Kelly Sorensen and Diane Williamson (eds.), *Kant and the Faculty of Feeling*

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018 pp. x + 276 ISBN: 9781107178229 (Hbk.) £75.00

*Penultimate version. Final version published in:
Kantian Review. 24 (2), 2019, pg. 322–327.
https://doi.org/10.1017/S1369415419000116

Kant's faculty psychology rarely receives direct scholarly treatment. Ever since the student lecture notes from Kant's courses have been widely available, however, and especially since they were partially translated into English as part of the Cambridge Edition, reference to and study of Kant's division of the mind into three fundamental faculties (cognition, desire, and feeling) has steadily increased. For example, in recent years some excellent monographs have appeared that deal with Kant's psychology, including Patrick Frierson's *Kant's Empirical Psychology* (Cambridge, 2014), Corey Dyck's *Kant and Rational Psychology* (Oxford, 2014), and Julian Wuerth's *Kant on Mind, Action, and Ethics* (Oxford, 2014). This volume is an excellent addition to the literature on Kant's faculty psychology, and it takes the faculty that is in the most desperate need of attention as its object, namely the faculty of feeling. It is a virtue of this volume that it does not confine itself to any specific role that the faculty of feeling plays as there are discussions of feeling in relation to cognition, desire, ethics, aesthetics, and even historical treatments of Kant's intellectual development. It is a wonderful volume and will interest advanced students and scholars of Kant of any persuasion.

The book has thirteen chapters, divided into two main parts. The first part deals with the relation of feeling to cognition and desire, as well as feeling in the third *Critique*. The first chapter, Alix Cohen's 'Rational Feelings', argues that reason has feelings in a *non*-metaphorical sense. Cohen focuses on the 'need' of theoretical reason, which manifests itself as a feeling, and she suggests that the feeling of reason's need be understood as a rational feeling similar in kind to the feeling of respect for the moral law. Her main conclusion is that rational feelings like the need of

theoretical reason 'manifest the conditions of rational agency' (p. 22) and as such justify the regulative use of the ideas of reason in order to enable our own cognitive activity. A wide-ranging chapter, Cohen's contribution is a helpful discussion of how Kant might make room for rational feelings.

In 'Two Different Kinds of Value? Kant on Feeling and Moral Cognition' Wiebke Deimling continues the discussion of the relation between feeling and cognition and argues that feelings are not elements of cognition, unlike sensations. Deimling illustrates that this implies that Kant's theory of the emotions is non-cognitivist in that it does not involve judgements. The chapter's even more interesting contribution involves the claim that feelings nonetheless 'track' information, namely value (p. 37). The chapter would benefit from a more extended discussion of the claim that moral judgements similarly track a value, but as a whole the chapter is a fascinating account of not only feeling's relation to cognition, but its relation to value as well.

Jeanine Grenberg's chapter, 'The Practical, Cognitive Import of Feeling: A Phenomenological Account', focuses on the alleged problem that feeling seems only capable of being reflectively experienced in the third person via inner sense, and never in first person. Grenberg's solution argues that time is determined differently in practical moral experience and is phenomenological rather than empirical. This means that moral feeling, for example, is the phenomenological experience of the self as a legislating subject and is not an experience of the self as an empirical object of inner sense. Grenberg's chapter is ambitious in that it attempts to find a place for the concept of phenomenological time in Kant's philosophy as a whole.

The next chapter, Janelle DeWitt's 'Feeling and Inclination: Rationalizing the Animal Within', is one of the volume's best. DeWitt seeks to avoid the 'fractured psychology' (p. 68) of the Kantian subject according to which it is both a rational and a sensible being. She proposes to do this by offering a cognitive interpretation of Kant's account of non-moral motivation, thus making the

'animal within' more rational, and preserving the unity of the subject. DeWitt argues against the view that feelings are non-cognitive and merely experiential. She claims that feelings are cognitive in the sense that reason structures the emotions and appetites. This structuring gives human beings control over their ends, which makes them free and unifies their otherwise fragmented psychology. She provides an excellent overview of how pleasure (feeling), desire, and reason interact in action, and the chapter offers needed orientation as to how the faculties function in general.

Allen Wood's contribution, 'Feeling and Desire in the Human Animal', comments on DeWitt and claims her account needs to be supplemented in two ways: 1) by explaining how the inclinations come to pose resistance to reason, such as that contained in Kant's account of unsocial sociability; and 2) by explaining how feeling and desire figure in rational agency more explicitly. Wood also reflects on Kant's view of non-human animals in comparison to our contemporary common-sense view of such animals. Like DeWitt, Wood is against 'reflective detachment' (p. 96) and the separation of the rational from the animal in the Kantian subject.

In "'A new sort of a priori principles": Psychological Taxonomies and the Origin of the Third Critique', Patrick Frierson offers a new interpretation of the origins of the third *Critique*. He argues convincingly that Kant was looking for a priori principles of feeling all throughout his development, not just in the 1780s. For example, Frierson shows that Kant thought of aesthetic rules during his early period merely in a different way than what we find in the third *Critique*, namely as universal only in the sense of 'generality' and abstracted from experience (114). Frierson also helpfully illustrates that Kant was committed to the three-faculty theory of the soul from very early on in his development and persisted to hold the same view in all of his writings. Frierson's contribution is an excellent account of how Kant conceived of the principles of feeling throughout his development, and of how Kant came to have the view he eventually presents in the third *Critique*.

In the final chapter of the first part of the volume, 'Between Cognition and Morality: Pleasure as "Transition" in Kant's Critical System', Kristi Sweet discusses the pleasure involved in judgements of taste as fulfilling the function of being the transition between the theoretical and the practical spheres. She argues that such pleasure performs this transition in virtue of the fact that it 'bears the same essential structure as both cognition and morality' (p. 131). Sweet illustrates that pleasure in the beautiful has the same structure as cognition in that 'it announces a general accord between an object represented and our faculties of cognition' (p. 131), and it has the same structure as morality in that 'it presents itself as a kind of universality – one that comes with a demand that involves taking account of all human beings' (p. 131).

The second part of the book, comprising the remaining six chapters, focuses on certain canonical feelings. Paul Guyer's 'What Is It Like to Experience the Beautiful and Sublime?' argues that Kant adopts a 'dispositional' model of pleasure and pain, according to which these feelings are dispositions to remain in or change one's current condition. Guyer very persuasively argues that Kant's understanding of the beautiful and sublime is not only more plausible from a contemporary point of view if interpreted according to the dispositional model, but is also more exegetically satisfying (pp. 149-150). The chapter also contains extremely helpful accounts of how some of Kant's British and German contemporaries, especially Hutcheson and Sulzer, conceived of pleasure and pain, and how Kant might have been influenced by them. Although Guyer discusses the dispositional model only in relation to aesthetic feelings, the model he presents seems fruitful for understanding Kant's conception of physical and moral feelings as well.

In 'How to Feel a Judgement: The Sublime and its Architectonic Significance', Katerina Deligiorgi attempts to untangle a number of interpretive issues surrounding Kant's concept of the sublime by way of explaining Kant's answer to three questions: What is the Sublime?; What is the Sublime About?; and Why does the sublime matter? . She argues that the sublime *is* a state of the

mind characterized by a feeling that is both pleasure and displeasure, and also that it is a judgement that unites contra-purposiveness and purposiveness. She claims the sublime is *about* neither an external object nor an internal object of thought, but rather concerns the question: '*for whom* is such a judgement, and so feeling, possible?' (p. 178) The answer, of course, is a finite moral being. Finally, Deligiorgi argues that the sublime *matters* because it reveals that there is transition between the theoretical and the practical, and also reveals there is less rigidity in Kant's system. Furthermore, she argues this concept matters because it addresses one of reason's needs, namely our need for moral orientation.

Robert Clewis focuses on 'The Feeling of Enthusiasm' and begins with the important note that his topic is not *Schwärmerei* (fanaticism), but *Enthusiasmus*, despite both terms at times being translated as 'enthusiasm'. Clewis suggests enthusiasm be understood as 'an imaginative representative of a rational idea of the morally good' (p. 186), as well as a response to an actual event or object, and the perceived good in it. Clewis catalogues the 'paradigmatic' (p. 197) cases of enthusiasm, such as in reaction to patriotic virtue, as well an 'exceptional' case, namely enthusiasm in reaction to the French Revolution. In this context, Clewis convincingly argues that enthusiasm should be regarded as 'a significant Kantian feeling' (p. 203) because Kant believes the feeling is required of all disinterested spectators of the relevant situations. Clewis ultimately concludes, however, that Kant's concept of the feeling of enthusiasm is ambiguous and dual-natured: it is positive as an imaginative response to the morally good, but is also negative in that it is an affect that should be censured.

In 'Sympathy, Love, and the Faculty of Feeling', Kelly Sorensen discusses both Kant's arguments against sympathy and love, what Sorensen calls the 'offensive case' (p. 208), as well as Kant's positive appreciation of them, what Sorensen calls the 'defensive case' (p. 208). With respect to the offensive case, Sorensen claims there are three main issues with sympathy and love: they are

unavailable as a motive when we need them, they are unreliable measures of the good, and they can turn into self-indulgence. Focusing on sympathy, in the defensive case Sorensen illustrates how it can still act as a provisional moral motive during moral development, that it helps agents perceive morally relevant information about a situation, and is one of the aesthetic preconditions of all moral behaviour. The main argument of the chapter, however, is that what is good about sympathy in Nietzsche is already there in Kant, but better. Oddly, we do not hear much about Nietzsche in the chapter, Sorensen remarks that his reflections on Kant and Nietzsche are 'less important' (p. 223) than his remarks on the virtues of Kant's account itself.

Diane Williamson, in 'Respect, in Every Respect', argues that there are four different kinds of respect that correspond to four different kinds of duties as well as four aesthetic preconditions: 1) positive self-respect – which corresponds to imperfect duties to oneself and moral feeling; 2) negative self-respect – perfect duties to oneself and self-esteem; 3) positive other-respect – imperfect/positive duties to others and love; 4) negative other-respect – perfect/negative duties to others and conscience. Williamson also argues that neither respect for the law nor respect for persons is foundational, that Kant's theory of respect is unified as both a behaviour and a feeling, and also that respect is a radical political notion. Given the prominence of the feeling of respect in the secondary literature, it is surprising that only one chapter of the volume focuses on this feeling, and the ground that Williamson attempts to cover could have easily filled two (or more) chapters.

In the final chapter, 'Is Kantian Hope a Feeling?', Rachel Zuckert claims that although there is a temptation to characterize hope as a belief, one need not and one should rather characterize it as a feeling (though she also refers to hope as an attitude, see pp. 243 and 250). Zuckert arrives at a definition of hope, according to which it is 'tentative expectation' (p. 248), i.e. a feeling aimed at something good that is possible but not within one's power. Zuckert's contribution is a fitting conclusion, for it highlights the many debates surrounding Kant's conception of feeling: on

Zuckert's reading, all feelings are passive, not spontaneously produced, she claims there is no such thing as a rational feeling, and that feelings are not judgements. For Zuckert, hope as a feeling is therefore something affected by certain other representations and is passive, not rational.

I might conclude with two critical remarks. First, to my mind the volume would have benefitted from a chapter that sought to clarify the place of the faculty of feeling within Kant's faculty psychology in general. Such a discussion, which would orient readers to the three-faculty theory and perhaps its history, would have been helpful for less advanced students and scholars not so familiar with Kant's faculty psychology. To be sure, the contributions by DeWitt and Frierson contain very helpful remarks in this direction, but a first chapter whose primary object is clarifying the situation of feeling as a faculty within Kant's faculty psychology would have been an excellent addition.

My second remark has to do with locating Kant's theory of the emotions within his theory of feeling. Many of the contributions in this volume explicitly equate feeling and emotion in Kant: in the Introduction, for example, Williamson claims that Kant's theory of feeling is the natural place to locate his theory of the emotions (p. 2), and both Deimling (see p. 30) and DeWitt (p. 71) explicitly subscribe to this approach as well. It is unfortunate, however, that so little attention is paid to the alternative approach, namely, that feeling and emotion are not even vaguely similar. The only representation of this contrasting position comes in a footnote in Deligiorgi's contribution, which very accurately points out that even in the contemporary philosophical discussion there are important differences between feeling and emotion. Deligiorgi also notes that there are a variety of terms in Kant, such as *Rührung* and *Gemütsbewegung*, aside from feeling (*Gefühl*) that describe aspects of the human being's emotional life as well (see p. 172n17). Absent any consideration of these alternative approaches, readers are presented with a relatively one-sided interpretation of what an emotion might be, for Kant.

Even so, I highly recommend this volume to anyone working on Kant's understanding of feeling, whether one's primary interest is his theoretical or practical philosophy. All readers of Kant are sure to find at least one chapter both fascinating and helpful, and every chapter advances the debate it participates in.

Works Cited

Frierson, Patrick. *Kant's Empirical Psychology*. Cambridge University Press, 2014

Dyck, Corey. *Kant and Rational Psychology*. Oxford University Press, 2014.

Wuerth, Julian. *Kant on Mind, Action, and Ethics*. Oxford University Press, 2014.

Michael H. Walschots

Trent University

michaelwalschots@trentu.ca