

Value-First Accounts of Reasons and Fit^{*1}

R.A. Rowland
University of Leeds

It is tempting to think that all our reasons for action somehow derive from value. We might be drawn to this idea in various ways. We might be ‘spellbound’ by the idea that we could never be required to do what’s worse rather than what’s best.² Or we might think that it is people, places, objects, artefacts, and states of affairs’ valuable features that explain why we ought to, and have reasons to, respond to them in various ways. It is people’s value that explains why we should respect them. Admirable people’s good features—that is, the features of them that make them admirable—are what give rise to reasons to admire them, and make it fitting to admire them. The value of natural beauty is what gives us reasons to protect it. And the good-making features of a good state of affairs, a good present, and a good holiday resort are what give us reasons to desire a good state of affairs, give a good present, and visit or recommend a good holiday resort.³ But the view that value explains, grounds, or gives rise to our reasons for actions and attitudes has fallen out of favour. Instead the dominant view is now that for something to be valuable is for it to be a fitting object of pro-attitudes, or to have the higher-order property of having other properties that are reasons for pro-attitudes. For instance, what makes a holiday resort a good one is that it has other features that are reasons to recommend or visit it (its sandy features, pleasant amenities, stunning views, etc.). On these buck-passing (reasons-first) and fitting-attitude (fittingness-first) accounts of value, reasons and fittingness are explanatorily prior to value.

Those arguing for such buck-passing and fitting-attitude accounts have considered rival value-first accounts of reasons and fittingness that explain reasons and fit in terms of value. And they have pointed out several quite severe problems with value-first accounts of reasons and fittingness. But these opponents of value-first accounts have only considered *direct* rather than *indirect* value-first accounts of reasons and fittingness—largely because it is only *direct* views of all reasons and fit that

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² See Foot (1985, p. 196) and Portmore (2011, pp. 32-33).

³ Though these ideas might attract one to a value-first view, buck-passing and fitting-attitude accounts of value may well be compatible with them; see e.g. Rowland (2019: 59-65)

have been clearly proposed.⁴ According to direct views, the fittingness of ϕ -ing and reasons to ϕ are explained by the value of ϕ -ing, the value of that which it is fitting to ϕ in response to, or the value of object of the attitude ϕ . This chapter aims to consider the prospects of *indirect* value-first accounts of fit and reasons. The indirect account I propose explains the fittingness of ϕ -ing and reasons to ϕ in terms of the value of being guided by standards according to which it is fitting to ϕ and there are reasons to ϕ .

I have previously argued at length for a buck-passing account of value, and against value-first accounts of reasons. The aim of this paper is to explore whether I and others have been too quick to dismiss value-first approaches to reasons and fit by exploring the possibility of an indirect value-first approach. As I will explain, an indirect value-first approach may seem able to avoid all of the objections that I and others have levelled against value-first views.⁵ But there do still seem to be costs to an indirect value-first approach which I will explain and explore the severity of. And, ultimately, it may still seem that an indirect value-first approach, hardened against objections though it is, does not quite do as much explanatory work as fitting-attitude and buck-passing accounts of value. My aim here though is primarily exploratory. I hope to explain how an indirect value-first account of reasons and fit can work and to try to make the strongest case for such a view. After making this case I try to honestly assess whether an indirect view like that which I consider has as many theoretical virtues as fitting-attitude and buck-passing accounts of value, whether it leads to other problems that direct-value-first views do not face, and whether an indirect value-first account is as plausible as the fitting-attitude and buck-passing accounts of value with which it competes.

§1 briefly explains how *direct* value-first views work and explains several objections that have been made to them which have not yet been answered by value-firsters. §2 proposes a new *indirect* value-first account of reasons and fittingness. §3 tries to make the strongest possible case for the view that this indirect value-first account is as explanatorily powerful as fittingness-first and reasons-first views

⁴ Raz (2001: 164-166), Heuer (2004), Olson (2006), Wedgwood (2009), Orsi (2013), and Maguire (2016) propose *direct* value-first accounts of reasons; Moore (1903: 24-26) held that value explains what we ought to do. Cowie (2019) and Maguire and Woods (2020) do, however, argue for indirect accounts of epistemic normativity in particular; similarly rule consequentialists argue for indirect accounts of moral normativity.

⁵ See Way (2013), Howard (2018: 4-5), Rowland (2019: ch. 2, 3, 5), and Kiesewetter (forthcoming). Scanlon (1998: 95-100), Suikkanen (2004: 516-522), and Statton-Lake and Hooker (2006) also argued against value-first accounts of reasons. But Olson (2006) and Orsi (2013) showed that value-first accounts can be constructed that avoid their objections.

(or fitting-attitude and buck-passing accounts of value). §4 explains how this indirect value-first account can address the objections discussed in §2. §5 tries to give an honest assessment of the prospects of this indirect value-first view, whether it will create problems elsewhere, whether it is really as explanatorily powerful as fittingness-first and reasons-first accounts, and whether we could really have reason to accept an indirect-value-first account over such views.

I

There are broadly two versions of a value-first account of reasons and fittingness that have been discussed. The first explains reasons and fit in terms of the value of the object or thing that provides a reason to act or that it is fitting to have a pro-attitude towards. The relevant value properties are normally, or most plausibly, thought to concern final value or non-instrumental goodness *simpliciter*.⁶ So on this view, if it is fitting to admire someone, this is because they have properties that make them (non-instrumentally) good *simpliciter*—for instance, they are kind, creative, or virtuous. Similarly, on this view, there are reasons to desire happiness because it is good *simpliciter* in itself and there are reasons to desire friendship because friendship is either intrinsically good *simpliciter* or is a means to other things (such as happiness) that are good *simpliciter*. And, on this view, our reasons to perform actions derive from, and consist in, the valuable features of outcomes, which we can bring about by acting. Let's call this view, the *VO-first view* (for value of the object).

A second value-first account explains the fittingness of ϕ -ing and reasons to ϕ in terms of the value of ϕ -ing. On this view, if there is a reason to perform an action, this is due to the value of that action. And fitting attitudes are fitting in virtue of the value of having them. Let's call this view, the *VA-first view* (for value of the attitude). On this view, our reasons for action consist in the value of our performing these actions or the value that we create via our actions.⁷ And fitting attitudes are explained by the value of having fitting attitudes, that is, the value of desiring the desirable, believing the credible, admiring the admirable, and so on.

On *VO-first*, the value of the happiness, relatively large amount of leisure time, and understanding that an academic career provides are what explains the reasons to desire it and pursue it; on *VA-first* the value of (or created by) pursuing a career that involves happiness, relatively large amount of leisure

⁶ For a defence of the idea that there are things that are good *simpliciter* see Rowland (2016b).

⁷ There may not be a great difference between these two accounts' views of reasons for action.

time, and understanding is what explains why you have reason to pursue an academic career. On *VO-first*, the value of the objects of fitting admiration is what makes this admiration fitting, the fact that kindness and creativity are valuable features of someone makes it fitting to admire them; on *VA-first* the fact the value of admiring someone who is kind and creative makes it fitting to admire them.

The most plausible version of the VA-first account holds that in order for it to be fitting to have an attitude, it must be *non-instrumentally* valuable to have it. Although it is instrumentally valuable to admire a demon who will punish you if you do not admire it, it is only *instrumentally* valuable to have this attitude and so it is not fitting to have it. But why think that it is non-instrumentally valuable to have all attitudes that it is fitting to have? Brentano (1969: 22-23), Moore (1903: 204, 208-209, 211, 217), Nozick (1981: 429– 433), and Hurka (2001: ch. 1) argue that it is derivatively non-instrumentally valuable to have pro-attitudes towards that which is good in itself and to have con-attitudes towards that which is bad in itself: it is good to love the good and good to hate the bad, good in itself to admire the admirable and desire the desirable, and so on. On this view, it is non-instrumentally valuable to desire those things that are desirable in themselves and to admire the admirable. This is because things that are intrinsically desirable are intrinsically valuable and so to desire them for their own sake is to have a pro-attitude towards that which is good in itself. And admirable features of people are features of them that are non-instrumentally valuable. And so, to admire the admirable is to have pro-attitudes towards things that are non-instrumentally valuable. Hurka calls this view a *recursive view* of value because on this picture the non-instrumental value of some things, pro-attitudes, is entirely the result of the intrinsic value of other things. And whenever something is finally valuable that thereby creates the additional non-instrumental value of valuing it accordingly. So, we can call the non-instrumental value that pro-attitudes towards the good and con-attitudes towards the bad have on this view, *recursive value*. With the idea of recursive value in place it can be argued that fitting admiration is admiration that is non-instrumentally valuable because it is admiration of that which is good in itself. And (right kind) reasons to desire things for their own sake are reasons to have an attitude that is non-instrumentally good because they are reasons to desire that which is good in itself, and it is good in itself to desire that which is good.⁸

⁸ The recursive value view relies on the general idea that there are types of non-instrumental value beyond intrinsic value. This general idea is generally plausible, since there are things that are good for their own sake but not in virtue of their intrinsic properties. For instance, Audi (2015: 125-126) argues that, although the only intrinsically valuable things are mental states, beautiful artworks are non-instrumentally derivatively valuable. On this view, the value of beautiful paintings derives from the value of the mental state of appreciating these paintings but the value of these paintings is not best understood as instrumental value, since these paintings are ‘not a means (in any ordinary sense) to the value of experiencing them, since [they are] partly *constitutive* of [the valuable] experience[s]’ that their value derives from. Somewhat similarly, Kagan (1998: 285) and Rabinowicz

Both VA-first and VO-first accounts are *direct* value-first accounts of reasons and fittingness: they give accounts of reasons to ϕ and the fittingness of ϕ -ing directly in terms of the value of ϕ -ing or in terms of the value of an object that gives us a reason to ϕ or makes it fitting to ϕ . Direct value-first accounts face problems with three types of reasons and fit.

1. *Fitting Belief and Reasons for Belief*

Not everything that we have reason to believe is good or bad, so a VO-first view of reasons for belief and fitting belief seems like a non-starter. And there are plausibly cases of things that it fitting to believe and things that we have reasons to believe which it is of no value for us to believe. There is no value to believing that there are 8,294,400 blades of grass on the field at Camp Nou, or that there are 6 specks of dust on your desk. But you might have excellent evidence that these claims are true; in this case, it seems that it would be fitting to believe these things and that you would have reason to believe them.⁹ If this is right, then direct VA-first views are false.

2. *Fitting Emotions*

It doesn't seem non-instrumentally good to envy the enviable, fear the fearsome, be annoyed by the annoying, and to dread the dreadful.¹⁰ But it is fitting to have these attitudes and there are right kind of reasons to have them. In this case, it seems that VA-first views are false, since we cannot analyse right kind reasons for these attitudes and the fittingness of having these attitudes in terms of the non-instrumental value of these attitudes. And we cannot hold that an attitude is fitting whenever it is instrumentally valuable to have it, since it is not fitting to admire an evil demon even when it will punish you if you do not admire it. VO-first views may also seem to face problems with some of these attitudes. Perhaps people who are enviable and lives that are enviable have good-making features—otherwise why would they and their lives be enviable? But it is less clear that annoying things have bad *simpliciter* making features or that all fearsome things have bad making features.

3. *Deontological Reasons*

Many deontologists hold that what we have most reason to do can outstrip what it is of most value for us to do. Think about the footbridge trolley case: many deontologists hold that we have most reason

and Rønnow-Rasmussen (2000: 41) argue that the pen that Lincoln used to sign the emancipation proclamation and one of Princess Diana's dresses are finally valuable but not in virtue of their intrinsic features; these things are finally, but not intrinsically, valuable.

⁹ See Rowland (2019: 41-52) and Howard (2018: 4).

¹⁰ See Howard (2018: 4). On how it might be *instrumentally* good to envy the enviable, see Protasi (this volume).

to refrain from pushing the heavy man even though pushing the heavy man would be best because it would save the most lives and do the most good. But direct value-first views hold that what we have most reason to do is explained by what it is valuable to do or by the valuable features of the worlds that we can bring about. So, these views seem to be in conflict with the existence of deontological reasons.¹¹ Similarly, it has been argued that we have reasons to obey legitimate authorities even when doing so is not good *simpliciter* at all and that there are reasons to respect property rights even when doing so is not good or finally valuable.¹² The problem here is best understood, I have argued, as a problem about neutrality. The problem here is not that there are such deontological reasons that outstrip value and so direct value-first views are false. Rather the problem is that the view that there are deontological reasons that outstrip value is a view that it is coherent to hold and that is somewhat plausible. And, other things equal, our views about the nature of reasons and fit should not imply that coherent and somewhat plausible first-order normative views are mistaken.¹³

A lot more could be said about whether value-first views truly face problems with these three types of reasons and fit. But hopefully it should be clear how there are *prima facie* problems here; more thorough cases that there are problems for value-first accounts with these three types of reasons and fit have been made elsewhere. In the rest of this paper I want to discuss how these problems can be evaded by proponents of a value-first account.¹⁴

¹¹ See Way (2013: 36-37) and Rowland (2019: 24-30), who both discuss and argue against the many possible ways for proponents of value-first views to respond to this argument such as by appealing to agent-relative value.

¹² See Kiesewetter (forthcoming)

¹³ See Rowland (2019: ch. 2). Reasons- and fittingness-first views have been held to face problems making sense of the contrast between deontology and consequentialism. But elsewhere I've argued that this seeming problem can be shown to be an illusion; see Rowland (2019: 147-149).

¹⁴ Two other kinds of problems for direct value-first views have been raised. First, in Rowland (2019: 32, 22-24) I argued that VA-first views problematically depend on a controversial axiology because they depend on the recursive value thesis for their plausibility. However, I am now not so sure that the recursive value thesis is problematically controversial, since it only holds that it is derivatively non-instrumentally valuable to have pro-attitudes towards the good. And so it is compatible with hedonistic and desire-satisfaction-based accounts of final value, for instance; see Rowland forthcoming b: 128-130.

Second, Howard (2018: 4) and Kiesewetter (forthcoming) argue that direct value-first accounts imply that value explains reasons and fit when intuitively it does not.

Kiesewetter (forthcoming) argues that even if it is in some way valuable for us to keep our promises, it is implausible that our reasons to keep our promises are always constituted by or explained by the value of so keeping them: sometimes our reasons to keep our promises consist in the fact that we promise or that we are obligated to do so. However, a VA-first view should probably be understood in terms of good-makers: for R to be a right kind of reason to ϕ is for ϕ -ing to have properties that make it good. Now if it is good for us to keep our promises and our reason to keep them is that we are obligated or have so promised, then it may be that what makes our keeping our promises good is that we promised or are obligated to keep them. In this case, the view that reasons are value-makers may seem to deal with Kiesewetter's case.

Similarly, Howard (2018: 4) says that what explains why it is fitting to admire Sharon, or why she is admirable, is not that it is valuable to admire her—even if it is in fact valuable to admire her. But VA-first

II

One way to solve these problems for the value-first approach is to abandon the attempt to *directly* account for reasons and fit in terms of value. This involves abandoning the view that we should understand the fittingness of each particular instance of fitting ϕ -ing in terms of the value of ϕ -ing or the fact that makes it fitting to ϕ on that occasion. And similarly we should abandon understanding reasons to ϕ directly in terms of the value of ϕ -ing or the value of the fact that is a reason to ϕ ; for instance, we should not analyse the reason to believe that there are 8,294,400 blades of grass on the field at Camp Nou in terms of the value of believing this. Instead we seek to explain reasons and fittingness in terms of value in a more indirect fashion. The strategy here is somewhat similar to how rule consequentialists and other indirect consequentialists ditch the idea that what we ought to do is always what it would be best to do but still retain the idea that we can explain what we ought to do and what's morally right and wrong in terms of what's best.

To start, let's think of how rule consequentialism works. We consider the set of all possible moral codes. These different moral codes give different verdicts about what's right and wrong and what moral reasons there are. For instance, a common sense Rossian moral code tell us that we have reasons to benefit ourselves and others, make amends if we have wronged others, keep our promises, tell the truth, do what's just, and refrain from harming others. According to a (crude) egoistic moral code, there are only moral reasons for us to promote our own well-being, and so we have no reasons to keep a promise just because we made one or to make amends just because we did wrong. And, according to a certain kind Nietzschean moral code, there are none of the moral reasons that the common sense moral code says there are. Rule consequentialists say that the correct or genuine moral code is the one that it would be best if we internalised. And rule consequentialists like Brad Hooker say that this code is the common sense Rossian code rather than the egoistic or Nietzschean code: things go better in our society if we all internalise the Rossian code rather than Nietzschean or egoist code.¹⁵

views seem committed to the view that what explains why it is fitting to admire her is that it is valuable to admire her. But this no longer seems problematic to me. This is because proponents of VA-first views can hold that what ultimately explains why it is fitting to admire Sharon is her valuable features, but her valuable features make it the case that it is valuable to admire her, and this makes it the case that it is fitting to admire her.

¹⁵ Hooker (2000).

Now we can be guided by a code or standard either instrumentally or for its own sake: someone can be guided by the norms and requirements of the no-snitching code just because they don't want to get murdered rather than because they think it's right not to snitch; we can be guided by a legal standard for its own sake, because we respect the law (we have taken up the Hartian internal point of view on it) or just because we don't want to be locked up. On the value-first approach that I want to explore,

Indirect Value-First (IV-First). For \mathbf{R} to be a genuinely normative reason to ϕ is for \mathbf{R} to be a reason to ϕ according to a standard that it is non-instrumentally better *simpliciter* for us to be guided by for its own sake. For it to be fitting to ϕ is for it to be fitting to ϕ according to a standard that it is non-instrumentally better *simpliciter* for us to be guided by for its own sake.¹⁶

There are lots of different possible standards for fitting admiration, fitting desire, fitting envy, reasons for pro-attitudes, and reasons for action. Only some of these standards tell us what it is in fact fitting to do and what we have genuinely normative reasons to do. For instance, there are possible standards for fitting admiration that are misguided; e.g. consider a standard that holds that it is fitting to admire people who are evil, malicious, and powerful.¹⁷ According to IV-first, value explains which of these standards tell us what it is actually fitting to do and what we really have reasons to do, and value explains this via the value of being guided by the standard on which there are these reasons and on which it is fitting to have these attitudes. It is non-instrumentally better (*simpliciter*) to be guided by the standard of admiration that holds that it is fitting to admire kind, creative, and smart people than it is to be guided by the standard of admiration that holds that it is fitting to admire evil, malicious, and

¹⁶ One might wonder why IV-first is framed in terms of betterness rather than value: why is IV-first holds that there is a genuinely normative reason to ϕ iff there is a reason to ϕ according to a standard that it is non-instrumentally *better* to be guided by rather than holding that there there is a genuinely normative reason to ϕ iff there is a reason to ϕ according to a standard that it is non-instrumentally *good* to be guided by? IV-first is articulated in terms of betterness because it might be to some extent non-instrumentally good to be guided by an incorrect moral standard rather than to not be guided by any moral standard at all. Since being guided by some close to correct moral standard might involve respecting others and caring about their well-being. But nonetheless it is not *better* to be guided by the incorrect moral standard than to not be so guided, since it is better to be guided by the correct moral standard than the incorrect one—this involves being virtuous rather than being close to virtuous; and it is better to be guided by the correct moral standard than to not be so guided. It is of course possible that whichever way we frame IV-first—in terms of non-instrumental betterness or non-instrumental goodness—it will lead to counter-examples.

¹⁷ Or what there are genuinely normative reasons to do and what it is robustly normatively fitting to do; more on this idea in §3.

powerful people. On this view, for there to be the reasons that the Rossian code says there are is for it to be non-instrumentally better *simpliciter* for us to be guided by the Rossian code than to not be guided by this code.

This view has a similar structure to a rule-consequentialist account of right and wrong. But, in addition to being a view about all kinds of reasons and fit (rather than about right and wrong and only moral reasons), IV-first also differs from rule-consequentialism in that it focuses on the *non-instrumental* betterness of being guided by a standard. According to rule consequentialism, ϕ -ing is wrong iff the best moral code holds that ϕ -ing is wrong, where the best moral code is the one that it would be best for us to internalise: our internalising this code would produce the best consequences. The consequences relevant to rule consequentialism involve instrumental consequences e.g. that if we internalised a particular code less assault would occur and people's well being would be promoted because they could rely on one another better (because, for instance, people would break their promises less). According to IV-first, it is fitting for us to ϕ iff it is *non-instrumentally* better for us to be guided by a code which holds that it is fitting to ϕ rather than to not be guided by such a code. According to IV-first, the instrumental consequences of our being guided by such a code are irrelevant to whether it is fitting for us to ϕ .

In order for IV-first to be extensionally adequate it must be non-instrumentally better to be guided by the correct moral standard and the (correct) standard for admiration. It does seem non-instrumentally better to be guided by these standards. It seems good in itself to be guided by the correct moral standard for its own sake (*de re* rather than *de dicto* at least), since virtue seems non-instrumentally good, and it seems non-instrumentally good to care about not wronging people, respecting them, and making them well-off rather than hurting or harming them.¹⁸ The correct prudential standard holds that there are reasons to have pro-attitudes towards things that are in fact intrinsically good for us. So, being guided by the correct prudential standard involves having pro-attitudes towards things that are in fact intrinsically good for us. In this case, if we accept the recursive

¹⁸ Furthermore, if we hold the recursive value thesis discussed in §2, and people are finally valuable, it will be recursively valuable to respect people and to care about not wronging them, since having this attitudes towards people will involve valuing the valuable. Since recursive value is non-instrumental value, this means that it is non-instrumentally valuable to be guided by the correct moral code.

One might worry that if hedonism about final value is correct, this will imply that it is not non-instrumentally valuable to be guided by the correct moral standard, and that this means that the combination of hedonism and IV-first would imply that there are no genuinely normative moral reasons. I discuss this problem in Rowland (forthcoming b: 128-130)

value thesis discussed in §2, on which it is non-instrumentally valuable to have pro-attitudes towards things that are intrinsically good, it must be non-instrumentally valuable to be guided by the correct prudential standard; being guided by this standard involves having non-instrumentally valuable attitudes. Similarly, the correct standard for admiration is the standard that holds that it is fitting to admire people, features, and things that are in fact admirable. So, being guided by this standard involves admiring the admirable. According to the recursive value thesis, it is non-instrumentally valuable to admire the admirable. So, it is non-instrumentally valuable to be guided by the correct standard of admiration.¹⁹

Let's take some particular examples to see how IV-first works. Suppose that the correct moral code holds that we have most reason to refrain from pushing the heavy many off of the bridge in the footbridge trolley case. IV-first says that what makes it the case that there is in fact most reason to refrain from pushing is that, even though it is in fact better to push, it is non-instrumentally better to be guided by the moral code that holds that we have most reason to refrain from pushing. If one is guided by this code, one is more virtuous than one otherwise would be, or one is responding to people and the features of people which make us worthy of respect and have dignity—the features of us which make us have value—better than one would be if one was not guided by this standard. Similarly, suppose that the correct standard of what makes someone admirable holds that being kind, creative, smart, and insightful are features of someone that make it fitting to admire them. Zoë has these features. So, according to this standard it is fitting to admire Zoë. Suppose these features are valuable features of someone. So, if we are guided by this standard for the admirable—if we accept this standard and admire these features and those who have them—then we have pro-attitudes towards valuable things. In this case our being guided by this standard is non-instrumentally valuable; it is better for us to be guided by this standard than to not be; since our not being guided by this standard involves our not having pro-attitudes towards (or having fewer pro-attitudes towards) valuable things. According to IV-First, it is fitting to admire Zoë; this standard gets things right about who it is fitting to admire. This is because the features of people that this standard claims makes it fitting to admire them are features of people that are valuable. In virtue of this fact, being guided by this standard is non-instrumentally valuable, since it involves having pro-attitudes towards things that are valuable in themselves. The value of being guided by this standard, which derives from the value of the admirable properties themselves, makes it the case that this standard gets things right about which attitudes are fitting.

¹⁹ For a discussion of the extent to which the plausibility of IV-first depends on the recursive value thesis, see *ibid.* For a defence of the recursive value thesis see *ibid.* 114 and Hurka (2001: ch. 1).

III

IV-first does not seem to give a reductive account of reasons or fittingness, since reasons and fittingness figure in IV-first's analysis of genuinely normative reasons and genuine fittingness. In this case one might wonder whether IV-first is a genuine competitor to reasons- and fittingness-first views, or to buck-passing and fitting attitude accounts of value. Since these views give reductive accounts of value but IV-first does not give a reductive account of reasons and fit. I think that we should primarily see the interesting issue being debated between fittingness-, reasons-, and value-first accounts as one of metaphysical explanatory priority between these properties rather than one of what can be reduced to what. Furthermore, the main reasons to be interested in giving reductions of value in terms of reasons or fit or *vice versa* are that reductive views of value, fit, and reasons have been argued to have theoretical virtues and explanatory pay-offs that non-reductive views do not have. But as I'll argue in the rest of this section, IV-first in fact seems to have these theoretical virtues and explanatory pay-offs without providing a reductive account of fittingness or reasons.

First, one reason that many have been attracted to reductive views is that they have been argued to be able to explain a necessary connection in a way that non-reductive views cannot. Reductive accounts of value and reductive accounts of reasons have been held to explain why

Necessary Connection. Necessarily, if X is of final value, then it is fitting to have pro-attitudes towards X and there are reasons for us to have a pro-attitude in response to X.

Necessary Connection is very plausible. For instance, if achievement is finally valuable, it seems it is fitting to desire it and if friendship is good in its self, there are reasons to want it for its own sake. Reductive direct value-first views explain this connection because they hold that for it to be fitting for us to have a pro-attitude towards X is for X to be finally valuable, or for having a pro-attitude towards X to be finally valuable. Fitting-attitude and buck-passing accounts of value explain this necessary connection because they hold that for X to be finally valuable is for it to be fitting for us to have pro-attitudes towards X or for us to have reasons to have pro-attitudes towards X. But no-priority views of the relationship between reasons/fit and value, which do not reduce either value to fit/reasons or vice versa, cannot explain this necessary connection, or so it has been argued.²⁰

²⁰ See Suikkanen (2004: 525-528) and Rowland (2019: 55-59, 65-69).

IV-first seems able to explain this necessary connection without giving a reductive account of fit or reasons. If X is finally valuable and the recursive value thesis holds, then it is non-instrumentally valuable to have pro-attitudes in response to X, since according to the recursive value thesis it is non-instrumentally good to have pro-attitudes towards the good. In this case, it will be non-instrumentally valuable to be guided by a standard S that holds that it is fitting to have pro-attitudes towards X than to not be guided by such a standard, since being guided by S will involve having pro-attitudes towards X, and so being guided by S will be non-instrumentally valuable. So, if IV-first holds, this necessary connection is explained.

Second, existing reductive views can explain why

Value Does not Provide Reasons. The fact that X is valuable never on its own provides a non-derivative reason to have a pro-attitude towards X and is never the reason why it is fitting to have a pro-attitude towards X.

For instance, the fact that a holiday resort is a good one is no (non-derivative) reason to visit it or recommend it to friends; more specific features of the holiday resort, such as its pleasant amenities, tasty food, and stunning views are (non-derivative) reasons to visit it and recommend it to friends. Similarly, that someone is good is no reason to admire her; other features of her such as her strength of character, intellect, resolve, creativity, and kindness are reasons to admire her. Non-reductive views have been held to fail to explain why value doesn't itself provide reasons; reductive views, such as buck-passing and fitting-attitude accounts of value have been shown to explain this.²¹ But it seems that IV-first does allow us to explain why value doesn't itself provide (non-derivative) reasons to have pro-attitudes towards something and why the value of something—rather than its value-making features—does not make it fitting to have pro-attitudes towards it. For, according to IV-first, value is not that which directly explains why it is fitting to have any attitude or provides reasons to perform actions or have any attitude. Instead, value plays a background role, that of explaining why facts that make attitudes such as admiration fitting make them fitting and explaining why certain facts are reasons to have certain attitudes. On IV-first, facts that are reasons and facts that are fit-makers are

²¹ See Scanlon (1998: 97), Stratton-Lake and Hooker (2006: 154-156), Crisp (2008: 263-264), Schroeder (2011), Parfit (2011: 39), and Rowland (2019: 59-65). The buck-passing account of value explains why the fact that a holiday resort is a good one is never a (non-derivative) reason to visit it or recommend it to friends. This is because, on this view the property of being good is just the higher-order property of having other reason-providing properties. And the property of having other properties that provide reasons cannot itself provide non-derivative reasons to have pro-attitudes towards something; the non-derivative reasons to have pro-attitudes towards something are instead provided by the lower-order features of things that themselves provide reasons. The higher-order property just reflects a summation of normative facts, it is not itself normatively important on this picture; see *ibid.*

just facts that are reasons and fit-makers according to standards that it is valuable to be guided by. Value *makes facts into normative reasons* to admire on this view rather than itself being a reason to admire.²²

A third reason for wanting a reductive account is that reductive views are more qualitatively parsimonious than non-reductive view, and we should prefer more qualitatively parsimonious theories to less qualitatively parsimonious theories: a theory on which there is only fittingness holds that there are less kinds of entities than one which holds that there is both fittingness and value; and, just as we should prefer theories that do not posit new entities over those which do not, we should prefer a theory that implies that there are fewer kinds of things to one that implies that there are more.²³

A case can be made that IV-first may be no less parsimonious than fittingness-first and reasons-first accounts. In order to see this case we need to understand the recently much discussed distinction between formal and robust normativity. We have formal normativity as soon as we have any standard of correctness. If we make up a game where everyone is required to wear one red item of clothing every other day, or where whenever someone says ‘cat’ we say ‘hat’, then we have reasons to say ‘hat’ whenever someone says ‘cat’, and we are required to wear red on alternate days of the week. But these reasons and requirements are not like moral and prudential reasons and requirements; if we never wear red on alternate days or do not say ‘hat’ whenever someone says ‘cat’, we don’t seem blameworthy or to be missing something normatively in the way that we seem to be if we never do what we have moral or prudential reason to do and never do what we’re morally or prudentially required to do. Similarly, all social norms and conventions have formal normativity but not all social norms and conventions seem to be robustly or authoritatively normative in the way that the correct moral, prudential, and epistemic norms seem to be. According to the ‘no-snitching code’ we have reason to refrain from telling the police if we’re assaulted, according to the norms of mid-20th century US high-society women shouldn’t wear white after labour day, and according to the norms of masculinity, men shouldn’t cry and are forbidden from wearing mascara. But we’re not going wrong normatively and we’re not criticizable if we fail to live up to these reasons and requirements in the way that we’re going wrong and criticisable if we fail to do what we morally or prudentially ought to do.²⁴

²² See Schroeder (2007: ch. 2) for discussion of how certain types of facts can play this purely background normative role.

²³ See Rowland (2019: 69-72) and Stratton-Lake and Hooker (2006: 157) for a detailed articulation of this argument and a response to objections to it.

²⁴ See Rowland (forthcoming b). For more on robust and formal normativity see McPherson (2018), Woods (2018), Wodak (2019), Enoch (2019), and Finlay (2019).

So there is a vast array of codes, some of which give rise to robustly normative reasons and fittingness, most of which do not. Value-first accounts have standardly been given as accounts of robustly normative reasons. It would be hard to see why there would be any value to an action that there is just some formally normative reason to perform, provided by some hypothetical code of etiquette or some made-up game; value-first accounts are not trying to give accounts of these kinds of reasons. Similarly, reasons-first accounts of value—that is, buck-passing accounts of value—give accounts of value in terms of robustly normative reasons for pro-attitudes. They do not hold that something is valuable iff there are reasons (merely formal *or* robustly normative) for everyone to have pro-attitudes in response to it. That would overgenerate value. Since, according to the mafia's code of *omerta*, we all have reasons to have pro-attitudes towards violent pay-back.²⁵ But that there are such (formally normative) reasons does not show that there is any value to such violent pay-back. Similarly, according to norms of 90s high school cliques, it is fitting to want bad things to happen to geeks and losers; so it is formally normatively fitting to want bad things to happen to geeks and losers. But this doesn't mean that fitting attitude accounts of value imply that it is good if bad things happen to geeks and losers. There is no connection between value and such formally normative fittingness.

If we accept IV-first, we can give an account of what makes a standard give rise to robustly normative reasons and robustly normative fittingness. For we can hold that

Value-First Account of Robust Normativity. For a standard to be robustly normative is for it to be non-instrumentally better (*simpliciter*) to be guided by that standard than to not be so guided.

If we assume that IV-first is a view about robustly normative reasons and fit and that a standard is robustly normative only if it gives rise to robustly normative reasons and/or fit, then this account of robust normativity—or something close to it—is entailed by IV-first. Elsewhere I've argued at length for a value-based account of robust normativity along these lines.²⁶ So, if we hold IV-first, we can give an account of robust normativity in terms of value. Reasons-first and fittingness-first views do not seem to have the resources to themselves give accounts of what distinguishes robust from merely formal normativity, since the robustly/merely formally normative distinction is a distinction that arises among reasons and fittingness. It is unclear how these accounts can give an account of why, and what makes, moral reasons authoritatively normative in contrast to reasons of etiquette which are not authoritatively normative.²⁷ And there are barely any plausible accounts on the table of what

²⁵ See McPherson (2018) and Woods (2018).

²⁶ See Rowland (forthcoming b).

²⁷ See Lord and Sylvan (2019).

distinguishes merely formally normative reasons from robustly normative reasons. Most accounts of the distinction between robust and formal normativity are accounts of *what it is to think that* something is that which one robustly (or merely formally) normatively ought to do rather than accounts of *what it is* for a reason to be robustly rather than merely formally normative.²⁸ And, as I've argued elsewhere, there is no similar robustly/formally normative distinction in value.²⁹

There were a lot of steps in the argument that I've been making. But the general idea is that if we hold IV-first, we can give a reductive account of what makes a standard or reason robustly normative; if we accept a reasons- or fittingness-first view we struggle to do this, or at least it is not obvious how we can do this. If this is right, then although IV-first does not give a reductive account of reasons or fit—since it does not attempt to give an account of formally normative reasons and fit—it does give a reductive account of robust normativity. And this means that it is no less qualitatively parsimonious than reasons- and fittingness-first accounts. The latter accounts reductively analyse value but not robust normativity; IV-first reductively analyses robust normativity but not reasons or fit. If we assume, with Howard (2019) and Rowland (2019: ch. 11), that we can and should reductively analyse reasons in terms of fit or *vice versa*, this means that neither view is more qualitatively parsimonious than the other.³⁰ So we have a tie in terms of qualitative parsimony. If this is right, then the third reason for wanting a *reductive* value-first view to compete with reductive reasons- and fittingness-first accounts is off the table; IV-first is no less explanatory, and does not have fewer theoretical virtues, than reasons- and fittingness-first accounts in virtue of not offering a reduction of fit or reasons. So, it seems that IV-first has all the explanatory and theoretical virtues of reductive accounts, and we did not want a reductive account for its own sake, but rather because reductive accounts seem to have these explanatory virtues over non-reductive views. We'll explore whether all of this is right in the final section of the paper when we consider objections to IV-first and the argument that I've been making for it. Before that I want to thoroughly explain why how IV-first can avoid the three problems for direct value-first views that I outlined in §2.

²⁸ See *supra* note 20. Could these accounts be built upon to provide accounts of what robust normativity is rather than what it is to think that something is a robustly normative reason? Perhaps. But this work has not been done, and some of these accounts would have very controversial first-order consequences. For instance, an extended version of Woods' (2018) account would seem to have subjectivist consequences. And if Lord and Sylvan's (2019: 66-67) account in terms of agency were extended it would seem to imply that moral reasons are not authoritatively normative because there are agents that are not at all moved by moral standards; see Rowland (forthcoming b: 122-123).

²⁹ See Rowland (forthcoming b: 130-134)

³⁰ IV-first implies that there is value, and reasons/fit, but analyses robust and formal normativity in terms of these things, so is committed to only two things. Fittingness- and reasons-first views imply that there is reasons/fit and robust normativity but analyses value in terms of reasons/fit and robust normativity, and so is also committed to only two things.

IV

In §2 we saw that direct value-first accounts face problems with three types of reasons and fit.

Deontological Reasons

Unlike direct value-first accounts, IV-First does not imply that there are no deontological reasons. It is compatible with IV-First that we have most reason to ϕ , and that it would be fitting to ϕ , even though it would be all things considered better not to ϕ . So, it is compatible with IV-First that we have most reason to refrain from pushing the heavy man in the footbridge trolley case even though it would be better to push him. This is because it might be non-instrumentally better to be guided by a standard according to which we should refrain from pushing even though it would be all-things-considered better to push; indeed some deontologists, such as Kamm (1989: 254), argue for exactly this view. If this is the case, then, according to IV-First, we have most reason to refrain from pushing even though it would be better not to push.

Fitting belief and reasons for belief

Direct value-first accounts cannot provide a plausible account of all fitting belief and reasons for believe. But IV-first can. IV-First can hold that it is non-instrumentally better to be guided by the correct evidential standard for its own sake, since this either involves having positive attitudes to things that are finally valuable, such as knowledge and understanding.³¹ In this case, it is always fitting to believe in line with our evidence and we have reasons to believe things that we have strong evidence for even when there is no value to our believing these things. For instance, it is not valuable to believe that there are 8,294,400 blades of grass on the field at Camp Nou, but if our evidence favours this, then it is fitting for us to believe this and we have (robustly normative) reason to believe this because it is non-instrumentally better for us to be guided by the correct evidential standard than to not be. And according to this standard, if our evidence favours that p , then it is fitting for us to believe that p and we have reason to believe that p .

However, many have argued that actually we shouldn't think of epistemic reasons for belief as robustly normative at all: Cowie (2019) and Maguire and Woods (2020), for instance, argue at length for the view that epistemic reasons are merely formally normative reasons. If knowledge and understanding

³¹ For arguments for and discussion of the view that knowledge and understanding are sometimes finally valuable see Rowland (forthcoming b: 116-117) (forthcoming a) and the references therein.

are not finally valuable—and considerations such as that nothing is finally valuable are behind Cowie’s (2019) argument that epistemic reasons are formally normative—then epistemic reasons are merely formally normative reasons according to IV-first.³²

Fitting Emotions

The other problem for direct value-first views concerned fitting emotions such as fitting fear and envy. It might seem that IV-first doesn’t help here because it is not non-instrumentally or recursively valuable to be guided by standards according to which it is fitting to envy enviable people and according to which there are reasons to fear the fearful. However, I think that with the resources that we’ve used to develop a plausible value-first view, we can diminish the problem posed by fitting fear and envy for value first views.

There is only a problem here for value-first views, such as IV-first, if we have robustly normative reasons to fear the fearsome and envy the enviable; there is only a problem here if it is fitting in a *robustly* normative sense to have these attitudes. We might think that reasons to envy the enviable are not robustly normative, loosely speaking because we are not making a normative mistake if we never envy anyone and because the normativity of fear is based in the good instrumental consequences of fearing fearsome things, namely that doing so motivates us to avoid things that are dangerous and harmful to us and those whom we care about. In this case we might understand the normativity of reasons to fear along similar lines to how Cowie and Maguire and Woods understand the normativity of epistemic reasons: reasons to fear are formally normative reasons (and fitting fear and envy is not robustly normative). But it is nonetheless for the most part instrumentally beneficial to see there to be reasons to fear fearsome things; the standard on which there are reasons to fear things (we can think of this as the fearsome standard), is one that it is instrumentally better to be guided by than to not be guided by.

Okay, but let’s assume that the fittingness of fitting envy and fear is robustly normative. In this case can value-first views like IV-first explain the robust normativity of fitting envy and fear? I think so. If there are robustly normative reasons to fear the fearsome and envy the enviable, then we should hold

³² Cowie (2019) and Maguire and Woods (2020) argue that epistemic reasons are merely formally normative even though it is instrumentally better to be guided by the correct epistemic standard. Why not think that there are robustly normative reasons to ϕ if there are reasons to ϕ according to standard S and it is instrumentally better to be guided by S for its own sake than to not be? We shouldn’t say this because it might be instrumentally better for A to be guided by the no-snitching-code (or by the norms of masculinity) for its own sake—because A’s being so guided will stop A from being assaulted or being otherwise seriously harmed. But we shouldn’t think that this makes the no-snitching-code or the norms of masculinity robustly normative standards; for they are not robustly normative.

that we are missing out on the normative world if we never fear the fearsome or envious the envious. For we are not adequately appreciating the envious or the fearsome and there are robustly normative reasons to do so; in order to fully appreciate these properties one needs, we might argue, to have the relevant attitudes that they call for, just as we don't fully appreciate someone's admirability unless we admire them to some extent. We might then say that to the extent that understanding is finally valuable and such having such fear and envy is part of having such understanding, there is something finally valuable about fearing and envying.³³

Furthermore, IV-first may be able to yield the view that there are robustly normative reasons to envy and fear due to the recursive value thesis. It might be argued that things that are genuinely fearsome are things that have a capacity to do us great bad, and that things that are annoying to us are things that lead to bad experiences for us (think about how annoying music or weather is that which causes a grating experience). More generally, it might be that all right kind reasons for envy, to be annoyed, and to fear—and the fittingness of having these emotions—can be understood in terms of the thick evaluative properties of people and things, namely their being envious, annoying, and fearsome (respectively). Now there are issues about whether these thick properties can be disentangled into thin (positive and negative) evaluative and descriptive (non-evaluative) elements. If they can, then, to have one of these thick evaluative properties will be to have a feature that is good or bad in a way. So, suppose that, as sketched above, to be fearsome is to have a capacity to do us great bad. In that case, to fear the fearful would be to have a negatively valenced attitude towards the bad. Given that according to the recursion thesis discussed in §1, it is good to hate the bad, it seems that it would then be good to fear the fearful. And it seems somewhat plausible that we can make analogous arguments for the view that it is recursively valuable to envy the envious and to be annoyed by the annoying.

But if the property of being envious and the property of being fearsome cannot be disentangled into thin evaluative and descriptive components and are just irreducible or *sui generis* evaluative properties, as Jonathan Dancy (1995) and Debbie Roberts (2011) have argued, then we might still hold that it is non-instrumentally recursively valuable to have evaluative attitudes towards the things that have these properties that match them. The recursive value thesis says that it is good to have positive attitudes

³³ IV-first may seem more plausible here than direct-value-first views. We might say that this value of understanding does not establish that it is always valuable to understand someone as envious or something as fearsome; so this line of argument does not show that direct value-first views avoid the problems with fitting envy and fear. But it is valuable to understand the properties of the envious and the fearsome and this understanding involves *sometimes* envying envious things and fearing fearsome things. In this case, there is something non-instrumentally valuable about being at least somewhat guided by standards according to which it is fitting to fear fearsome things and envy envious people because being somewhat guided by these standards is the only way to fully appreciate, understand, and comprehend the normatively important properties of the fearsome and the envious.

towards the good and good to have bad attitudes towards the bad. If there is more to evaluation and evaluative properties than good and bad, as Dancy and Roberts argue, then why not also hold that it is good to have these other evaluative responses to evaluative properties that match them: to envy the enviable and fear the fearsome for instance?

To be clear, I've not been trying to establish that there are robustly normative reasons to fear or envy or that it is ever robustly normatively fitting to have such attitudes; I am not at all sure that it is robustly normatively fitting to have these attitudes.³⁴ But if you think that it is, there are several ways in which value-first views, such as IV-first, can fit with this view of yours.

V

I've been exploring whether an indirect value-first account of fittingness and reasons can avoid the problems that direct value-first accounts face. In particular I've been exploring the plausibility of

IV-First. For R to be a genuinely normative reason to ϕ is for R to be a reason to ϕ according to a standard that it is non-instrumentally better *simpliciter* for us to be guided by for its own sake. For it to be fitting to ϕ is for it to be fitting to ϕ according to a standard that it is non-instrumentally better *simpliciter* for us to be guided by for its own sake

Even if IV-first avoids the problems that direct value-first accounts face, IV-first may lead to problems of its own.

One worry about IV-first is that it overgenerates fittingness. Suppose that an evil demon will punish everyone unless we are guided by a standard for fitting admiration according to which evil demons are admirable for their own sake; call this the demon's standard for admiration. It might seem that in this evil demon case it is non-instrumentally better to be guided by the demon's standard for its own sake than to not be guided by it, since, being guided by that standard for its own sake involves a valuable appreciation of the value of those who would be harmed by the demon if we were not guided by this standard. So, it is non-instrumentally recursively better to be guided by this standard for its own sake than to not be guided by it. And if this is right, IV-first implies that it is fitting to admire the evil demon. And it is not. So, it overgenerates fittingness.

³⁴ See Rowland (forthcoming b: 117-118).

It seems to me that worries about this particular case can be overcome. If one is truly guided by the evil demon's standard for admiration, then one is not thereby having pro-attitudes to those who would be harmed by the demon if one were not guided by this standard for its own sake. Being truly guided by this standard for its own sake just involves internalising and endorsing the idea that evil demons have genuinely admirable qualities; it does not involve having pro-attitudes towards anyone's value. It is true that it is non-instrumentally better to have very strong pro-attitudes towards the value of people and that if we have these pro-attitudes we might be motivated to internalise the demon's standard to avoid people being harmed. But having such pro-attitudes is not part of what it is to be guided by the demon's standard for admiration for its own sake. So, IV-first does not overgenerate fittingness in this evil demon case.

Another type of worry about IV-first concerns its similarity to rule-consequentialism. First, it might seem that IV-first is objectionable because it implies that rule-consequentialism is the correct moral theory. However, IV-first definitely does not imply the truth of rule-consequentialism. Since rule-consequentialism implies that there is moral reason to perform an action only if the moral code the internalisation of which has the best consequences overall says that there is moral reason to perform that action. But IV-first is not concerned with the overall consequences of internalising or being guided by a particular code or standard; it is only concerned with the non-instrumental value of being guided by a standard: there could be great instrumental value to being guided by a particular code but no non-instrumental value to being guided by it. (E.g. in certain circumstances there is great instrumental value to being guided by the no-snitching code or the norms of masculinity because being so guided will stop one from being harmed. But this does not establish that there is any non-instrumental value to being guided by these standards).

Alternatively, it might seem that IV-first will face analogous objections to those which rule-consequentialism faces, such as the objection that it involves an objectionable form of rule worship. This might be true. But, of course, analogous replies will also be available. More work needs to be done to see whether the similarity of IV-first to rule-consequentialism presents a problem for it. But it is not obvious that it does—or that it does not.

Perhaps the most significant issue with IV-first is whether it really has as many virtues as the fittingness-first and reasons-first views with which it competes. In §3 I tried to make the strongest possible case that it does. But I'm not sure that this case stands. And more needs to be done to show that this case does stand. First, a proponent of IV-first needs to (i) show that proponents of fittingness-

first and reasons-first accounts cannot give a plausible account of robust normativity, (ii) show that a value-first account of robust normativity along the lines of that which I suggested in §3 is plausible, and (iii) show that the formal/robust normativity distinction does not arise within value. I've argued for (ii-iii) elsewhere.³⁵ But others may disagree with the arguments that I have made.

Second, a proponent of IV-first may need to show that they can give an account of what unifies all the different types of goodness (attributive goodness, prudential goodness, and goodness *simpliciter*), that is, what makes them all varieties of goodness. If they cannot do this, then, similarly, IV-first will be less explanatory than fittingness-first and reasons-first views. Since the latter views can give accounts of what unifies all varieties of goodness in terms of reasons and/or fit. They can provide a unified explanation of all different forms of goodness and value in terms of the different sets of agents whom it is fitting to, and who have reasons to, have particular pro-attitudes. For instance, they can hold that for something to be good *simpliciter* is for there to be (right kind) reasons for everyone, or for it to be fitting for everyone, to have pro-attitudes towards it; for instance, for pleasure to be good *simpliciter* is for it to be fitting for everyone to desire it. Attributive and prudential goodness can be understood in terms of the reasons for pro-attitudes that there are for a more restricted set of agents. For a Lakeland knife to be a good knife—that is, have the attributive goodness property of being good as a knife—is for there to be reasons for anyone who has reason to want a knife to want a Lakeland knife; and for exercise to be good for me is for it to be fitting for anyone who has reason to care about me to have pro-attitudes towards my exercising because they have reason to care about me.³⁶ If proponents of an IV-first view cannot give an account of what unifies all the varieties of goodness, then they are left with an account on which what makes these different goodness properties all goodness properties cannot be explained.³⁷ In this case IV-first views would not have an explanatory virtue which reasons- and fittingness-first views, since they can explain this.³⁸

Even if proponents of an IV-first view can show all that I've been explaining that they would need to in order to show that IV-first is as plausible and explanatorily powerful as reasons- and fittingness-first views, it's not clear to me that we will be left with anything but a tie between IV-first and fittingness-/reasons-first views. It's true that for some things, perhaps most clearly action, value can at

³⁵ See Rowland (forthcoming b).

³⁶ See Rowland (2016a) (2019: ch. 5) and Schroeder (2010).

³⁷ I assume that if we accept IV-first, we may be able to explain or analyse attributive goodness properties in terms of formally normative reasons and prudential goodness properties in terms robustly normative prudential reasons. So, I expect that IV-first will not be less parsimonious than reasons- or fittingness-first views on account of not being able to analyse attributive or prudential goodness. But that leaves open what the unity is among these varieties of goodness and goodness *simpliciter*, since according to IV-first goodness *simpliciter* is not analysed in terms of reasons; cf. Rowland (2019: ch. 5).

³⁸ See *ibid.*

least often seem to intuitively come before reasons and fit. But with fitting envy and fear, the fittingness seems to intuitively come before the value. So intuitions of explanatory priority—if they should be trusted—don't seem to tilt towards IV-first. And IV-first doesn't preserve the spellbinding intuition that we always have most reason to do what's best. For IV-first implies that what we have most reason to do can be something that isn't the best thing to do. So, although the spellbindingness intuition might give us reason to accept certain direct value-first accounts it does not give us reason to accept IV-first.³⁹

This is all to say that a more work needs to be done to show that: (a) an indirect value-first approach can secure all the explanatory advantages that reasons-first and fittingness-first views have; (b) an indirect value-first approach doesn't face new insuperable objections; and (c) that there are independent reasons to favour an indirect value-first view that could show that we should accept it rather than a fittingness-first or reasons-first view. In some ways this is unsurprising. A lot of work has been done on reasons-first—and increasingly on fittingness-first—accounts of value and normativity more generally. In order for an indirect-value-first approach to be shown to be a serious competitor to these views a similar amount of work would have to be done on all aspects of it. And this amount of work cannot be done in one paper. But what I do hope to have done is show that an indirect-value-first approach can avoid the problems that have led those of us attracted to reasons-first and fittingness-first approaches to value and normativity to reject direct value-first views. And that there may be reasons to be optimistic that if hard work is done on such an indirect value-first account of reasons and fit, such an account may be shown to be a strong competitor to fittingness-first and reasons-first approaches to value and to normativity more generally.

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³⁹ Of course, this fact is related to an important virtue of IV-first, namely that it is compatible with the existence of deontic reasons. My point is just that we do not have reasons to accept IV-first in virtue of spell bindingness. So, some of the initial attractions of value-first views are not attractions of IV-first.

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