a similar pain*, to put oneself in somebody else’s shoes. Scheler calls “feeling-after” (*Nachfühlen*) the imagination of the pain of others, where we affectively reproduce a similar pain in ourselves, and contrast it with the “feeling-with” (*Mitgefühl*) such as *compassion*, which presupposes that we access the very mental state of the other person.¹⁹ The fourth distinction between pain and suffering is then this:

Compassion: One can have compassion for the suffering of others, but not for the pain of others.

¹⁹ Compare De Vignemont and P. Jacob (2012).

The idea traces back to Adam Smith, who endorses a weaker version of the view to the effect that sympathy for pains must be of a lesser degree than sympathy for suffering:

[...] this is the case of all the passions which take their origin from the body: they excite either no sympathy at all, or such a degree of it, as is altogether disproportioned to the violence of what is felt by the sufferer.

It is quite otherwise with those passions which take their origin from the imagination. The frame of my body can be but little affected by the alterations which are brought about upon that of my companion: but my imagination is more ductile, and more readily assumes, if I may say so, the shape and configuration of the imaginations of those with whom I am familiar. A disappointment in love, or ambition, will, upon this account, call forth more sympathy than the greatest bodily evil. Those passions arise altogether from the imagination. The person who has lost his whole fortune, if he is in health, feels nothing in his body. What he suffers is from the imagination only, which represents to him the loss of his dignity, neglect from his friends, contempt from his enemies, dependance, want, and misery, coming fast upon him; and we sympathize with him more strongly upon this account, because our imaginations can more readily mould themselves upon his imagination, than our bodies can mould themselves upon his body. (Smith, 2002b)

Scheler endorses the stronger view that compassion for the pain of others is impossible:

Two parents stand beside the dead body of a beloved child. They feel in common the “same” sorrow, the “same” anguish. It is not that A feels this sorrow and B feels it also, and moreover that they both know they are feeling it. No, it is a *feeling-with-each-other* [*Mit-einander-fühlen*]. [...] It will be evident that we can only feel mental suffering [*Leiden*] in this fashion, not physical pain [*Schmerz*] or sensory feelings. There is no such thing as a “pain-with” [*Mitschmerz*]. Sensory types of feelings (feeling-sensations [*Gefühlsempfindungen*] as Stumpf calls them), are by nature not susceptible of this highest form of feelings-with [*Mitgefühls*]. They must somehow become “objectual”. They arise only compassion [*Mitleid*] “with” and “upon” the suffering of pain by the other person. Likewise, there is certainly such a thing as rejoicing-with [*Mitfreude*] and upon another’s sensory pleasure, but never sensory-pleasure-with [*Mitlust*]. (Scheler, 2008, 12-13, translation modified; see also Scheler, 1973, 335, 340-341).

Why is it, as Smith puts it, that “our imaginations can more readily mould themselves upon his imagination, than our bodies can mould themselves upon his body”? How is it that we can have compassion for the suffering of others, but not for their pain? One natural explanation is this. Since pain cannot be expressed, *one cannot perceive the pain of others* — no more than one can hear their tinnitus. By contrast, since suffering might be expressed, typically through grimacing, one can perceive their suffering. Now to sympathise with someone's emotions, one must arguably have direct awareness, typically perceptual, of these emotions. If this is true, only expressible states can become objects of sympathy. Under this plausible assumption, the third criterion of distinction between pain and suffering, *Expression*, entails the fourth one, *Compassion*.

The four distinctions between pain and suffering are recapped in Table 1.²⁰

	Location	Intentionality	Expression	Compassion
Pain	✓	×	×	×
Suffering	×	✓	✓	✓

Table 1: Four differences between pain and suffering

3 Pains are not suffered bodily sensations

I have rejected two views about the relation between pain and suffering: (i) that they are identical; (ii) that one is a species of the other, or that the two are species of a common kind. Those tempted to downplay the pain/suffering distinction might still argue, however, that although pain and suffering indeed belong to distinct kinds, one can be

²⁰ These do not exhaust the differences between pain and suffering. Scheler (1973: 334 sqq.) notices further differences, which I only mention here *en passant*:

- (i) Pain cannot be emotively remembered (re-felt), whereas suffering can.
- (ii) There is make-believe or imaginative suffering, but there is no make-believe pain;
- (iii) Attending to suffering typically diminishes it, but attending to pain does not modify pain.
- (iv) Pain is transient, suffering is enduring (in a quite specific sense, see Scheler, 1973: 90-92);

Scheler also seems to think that:

- (v) Pain and bodily pleasure are not essentially incompatible (a pain and a bodily pleasure can occupy the same bodily place), but suffering and enjoyment essentially are (one cannot enjoy and suffer exactly the same thing, under exactly the same respect, in exactly the same way).

defined via or reduced to the other. I now turn to rejecting proposals of this sort. Pain and suffering are not only different in kind: neither figure in the nature of the other.

The first account I want to rebut is this:

Suffering account of pain: pains are suffered bodily episodes.

This account of pain belongs to the same family as accounts that equate pain with an averted or disliked sensation. One chief proponent of a suffering account of pain is Feldman (1997b; 2004). Feldman argues that sensory pleasures are alike in virtue of being the objects of attitudinal pleasures, and that sensory pains are alike in virtue of being the object of attitudinal pains (which I prefer to call suffering, see note 14). This allows him to solve both the heterogeneity and linkage problems: what unites the heterogeneous sensory pains is their relation to attitudinal pain. For x to be a sensory pain is (simplifying a bit) for x to be the object of some attitudinal pain.

Here are six problems for the suffering account of pain.

1. *Hunger*. Bodily sensations other than pains can be suffered. One can suffer from an itch, a discomfort, the sensations of cold associated with the flu, hunger, etc. As noted above, not all unpleasant bodily sensations are pains, although many if not all may give rise to suffering. One way out for the suffering account of pain would be to isolate which kinds of bodily sensation needs to be suffered in order to count as a pain. But then why not call “pains” those very sensations, prior to their being suffered (which would also avoid the other problems below)? And why endorse the suffering account in the first place if we are able to solve the heterogeneity problem – the question of what all pain sensations have in common– before having introduced suffering?
2. *Asymbolia*. Some subjects, though they claim to have pains, also claim not to be bothered by them. Taking these subject’s reports at face value, one is led to the conclusion that pains do not essentially displease, are not essentially *disliked* or *suffered*. Faced with such cases, upholders of the suffering account of pain have to dismiss the reports of the subjects who claim that they feel pain but do not

suffer it.²¹ It would however be better not to dismiss as false such reports. A more common example comes from the enjoyment of spicy food. Up to a threshold above which pain becomes unbearable, chili likers tend to enjoy the burning pain caused by chili (Rozin and Schiller, 1980).

3. *Euthyphro*. Do we suffer pains because they feel painful/bad, or do pains feel painful/bad because we suffer them? The suffering account is arguably committed to the latter. Indeed, it would be quite odd to claim that suffering a sensation turns it into a pain and to deny that suffering a sensation makes it seem painful/bad. However, the view that pains seem painful or bad because we suffer them puts the cart before the horse. The natural order of explanation is that we suffer pains because they seem painful/bad.²²
4. *Misidentification*. The suffering account of pain misidentifies *what* we suffer (from). When we walk on a small stone, what we suffer from is the ensuing *pain* and not the non-pain pressure sensation which, once suffered, becomes a pain. Pain is already there when we start suffering it. We do not introduce pain into the world by suffering initially neutral sensations.
5. *Justification*. Like other emotions, suffering can, on the face of it, be justified: one may wonder why –for what reason– a pain is (or should be) something we suffered from. Intuitively, the answer to that question, will have to be either (i) because pain is painful or (ii) because pain is bad. But neither of these answers are open to the suffering account of pain, since the account is committed to pain being painful or bad because we suffer it. On the suffering account

²¹ Here is Feldman:

what happens in such cases [in which people experience pain but do not mind] is that the individual experiences a sensation that any normal person would find painful—perhaps the individual himself formerly found similar experiences painful, or would find them painful were it not for the drugs or hypnosis or whatever is affecting him. Thus, there is some justification for calling the sensations ‘pains’. [...] But because of the unusual circumstances, the person does not take intrinsic attitudinal pain in his feelings. Thus the feelings (as felt by him on that occasion) are not strictly pains. [...] we call them ‘pains’, but on the proposed analysis they are not. (Feldman, 2004)

²² A similar problem afflicts desire-based account of pain, see Bain (2012), Aydede (2014). Brady (2018b) advances a new version of the desire-based account of pain which avoids this Euthyphro worry. On this new version, it is not the averted pain sensations that is painful, but the experience of having a pain sensation that one wants to cease. If I am right that pains are pain sensations—and that pain experiences are experiences *about* pains—Brady’s new desire view entails pains are not painful (only pain experiences are).

of pain, suffering alights somewhat randomly on bodily sensations, without reason.

6. *Location.* The suffering account of pain is not compatible with the view that pains are entirely located in the body. On this view, it is true indeed that the bodily sensation constitutive of pain is wholly located in our body. However that sensation, *qua suffered*, is not entirely located there. The reason is that the suffering element essential to pain is not itself given as located in the body. So an essential part of any pain lacks bodily location. What is strictly speaking located in the body is just the neutral sensation: not the pain, but its indolent substrate.

The suffering account of pain should therefore be rejected: pains cannot be defined through suffering, or at least not in this way.

4 Suffering is not perceiving pain's badness

Instead of defining pain in terms of suffering, one might attempt to define suffering in terms of pain. Suffering, we have seen, is an emotion which, like other emotions, is intentional, can be expressed, with which one can sympathise, and which is liable of justification. One influential account of emotions equates them with perceptions of value. Let us call the “perceptual approach to suffering” the following view:

Perceptual account of suffering: to suffer is to perceive/feel the badness of a pain.

Here are six problems for this account:

1. *Loss.* That we can suffer from other things that pains (hunger, but also loss, disease, poverty...) shows, as we saw, that the suffering account of pain fails to give a sufficient condition for having pains. It also shows that the perceptualist account of suffering fails to give necessary conditions for suffering: it is not necessary to perceive the badness of a pain to suffer, one might as well perceive the badness of a loss.
2. *Valence.* Suffering, like most emotions, has a *hedonic valence*: suffering is essentially unpleasant. But feeling or perceiving x are not essentially valenced episodes. The perceptualist's idea, however, is that to perceive x as bad must be unpleasant. That is, the presentation of disvalue necessarily turns the presentation itself into something negative. But this idea is far from being obvious. Perceiving a ladybird as red does not turn the perceiving into a red state; thinking of an event as past does not turn the thinking into a past episode. Why should perceiving a bodily episode as bad turn the perceiving into a bad or unpleasant episode? In other words, the perceptual account of suffering faces the problem of

explaining how the attitude inherits or gets coloured by the disvalue represented in its content. Absent such an account, we should stick to the view that the perception of the badness of a pain is, like other perceptions, neither positive nor negative.

3. *Messenger Shooting*. If suffering just informs us about the badness of our pain, are we irrational each time we want to be relieved of our suffering? Shouldn't we want, on the contrary, to face the truth and continue to be informed about the bad episodes occurring in our body? Why shoot the messenger?²³
4. *Torturing*. Here is another way to press this point. Suppose that to torture a person is to intentionally make her suffer. Why would the torturer want to inform his victim about the badness of her pain? And if torturing is just informing or making apparent to the victim the badness of her bodily episodes, why is it morally problematic? Is it impossible to torture an omniscient being?
5. *Justification*. Another problem for the perceptual account of suffering stems again from the fact that suffering is capable of justification. We may wonder for what reason one suffers a sensation or external episode, to which the answer will typically be: because it is or feels bad in some way. But while "Why —for what reason— do you suffer?" makes sense, the question "Why —for what reason— do you experience your pain as bad?" does not. Perceptions, experiences, feelings, presentations are not the kinds of states which are liable of justification, by contrast to suffering, emotions or beliefs.²⁴
6. *Reaction*. We say both that we *suffer pain*, and that we *suffer from pain*. The former is intentional and raises no problem for the perceptual account of suffering. The latter however suggests that suffering is a *reaction* to pain. But perceiving or feeling are not reactions: we can suffer from pain, but we cannot perceive or feel from pain.

To suffer is not to perceive pain's badness.

²³ This argument was initially raised by Bain (2012) as a potential problem for the evaluativist theory of pain, according to which to have a pain is to have an experience of a bodily disturbance as bad. Jacobson (2013) generalises the worry to any view that analyses pain in terms of a cognitive attitude.

²⁴ This problem is more generally a problem for any perceptual theory of emotions (see Deonna and Teroni, 2012; Müller, 2017). See however Tappolet (2016, 40) for a possible answer, and Maguire (2018) for doubts about the view that there are reasons for emotions. I cannot address these worries here.

5 Suffering is the correct reaction to pain

I have argued that pain and suffering are distinct, that neither is subsumed under the other or under a common kind, that a pain is not a suffered bodily sensation, and that suffering is not experiencing the badness of pains. What then are pain and suffering and how are they related?

My answer to the first question is dull: pain is pain, suffering is suffering. From the standpoint of descriptive psychology, pain and suffering cannot be reduced, analysed or defined in terms of each other, nor, I suspect, in terms of other phenomena. They have to be accepted as primitive. This does not mean that nothing can be said about them. First, we can specify the category to which they belong (attitudes, emotions, for suffering, bodily episodes, for pains) and some distinctive features they have in virtue of their primitive nature (e.g. suffering is expressible). Second, we might describe their relations. What then are the relations between pain and suffering –identity, subsumption, and essential participation having been excluded?

There are three main relations between pain and suffering, I submit. The first is normative: suffering a pain is the *correct* emotion to entertain towards it:

Correctness: suffering is the *correct* emotional reaction to pain.²⁵

Thus the relation between suffering and pain is akin to the relation between fear and danger, indignation and injustice, guilt and misdeeds, etc.: the former are the fitting/correct/appropriate affective answer to the latter.

For the sake of this paper, I will take *Correctness* to be equivalent to: (i) suffering is the *appropriate* reaction to pain; (ii) suffering is the *fitting* attitude towards pain; (iii) pain is *worthy* of being suffered; (iv) if one is to affectively react to pain, then pain *ought to be* suffered; (v) there are normative *reasons* to suffer pain. Correctness is a normative relation which I won't attempt to specify further, apart from the two following points. First, correctness is a non-moral relation.²⁶ To say that suffering is the correct, appropriate or fitting reaction to pain is *not* to say that suffering pain is *morally* good, *praiseworthy* or that we have some *ethical* duty to suffer pain. We can imagine baroque cases where our ethical duty would be to adopt an incorrect reaction to pain, such as to enjoy it. Second, to say that

²⁵ Perhaps *Correctness* should be conditional on pain *being felt*. Unfelt pains, if they exist, may not call for suffering. I shall here ignore this complication.

²⁶ Ewing (1947), d'Arms and Jacobson (2000); Mulligan (1998) and Rabinowicz & Rønnow-Rasmussen (2004).

suffering is the correct emotional reaction to pain, is not to say it is *required* to suffer in reaction to pain. Another permitted option is to fail to react affectively to pain.

Here is a short consideration in favour of *Correctness*. Pain is widely thought to be bad in some way (typically to be bad finally, personally and *pro tanto*; see Massin 2017). It is also typically agreed that bad things call for negative affective reactions. One is then naturally led to wonder what the correct reaction to pain is. It is hard to think of a better candidate than suffering.²⁷ Of course, pain may also, and appropriately so, *annoy* us, make us *despair*, *angry*, *distressed*, *fearful*, *depressed* etc. But such reactions are arguably not just reactions to the pain, but to specific aspects of the pain or to elements associated with it. We might despair at the chronicity of a pain, or be annoyed by its recurrence. A pain can make us angry because it was avoidable, etc. By analogy, that dangers may appropriately depress us, annoy us or tire us, constitutes no objection to the view that fear is the fitting affective reaction to danger.

The second relation between pain and suffering is psychological: we normally suffer pain because it feels bad (and not the reverse, as mentioned above against the suffering account of pain). That is, our suffering from a pain is an answer to its seeming bad:²⁸

Reaction: suffering from a pain is an emotion that arises in reaction to the felt badness of that pain.

This echoes the recurring claim that emotions are answers, responses or reactions to (the objects of) evaluations, a claim which entails that emotions are not themselves evaluations (*pave* the perceptualist account of emotions).

What is it to affectively *react* to pain being presented as bad? One possibility is that “*x* is a reaction to *y*” simply means “*x* is caused by *y*”: the experience of pain's badness would cause us to suffer. While I think it is true that suffering is caused by the feeling of pain's badness,²⁹ it is certainly not the case that any emotions caused by such a feeling should count as a reaction to it. There is more to reacting than simply being

²⁷ “Enduring pain” could be an alternative. But what is to *endure* a pain? My hunch is that enduring a pain is suffering it *plus* some behavioural element: not to be distracted by it, persisting in one's effort or activity, not complaining, etc. If this is true, then enduring is not really an alternative to suffering.

²⁸ I am here assuming following (Brogaard, 2010, 2012) that the logical form of “*x* feels *F*” (in which “feel” is neither comparative, nor epistemic) is “Feels[*x* is *F*]”. Badness is a property that pains are presented as having.

²⁹ Klein (2015a: 48sq) also points out that pain normally causes suffering.

caused. What? To react to the felt badness of pain is also to adopt the ensuing attitude *for this very reason*. When Marie suffers her pain in the toe, she does so for the reason that her pain feels bad. The felt badness is both a cause of and a motivating reason for the suffering reaction.

One question that naturally arises at this point is this: is pain bad because it is worthy of being suffered, or worthy of being suffered because it is bad (or neither of these). Let us adopt the following labels:

Buckpassing: pain is bad because it is appropriate to suffer pain.

Naive realism: suffering pain is appropriate because pain is bad.

Correctness is compatible with both *Buckpassing* and *Naive realism*. However, *Reaction* strongly suggest *Naive realism*. For if the felt badness of pains is the reason for which we normally suffer pains (*Reaction*), and if the reason for which one should suffer pain never involves pain's badness (by *Buckpassing*), we are forced to conclude that we are always wrong when we suffer pains on account of their felt badness. Unless we want to divorce motivating reasons to suffer from normative reasons to suffer, we should endorse *Naive Realism*. This is, I submit, the third relation between pain and suffering:

Naive realism: suffering pains is correct because pains are bad.

The badness of a pain is not only the reason for which one normally suffers it when one feels it –a motivating reason–, it is also the reason for which one should suffer the pain –a normative reason.

Let us call the conjunction of *Correctness*, *Reaction* and *Naive Realism* the *Reactive account* of the pain-suffering relation.

Reactive account of the pain-suffering relation:

(i) *Correctness*: suffering is the *correct* emotional reaction to pain.

(ii) *Reaction*: suffering a pain is an emotion that arises in reaction to the felt badness of that pain.

(iii) *Naive realism*: suffering pains is correct because pains are bad.

The reactive account avoids all the problems raised against the suffering account of pain:

1. *Hunger*. That bodily sensations other than pains can be suffered is not a problem for the reactive account, since it neither claims nor entails that all suffered bodily sensations are pains.
2. *Asymbolia*. Since on the reactive account it is possible to have pain without suffering it, asymbolics' reports can be taken at face value.

3. *Euthyphro*: On the reactive account, pain is not unpleasant or bad in virtue of being suffered, but pain is typically suffered because it is unpleasant or bad, in line with the natural order of explanation.
4. *Misidentification*: On the reactive account, it is not the neutral bodily substrate of pain which is suffered, but pain itself.
5. *Justification*: While the suffering account of pain cannot say that we suffer pain for the reason that it is bad or painful, this is explicitly what the reactive account claims.
6. *Location*: In the reactive account, suffering is not part of the nature of pains, hence pains can be wholly located in the body.

The reactive account also avoids the pitfalls of the perceptual account of suffering:

1. *Loss*. Since the reactive account does not define suffering in terms of the perception of pain's badness, things other than pain can be suffered from –a loss, a disease...
2. *Valence*. The reactive account is not committed to the controversial view that the perception of something negative is itself negative. The negativity of suffering is not derived from the negativity of the pain suffered.
3. *Messenger Shooting*. On the reactive account, suffering *is* not the perception the pain's badness but *arises in reaction* to the perception of pain's badness. Hence wanting to be relieved from our suffering is not refusing to face the facts.
4. *Torturing*. For the same reason, the reactive account does not equate torturers with informers. (One may indeed inform somebody about something bad in order to make him suffer, but informing is here a means to cause suffering, it is not itself the suffering.)
5. *Justification*. Since on the reactive account, suffering is an emotion and is not reduced to a perception, the question “Why —for what reason— do you suffer?” is legitimate (contrary to the question “Why —for what reason— do you experience your pain as bad?”), and finds a natural answer: because pain is painful/bad.
6. *Reaction*. The reactive account straightforwardly accounts for the fact that we both suffer *pain*, since suffering is intentional, and that we suffer *from* pain, since suffering is equated with an intentional reaction.

6 Objections answered

In spite of these advantages over the suffering account of pain and the perceptual account of suffering, the reactive account faces three objections that I now want to address.

Objection 1: It is not appropriate to suffer slight pains

An objection to *Correctness* is that it is intuitively unfitting to suffer from little pains.

One natural answer is that suffering from slight pain is fitting as long as the suffering is also slight. But the gist of the objection may be precisely that there is no such thing as slight suffering. In the same way that nothing can be mildly sublime, fantastic or radiant, or that one cannot be slightly exhausted or thrilled, one cannot slightly suffer.

Granting that “suffering” forbids “slight suffering”, one may however argue that there is a perfectly intelligible broader concept of emotional reaction to pain, which encompass *suffering* for intense pains, but also *being bothered* or *being annoyed*, for less intense ones. Ordinary language’s lexicon may be deficient here, nonetheless the distinction between pain and the affective reactions to it is clearly marked in its syntax and semantics.

Objection 2: We suffer from pains because they are painful, not because they are bad.

One may object to *Reaction* that it is not the badness of pain that one reacts to when one suffers it, but to its unpleasantness or painfulness.

My answer is that the distinction between pain's badness and pain's unpleasantness or painfulness is a spurious one. Painfulness is a thick axiological property. I can't elaborate on this view here (see Massin, 2017 for a full defence), but here is a short argument. Pain feels painful; pain also feels bad. But pain does not feel bad on top of feeling painful. Once we experience the painfulness of a pain, we do not need to experience a further property to be presented with its badness. Unless the experience of pain is systematically delusive, painfulness and pain's badness are one and the same property.

Objection 3: There is no difference between feeling a pain as bad and suffering it.

A second objection to *Reaction* is that the distinction between *feeling x as bad* and *suffering x* is without a difference. What is it to feel a pain's badness, if not to suffer it?

The claim that value feelings are distinct from affective reaction to them is unorthodox, but not unprecedented.³⁰ Here are two considerations in its favour, one general, one more specific to pain.

First, it is quite difficult to offer reasons for emotions without appealing, explicitly or implicitly, to the values of the objects of these emotions. We are amused by a joke for the reason that it was *funny*, angry about somebody because his remark was *offensive*, enjoy a wine because it is *balanced*, fear a lion because it is *dangerous*, or like a vase because it is *delicate*. These properties are admittedly all thick values. Now for these to count as motivating reasons for our emotions, they must (i) be accessed by us;³¹ (ii) be distinct from the emotion they motivate. Hence there must be some mental episodes prior to emotions that present us with the value of the object of our emotions. Furthermore, (iii) recalcitrant emotions suggest that such episodes are often non-doxastic. Hence there are some non-doxastic mental episodes with evaluative content that are distinct from and prior to emotions and that provide the motivating reasons for these emotions. These are the episodes which I stipulatively call “feelings of value”.

Some sceptics about feelings of value have tried to satisfy these three requisites by denying that motivating reasons or justifiers for emotions are evaluative, and by claiming instead that emotions are justified by the natural properties grounding values.³² Paul's reason to fear the lion would not involve its dangerousness (an evaluative property) but only its having sharp teeth (a non-evaluative property). However, this proposal heavily relies on a conversational implicature between *having sharp teeth* and *being dangerous*.³³ Once the implicature is cancelled, the proposal loses any intuitive appeal. Consider:

Jules: For what reason do you fear that lion?

Paul: Because it has very sharp teeth!

Jules: And these make him dangerous?

Paul: No, not in the least. In fact, the lion seems totally harmless to me.

³⁰ The distinction has been defended by Scheler (1973), Reinach (1989: 104, 279-312), von Hildebrandt (1969), and Mulligan (2008, 2009, 2010a, 2010b), Müller (2017). See Vendrell Ferran (2008) and Salice (2015) for presentation of the role of distinction among early phenomenologists.

³¹ I am here assuming with Dancy (2000) that motivating reasons are reasons *in the light of which* one acts (in the present case: react).

³² Deonna and Teroni (2012a: 94-97; 2012b).

³³ See Müller (2017) for a detailed defence of that point.

Second, there seem to be cases where we feel the value of something without affectively reacting to it. One can thus feel the funniness of a joke without being amused by it (Mulligan, 2008). After several hearings, the pleasure we take in listening to a piece of music decreases, although the aesthetic value we hear in it does not disappear. Sceptics about value feelings typically reply this way: in such cases one *believes* or *judges* that the joke is funny, while failing to really *feel* or *perceive* its funniness (which, on perceptualist accounts, is an emotion). More generally, where defenders of value feelings claim that one can grasp the value of a thing while remaining unmoved— that one can be *value-blasé*—, their enemies reply that one then simply fails to see its value —that one is *value-blind*.

This is where pain asymbolia provides a neglected argument in favour of value feelings. Asymbolics report feeling pain after a pinprick, but also report that this does not bother them in the least —and behave accordingly. The standard take on pain asymbolia is that pain is a sensation with two components, one sensory, the other affective, and that asymbolic pains lack the affective component. There are two problems with the standard account. First, it amounts to dismissing asymbolics’ reports: when asymbolics claim to have a pain in the finger, what they should in effect say, on the standard account, is that they have a sensation which is like pain in only one respect. Second, the claim that asymbolics’ pains lack any affective component —that they are, as is commonly put, “pains that don't hurt”— is at odds with the way asymbolics describe their experience. Looking at the (very few) reports available, asymbolics do report not only feeling pain, but also describe these pains as *hurting*, *painful* and *bad*: “Thank you, this was very good, it hurts a lot”. [“Danke schön, das war ganz gut, das hat mir so weh getan”] (Schilder and Stengel 1928); “I feel it indeed; it hurts a bit, but it doesn’t bother me”(Pötzl and Stengel 1937, 180; see Grahek 2007: 45); “it was bad, please something else” [“das war schlecht, bitte schön, noch etwas”] (Schilder and Stengel 1928).

It is very hard to make sense of such reports if one maintains that asymbolics’ pains lack the “affective dimension” of pain altogether, failing to distinguish the painfulness/badness of pains from their being disliked/suffered. Once the distinction between the felt badness of pain and its being suffered is recognised however, such reports make plain sense: asymbolics experience their pains as painful/bad, but fail to react to them by suffering them. They are not unable to fully feel pain, but to correctly react to it. Asymbolics’ pains are not pains that don't hurt. They are full-blown pains, that hurt, are painful and feel bad. They are just pains that asymbolics don’t suffer from.³⁴

³⁴ See Klein (2015b) for a partly converging account of pain asymbolia and Bain (forthcoming) for discussion.

7. Against Incorrighibility

The reactive account of the relation between pain and suffering sheds new light on pain's alleged incorrighibility. I take Incorrighibility to be the following view:

Incorrighibility: seeming to have a pain entails having a pain.

Incorrighibility has been very influential. It is a key assumption of Kripke's argument against identity-theories of mind. Since pain is exactly as it seems, Kripke maintains, the identity theorist cannot explain away the intuition that the relation between pain and brain states is contingent by pointing out that it is in fact the relation between the *sensation* of pain and brain states which is contingent (as he can do with heat):

Someone can be in the same epistemic situation as he would be if there were heat, even in the absence of heat, simply by feeling the sensation of heat [...] No such possibility exists in the case of pain and other mental phenomena. To be in the same epistemic situation that would obtain if one had a pain *is* to have a pain. (Kripke 1980, 152)

Incorrighibility is also a key premiss of the so-called “paradox of pain” (Hill, 2004, 2005). Our ordinary conception of pain would be paradoxical on the following grounds. On the one hand, we naturally think of pains as being *located* in body parts, and in this respect we seem to be committed to the view that pains are *objective* bodily conditions. On the other hand, we conceive of pains as being mental, notably because they seem incorrighible. If no mental episodes are located in body parts, the ordinary conception of pain is paradoxical.

I believe that *Incorrighibility* is false and that the pain/suffering distinction explains both its attraction and why it is false.

The reason why *Incorrighibility* is false is relatively straightforward. Referred pains — where a pain is felt in a location than other than the one in which it is actually located — shows that the felt location of pain can be illusory.

“But still, there is a pain, the incorrighibilist replies, it is just elsewhere”. No, there is possibly no pain at all. Phantom limb pains — where a pain is felt in an amputated limb — show that experiences of pain can be hallucinatory. One cannot have a pain in a limb that does not exist.³⁵ And unlike referred pains, phantom limb pains are not actually located elsewhere in the body.

“But still, there is a pain, the incorrighibilist replies, it just has no location”. No, pains essentially have locations, this is one of the essential

³⁵ As compellingly argued by Bain (2007).

differences between pain and suffering, as we saw. Suppose there were pains without location, would there be any natural kind to which located and un-located pains belong?

“How can you claim that a person complaining about an intense pain in her limb in fact has no pain? Doesn't *she* know?” When Julie insists, sincerely, that she has an intense pain in her amputated limb, what she *says* is false —she has no pain in her limb, because she has no limb. *But* what she *expresses* —her suffering— is not doubt real. Julie is genuinely suffering from a hallucinatory pain. The plausibility of *Incorrigibility* relies on a conflation between pain and suffering. One may suffer a pain that one does not have, in the same way that one may fear a danger that one does not face. Suppose Julie hallucinates that a tarantula is above her and insists that she is in real danger. She is not infallible about dangers for all that, quite the contrary. But she really is frightened by an hallucinated danger. Likewise for her phantom limb “pains”: she has no pain, but her pain hallucinations prompts genuine suffering. When we say, with an air of paradox, that Julie is in pain although she has no pain, what we mean is that Julie is genuinely suffering in reaction to a hallucinated pain.

So *Incorrigibility* is false. I won't elaborate on how this affects Kripke's objection to materialism, but I want to say a few words in conclusion about how this counts in favour of the common sense conception of pain. Such a conception has been claimed to be paradoxical on the grounds that it both maintains that pains are mental and that pains are located in our body. I believe it is simply not the case that the common sense conception of pain equates pains with mental episodes. Pains are neither experiences nor emotions —but there are experiences of pain, and emotional reaction to experienced pains. For common sense, pain is a state of our body, which one experiences and to which one usually and correctly reacts by suffering. In other words, the reactive account is (part of) the common sense account of pain and suffering. This ordinary account is not only perfectly consistent, it is also preferable to several alternative accounts of pains.

First, many alternative accounts of pain diagnose an ambiguity in the ordinary term “pain” which they then disambiguate by introducing various technical terms (“pain-experience” vs “pain-quality”; “pain_e” vs. “pain_o,” “central state” vs “peripheral pain” see e.g. Tye 2006a; 2006b, Aydede 2009, Hill, to appear). The present proposal dispenses with any technical jargon by relying instead on the ordinary language distinction between pains, experiences of pain, and sufferings of pain.

Second, the reactive and ordinary approach to pain and suffering proves more fine-grained than several revisionary accounts. Thus, while the standard scientific account of pain relies on a twofold distinction between the sensory and the affective components of pains, the ordinary

approach relies on a threefold distinction between having, experiencing and suffering pain. Second, while the standard scientific approach rests content with componential and causal relations between the two components of pain, the ordinary approach introduces normative relations into the picture.

Third, most alternative accounts of pain are led to equate pains with experiences or feelings (of bodily damages, of evaluative properties), and as a consequence struggle to account for the location of pains. The ordinary conception of pain, by contrast, does not compromise on pain location.³⁶

³⁶ I am very grateful to Kevin Mulligan, Uriah Kriegel, Walter Horn, Michael Brady and Daniel Schulthess for extended discussions and suggestions on this paper. I am also indebted to Fabrice Teroni, Arnaud Dewalque, Robin McKenna, John DeMouy, Larry Tapper and audiences at the conferences *Suffering and Phenomenal Consciousness*, Glasgow, 2016 ; *Phenomenology of Emotion*, Liège, 2017 for their useful comments. Thanks to Riccardo Braglia, CEO and managing director of Helsinn Holding SA and the Fondazione Reginaldus (Lugano) for financial support of the work published here

References

- Aydede, M. 2014. "How to Unify Theories of Sensory Pleasure: An Adverbialist Proposal." *Review of Philosophy and Psychology*, pp. .
- . 2009. "Is feeling pain the perception of something?" *The Journal of Philosophy*, pp. 531–567.
- Bain, D. 2007. "The Location of Pains." *Philosophical Papers* 36 (2):171-2
- . 2012. "What makes pains unpleasant?" *Philosophical Studies*, 166 (1): 69-89.
- . (forthcoming). "Why Take Painkillers?" *Noûs*.
- Brady, M. S. 2018a. *Suffering and Virtue*. Oxford University Press: Oxford, UK.
- . 2018b. "Painfulness, desire, and the Euthyphro dilemma". *American Philosophical Quarterly*, 55(3), pp. 239-250.
- Brentano, F. . 1995. *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint*, L. McAlister, ed., trad. A. C. Rancurello, D. B. Terrell, L. L. McAlister, London: Routledge.
- Brogaard, B. 2010. "Do 'looks' Reports Reflect the Contents of Perception?" manuscript.
- . 2012. "What do We Say When We Say How or What We Feel?", *Philosophers' Imprint* 12.
- Carruthers, P. 2004. "Suffering without subjectivity." *Philosophical Studies* 121:99–125.
- Cassell, E.J. 1982. "The nature of suffering and the goals of medicine." *New England Journal of Medicine* 306:639–645.
- . 1995. "Pain and suffering". In: Reich W, ed. *Encyclopedia of Bioethics* , 2nd ed. New York: Macmillan:1897–1905.
- d'Arms, J., and D. Jacobson. 2000. "The moralistic fallacy: on the 'appropriateness' of emotions." *Philosophical and Phenomenological Research*, pp. 65–90.
- Dancy, J. 2000. *Practical Reality*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.
- DeGrazia, D. & Rowan, A. 1991. Pain, suffering, and anxiety in animals and humans. *Theoretical Medicine and Bioethics* 12 (3).
- Deonna, J. and Teroni, F. 2012a. *The Emotions: A Philosophical Introduction*, London: Routledge.
- . 2012b, "From justified emotions to justified evaluative judgements", *Dialogue* 51, 01 (2012), pp. 55–77.

- De Vignemont, F., and P. Jacob. 2012. "What Is It like to Feel Another's Pain?" *Philosophy of Science* 79:295–316.
- Dummett, M. 2014. *Origins of analytical philosophy*. A&C Black.
- Ewing, A. 1947. *The definition of good*. London: Macmillan.
- Feldman, F. 2002. "The Good Life: A Defense of Attitudinal Hedonism." *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 65:604–628.
- . 2004. *Pleasure and the Good Life: Concerning the Nature, Varieties, and Plausibility of Hedonism*. Oxford University Press.
- . 1997. *Utilitarianism, Hedonism, and Desert: Essays in Moral Philosophy*. Cambridge University Press.
- Fingarette, H. 1977. "Punishment and Suffering." *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association*, 50(6), 499-525.
- Geiger, M. 1913. "Phänomenologie des ästhetischen Genusses." *Jahrbücher für Phänomenologie, Halle*, pp. 567-684.
- Gray, D.C. 2010. "Punishment as suffering." *Vanderbilt Law Review* 63:1619.
- Hall, E.W. 1956. "Ghosts and categorial mistakes." *Philosophical Studies* 7:1–6.
- Hall, R.J. 1989. "Are Pains Necessarily Unpleasant?" *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 49:643.
- Hart, H.L.A. 2008. *Punishment and responsibility: Essays in the philosophy of law*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hill, C.S. 2004. "Ouch! An essay on pain." *Advances in Consciousness Research*, 56:339–362.
- . "Ow! The Paradox of Pain". In Murat Aydede (ed.), *Pain: New Essays on its Nature and the Methodology of its Study*. Cambridge Ma: Bradford Book/Mit Press.
- Husserl, E. 1970. *Logical Investigations*. London: Routledge.
- Hyman, J. 2003. "Pains and places." *Philosophy* 78:5–24.
- Jacobson, H. 2013. "Killing the Messenger: Representationalism and the Painfulness of Pain." *The Philosophical Quarterly* 63:509–519.
- Johansson, I. 2001. "Species and dimensions of pleasure." *Metaphysica* 2:39–71.
- Kenny, A. 1966. *Action, emotion and will*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Klein, C. 2015a. *What the body commands: the imperative theory of pain*. MIT Press.
- . 2015b. "What Pain Asymbolia Really Shows". *Mind* 124 (494):493-516.
- Kripke, S. 1980. *Naming and Necessity*, rev. ed . Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

- Loeser, J.D. 2000. "Pain and suffering." *The Clinical journal of pain* 16:2–6.
- Maguire, B. 2018. "There Are No Reasons for Affective Attitudes." *Mind*, Volume 127, Issue 507, 779–805.
- Massin, O. 2017. "Bad by Nature, An Axiological Theory of Pain." In J. Corns, ed. *Routledge Handbook of Philosophy of Pain*. London: Routledge, pp. 321–333.
- . 2013. "The Intentionality of Pleasures and Others Feelings, A Brentanian Approach." In D. Fissette and G. Fréchette, eds. *Themes from Brentano*. Amsterdam: Rodopi, pp. 307–337.
- Mayerfeld, J. 1996. "The moral asymmetry of happiness and suffering." *Southern Journal of Philosophy* 34 (3):317-338.
- . 1999. *Suffering and Moral Responsibility*. Oxford University Press.
- Müller, J. M. 2017. "How (Not) to Think of Emotions as Evaluative Attitudes: How (Not) to Think of Emotions as Evaluative Attitudes", *Dialectica* 71(2):281–308.
- Mulligan, K. 1998. "From appropriate emotions to values." *The Monist* 81:161–188.
- . 2008. "On Being Blinded by Value, Feeling Feelings and their Valence." manuscript.
- . 2009. "On being struck by value", in Merkel, Barbara, ed., *Leben mit Gefühlen. Emotionen, Werte und ihre Kritik* Mentis-Verlag, 141-161.
- . 2010a. "Husserls Herz", in Manfred Frank & Niels Weidtmann (eds.), *Husserl und die Philosophie des Geistes*. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 209-238.
- . 2010b. "Emotions and values", in Goldie, P., ed., *Oxford Companion to the Philosophy of Emotions*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 475-500.
- Nilsson, P. 2011. "On the suffering of compassion." *Philosophia* 39:125–144.
- Noordhof, P. 2001. "In pain". *Analysis*, 61(270), 95-97.
- . 2005. "In a state of pain", in Aydede, M. (ed.) *Pain: New Essays on its Nature and the Methodology of its Study*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Rabinowicz, W., and T. Rønnow-Rasmussen. 2004. "The Strike of the Demon: On Fitting Pro-attitudes and Value*." *Ethics* 114:391–423.
- Reinach, A. 1989. *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. ; Schuhmann, Karl & Smith, Barry (1989). München: *Philosophia Verlag*.
- Roberts, R. 2003. *Emotions: An essay in aid of moral psychology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2016. "Emotions in the Christian Tradition", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2016 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL =

- <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2016/entries/emotion-Christian-tradition/>>.
- Rozin, P., & Schiller, D. 1980. "The nature and acquisition of a preference for chili pepper by humans", *Motivation and emotion*, 4(1), 77-101.
- Ryle, G. 1990. *The Concept of Mind*. Penguin Books Ltd.
- Salice, A. 2015. "Actions, Values, and States of Affairs in Hildebrand and Reinach". *Studia Phaenomenologica* 15:259-280.
- Scheler, M. 1973. *Formalism in Ethics and Non-Formal Ethics of Value*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.
- . 2008, *The Nature of Sympathy*, trad. P. Heath, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick (U.S.A), London (U.K.).
- Smith, A.. 2002. *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*. Cambridge University Press.
- Talbott, T. 2017. "Heaven and Hell in Christian Thought", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2017 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2017/entries/heaven-hell/>>.
- Tappolet, C., 2016. *Emotions, Value, and Agency*, Oxford University Press.
- Twardowski, K. 1999. *On actions, products and other topics in philosophy*, J. Brandl, J. Wolenski, and A. Szylewicz, eds. Rodopi.
- Tye, M. 2006a. "Another Look at Representationalism about Pain." In M. Aydede, ed. *Pain: New Essays on Its Nature and the Methodology of Its Study* (Bradford Books). The MIT Press, pp. 99–120.
- . 2017. "Are Pains Feelings?" *The Monist* 100:478–484.
- . 2008. "The Experience of Emotion: an Intentionalist Theory." *Revue internationale de Philosophie* 62:25–50.
- . 2006b. "In defense of representationalism: Reply to commentaries." *Pain: New Essays on Its Nature and the Methodology of Its Study*, Cambridge, MA, The MIT Press, Bradford Books, pp. 163–176.
- von Hildebrand, Dietrich. 1969 [1922]. "Sittlichkeit und ethische Werterkenntnis." In *Die Idee von der sittlichen Handlung. Sittlichkeit und ethische Werterkenntnis*, ed. K.Mertens, 127–268. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.
- Vendrell Ferran, I. 2008. *Die Emotionen, Gefühle in der realistischen Phänomenologie*, Berlin: Akademie Verlag.
- Walen, A. 2016. "Retributive Justice", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2016 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2016/entries/justice-retributive/>>

- Zaibert, L. 2013. "The Instruments of Abolition, or Why Retributivism is the Only Real Justification of Punishment." *Law and Philosophy* 32:33–58.
- . 2017. "On the Matter of Suffering: Derek Parfit and the Possibility of Deserved Punishment", *Criminal Law and Philosophy* 11 (1):1-18. .