

Emotion, Feeling, and Knowledge of the World

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There is a view of the emotions (I might tentatively call it “cognitivism”) that has at present a certain currency. This view is of the emotions as playing an essential role in our gaining evaluative knowledge of the world. When we are angry at an insult, or afraid of a burglar, our emotions involve evaluative perceptions and thoughts directed toward the way something is in the world that impinges on our well-being, or on the well-being of those that matter to us. Without emotions, we would be worse off, prudentially and morally: we would not see things as they are, and accordingly we would not act as we should. Emotions are, according to this view, a Good Thing. No wonder we have evolved as creatures capable of emotion.¹

So far as it goes, I myself favor this view. But I think that, as I have just put the view, it leaves out two important things about the emotions (and neglects other things I will not mention), each of which is utterly familiar to all of us. The first omission is feelings: feelings of the condition of one’s body, such as the feeling of the hairs going up on the back of one’s neck; and feelings directed toward the object of one’s emotion, such as feelings of fear directed toward the strange man approaching one in the dark alley. The second omission is that there is no mention of how profoundly and systematically our emotional feelings can mislead us—of how the emotions can distort perception and reason.

It might be objected at this point that, even if there is to be a place for feelings in an account of emotion, feelings are surely not going to be the sort of thing that could do anything like *mislead* us about the way things are—they are just not that sort of thing. *Thoughts* might mislead us, but

they, according to this objection, have already been included into the view of the emotions. I want to show that this objection is founded on a mistaken conception of what feelings are. The misconception is that feelings are *brute*: they can tell us nothing about the world and how to act in the world, and this is because feelings are not *about* anything (or if they are about anything, they are about only the condition of one's body). Moreover, feelings are inessential and peripheral to an account of what emotions are, although, of course, one might admit that they do sometimes occur. This misconception of the place of feelings—I have called it the *add-on* view (Goldie 2000)—overintellectualizes emotional life.²

The correct conception of emotional experience, which I want to put forward here, is one where the feelings involved are at center stage, playing a centrally important epistemic role in revealing things about the world.³ Once feelings gain (or perhaps have restored to them) their rightful place in an account of emotion, and in an account of how emotions can give us knowledge of the world, I can then address the second omission: not only are emotional feelings a potential source of knowledge, they also have a tendency to mislead us, and to do so in a systematic way that cannot be dismissed as merely the tendency to throw up a few “false positives.” There is something especially troubling about the emotions here, which the view first canvassed cannot account for. It is only when feelings have their rightful and proper place in emotional experience that we may see how emotions can mislead us about the way the world is.

I will proceed as follows. To begin with, I will give an account of how the mind can be directed toward things in the world. This is the phenomenon of *intentionality*.⁴ Then I will be able to show where emotional feelings fit into this account of intentionality: as bodily feelings and as feelings directed toward the object of the emotion. Both kinds of feelings can reveal things about the world: things about ourselves—what I will sometimes call *introspective knowledge*—including our thoughts, emotions, and the condition of our bodies; and things about the world beyond the bounds of our bodies—what I will sometimes call *extraspective knowledge*. And both kinds of feelings can mislead us in respect of our efforts to gain both introspective and extraspective knowledge. They can mislead us not only when we are in emotional turmoil, such as when in anger the red mist comes down over the eyes; they can also mislead us when we are ignorant of our emotions, such as when a deeply suppressed envy is quietly lurking in the background. If we do not have the right emotional dispositions, prudential and moral, that properly attune us to the world, then, I will argue, our emotions can distort perception and reason so that the world seems to us other than it really is: as I will put it, the emotions *skew the epistemic landscape*. Emotions may be a Good Thing, but we should not be too optimistic: they come at a certain epi-

stemic cost, which should not be ignored if one wants to be faithful to emotional life as we all live it.

Intentionality is the mind's capability of being directed onto things in the world. When you think about your spouse or partner, and about what he or she is doing at this very moment, or when you remember the tree house that you played in that summer when you were twelve, your thoughts and memories are directed toward these people or things as being a certain way; they are presented to you under a certain aspect.

A bodily feeling or sensation, the feeling from the inside of the condition of one's body, is intentional in just this sense: the feeling is directed toward an object, one's body, as being a certain way or as undergoing certain changes.⁵ For example, when you feel an agonizing pain in your elbow, the object of the sensation is your elbow, which feels a certain way: agonizingly painful.⁶

Many emotions, especially short-term emotions such as fear, anger, and disgust, involve characteristic involuntary bodily changes—muscular reactions, hormonal changes, changes to the autonomic nervous system, and so on; their precise characterization is not my concern here. Such emotions have what Paul Ekman (1994) has called a “distinctive physiology.”⁷ These bodily changes can be felt. For example, when you are afraid, you might feel the prickly sensation of the hairs going up on the back of your neck, and here the object of the feeling is the hairs on the back of your neck that feel a certain way: prickly, as if they were rising.⁸

A bodily feeling of this sort can provide a *prima facie* reason for one's believing that one is experiencing an emotion of a certain type.⁹ It is only a *prima facie* reason because one can be mistaken about whether the feeling is part of an emotional experience.¹⁰ You might, for example, feel your face going red and think that this is because you are embarrassed (that you blushed *in* embarrassment), while in fact your face is red because you have just come in to a warm room on a frosty day. (The converse is also possible: you can think that the feeling is *not* part of an emotion when it really is.) Moreover, even if the feeling of your bodily condition does truly reveal that you are experiencing some emotion or other, it may mislead you as to just which sort of emotion it is. For example, the tense feeling in your stomach as you get on the roller coaster might be one of fear rather than excitement. And as we move further away from the relatively short-term emotional responses such as immediate fear and anger, which have tended to be the central concern of Paul Ekman, we tend at the same time to move further away from there being a distinctive physiology that one can feel and that can provide a reason for believing that one is experiencing an emotion of a certain type.

So far, then, we have seen that bodily feelings can yield introspective knowledge about the condition of your body and about the type of emotion

that you are experiencing. But they can tell you more than that. They can also yield extraspective knowledge about the world beyond the bounds of your body. This may at first seem surprising. But consider an example from outside emotional experience. You experience a feeling of cold: this feeling could give you prima facie reason to believe that the ambient temperature in the room has fallen, and that the central heating has turned itself off. You might be wrong, however: your feelings might reveal something about yourself and not about the world beyond the bounds of your body: perhaps you are experiencing the first signs of flu. And the same principles apply with emotional experience. A feeling of the hairs going up on the back of your neck can give you prima facie reason to believe not only that you are afraid, but also that *there is something frightening nearby*. And if it is in fact *true* that there is something frightening nearby, then your bodily feelings will have yielded extraspective knowledge. But again, perhaps, the feeling might in fact reveal something about yourself and not about the world beyond the bounds of your body: for example, it might reveal that you are of an unduly nervous disposition, and in fact there is nothing frightening nearby. (I will return to this important point later.)

These principles do not go so far as to yield up an epistemic route from a bodily feeling to a belief about the object of your emotion *as such*; the most the bodily feeling can reveal is that there is *something* in the environment (you know not what) that has a certain property, such as the property of *being frightening*.¹¹ Let me here introduce a term for properties such as being frightening: I will call them *emotion-proper* properties, to capture the idea (borrowed from the ancient scholastics) that a property can belong to, or be proper to, an emotion. Other examples of emotion-proper properties are being disgusting (proper to disgust), being shameful (proper to shame), being enviable (proper to envy), and being worthy of pride (proper to pride).

This epistemic route (a route from a bodily feeling to an introspective belief that one is experiencing an emotion of a certain type, and from there to the extraspective belief that there is something in the environment that has the emotion-proper property) seems to me to be important and to capture a sense in which we are right to say that we should pay attention to, or "listen to," our feelings. For example, you might wake up in the middle of the night feeling frightened. You are aware of your bodily condition as being characteristic of fear; you feel the hairs going up on the back of your neck and your heart racing. In such circumstances, it is not just intelligible, it is also *sensible*, to look around fearfully, ask yourself whether there was a strange noise from downstairs that woke you, whether there is a burglar in the house, and so forth. It might have all been a dream, but it makes sense to be sure before going back to sleep.

Of course, this epistemic route, beginning as it does with bodily feelings, is only available first-personally or from "the inside": one cannot feel *in this way* the condition of someone else's body.¹² However, this is not in any way

to suggest that bodily feelings are essentially private, or that we cannot often gain a grasp of other people's bodily feelings in different sorts of ways. When we think of feelings and recognize them as what they are, we are deploying, in our everyday thought and talk, a common set of concepts shared with others. We can as well think and talk of how another is feeling as we can think and talk of how we are ourselves feeling; we are speaking third-personally, but still personally. Because being able to think about and talk about one's own feelings requires a shared set of concepts, the child must come to learn the use of the concept from its caregivers and learn to apply the concept to herself; after all, there is nothing *intrinsic* to the experience of, for example, the hairs going up on the back of your neck to suggest that it is characteristic of a feeling of fear. And, at the same time, and without the priority of the first-personal over the second- and third-personal, or vice versa, the child must learn to apply the concept to others, on the basis of their bodily condition, or their behavior, including what others say about their own feelings.¹³ So, to know what someone is feeling, one does not need—which is impossible—somehow to share his unique, immediate, and “privileged” method of access; all one needs to be able to do is answer the question, “What is he feeling?”¹⁴ It is true that there is a unique, immediate, and privileged route to knowledge of one's own feelings, namely introspection “from the inside,” but this should not be taken to imply either that introspection is an indefeasible route to introspective knowledge (for it is not), or that knowledge of others' feelings is impossible (for it is not).

I emphasize that our everyday thought and talk of feelings is personal (first, second, and third, singular and plural) partly in order to contrast the personal perspective with the impersonal perspective of the sciences.¹⁵ The two sorts of perspective, and the two ways of thinking and talking, are in different businesses, deploying different kinds of concepts—call them respectively *phenomenal* and *theoretical* concepts. When we use a phenomenal concept to think or talk about, for example, the experience of being afraid (my experience, your experience, his experience), we are thinking partly in terms of *what it is like* to be afraid. On the other hand, a purely theoretical concept of being afraid would be one which, roughly, picks out the emotional experience by its causal role, and which leaves out entirely what it is like to be afraid.¹⁶ It might be the case, as some would argue, that our thoughts, feelings, and emotions can be fully described using these purely theoretical concepts.¹⁷ If this is the case, then, from the impersonal perspective there will be nothing left out; a Martian, incapable of emotion, would be satisfied with it as a *complete* account of the workings of human beings. Yet, when we compare this perspective with the personal perspective, there is much that is left out: our Martian, in possession of a complete scientific account of the workings of a human being, would still have *no conception* of *what it is like* to have the experiences that the impersonal perspective picks out using its theoretical concepts. Scientific investigation of the emotions,

from a purely impersonal perspective, deploying purely impersonal theoretical concepts, inevitably—and quite appropriately from this perspective—makes no *use* of phenomenal concepts, which are available only from the personal perspective, whereas our everyday thought and talk is *essentially* personal and makes *essential* use of phenomenal concepts.¹⁸ In one sense, then, the impersonal stance of the sciences leaves nothing out; in another sense, it leaves much out, for it leaves out our ordinary, everyday way of thinking of our emotional experiences from the personal perspective.¹⁹

To sum up where we are so far, then, the position is as follows. Many emotional experiences involve characteristic bodily feelings. These are intentional, being directed toward the condition of one's body. Such bodily feelings can provide *prima facie* reasons for believing that one is experiencing a certain sort of emotion (introspective knowledge), and for believing that there is something in the environment that has the related emotion-proper property (extraspective knowledge). But bodily feelings alone cannot reveal to you what your emotion is about. The feeling of the hairs on the back of your neck going up can tell you that there is something frightening nearby, but it cannot tell you that this something is a burglar. The other kind of emotional feeling, on the other hand, *is* directed toward the object of one's emotion as such—for example, your feeling of fear that is directed toward the burglar.

When an emotion is directed toward its object, then this is a sort of *feeling toward* the object. The object can be a thing or a person, a state of affairs, or an action or event: when you fear a burglar, the object of your fear is a person; when you are angry about the level of unemployment, the object is a state of affairs (or a fact); and when you are disgusted at the drunken behavior of a man on the train, the object of your emotion is an action.

Feeling toward is unreflective extraspective emotional engagement with the world beyond the body; it is not a consciousness of oneself, either of one's bodily condition or of oneself as experiencing an emotion.²⁰ Such feelings are thus something that a creature incapable of self-reflective thought—a dog or a toddler, for example—could achieve. We adult humans, however, are capable of a turn of reflectiveness: we are capable of noticing through introspection that we have feelings toward something. For example, you are in an audience at a conference and a new speaker takes the stand. A friend next to you observes that you are becoming increasingly restless; your fingers are drumming on your notepad, your foot is tapping, and your lips and jaw are tense. Your friend surmises, rightly, that you are becoming irritated by something about the speaker: his manner, what he is saying, or something. But you are not aware of this. You have not noticed that you are feeling irritated by the speaker, yet you do have feelings of irritation toward him. Then your friend passes you a note, asking what is irritating you; and *then* you notice, or become aware, that you are feeling

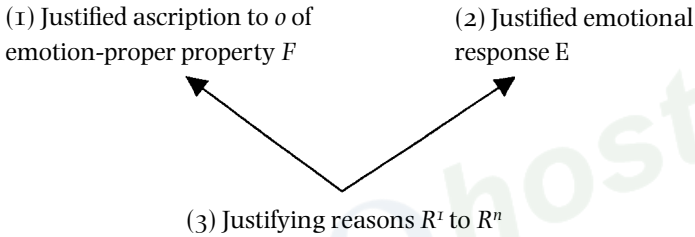
this emotion. Before seeing the note, you had feelings of irritation toward the speaker but were not aware that this was so.²¹

The notion of having feeling toward things in the world may seem to be a puzzling one: it is not a familiar sort of “attitude” in the philosopher’s armory, unlike, for example, perception, belief, desire, memory, or imagination. There is, accordingly, a philosophical approach that seeks to give an account of the emotions by a sort of divide and rule: first, to capture their intentionality in terms of these familiar unemotional attitudes—that is to say, attitudes that we can have when we are not experiencing an emotion; and second, as an afterthought, so to speak, to capture what emotional experience is like—its phenomenology—by reference to feelings as nonintentional states or as intentional states that are merely bodily feelings, not directed toward objects in the world beyond the body. This is a version of the “add-on theory” of emotions.²² Rather, emotional feelings are inextricably intertwined with the world-directed aspect of emotion, so that an adequate account of an emotion’s intentionality, of its extraspective directedness toward the world outside one’s body, will at the same time capture an important aspect of its phenomenology. Intentionality and phenomenology are inextricably linked. Your feeling afraid of a burglar, or your feeling angry about the level of unemployment, involves having feelings (of fear, of anger) toward the object of your emotion, and this sort of intentional attitude cannot be identified with, or analyzed into, terms that refer only to unemotional attitudes.²³ But this is not to suggest that perception, belief, and reason are not involved in, or closely related to, emotional experience. Indeed, they are. And it just here that the emotions become epistemologically problematic.

When we respond emotionally to things in the environment, we also, as part of the same experience, typically *perceive* those things as having the emotion-proper property. For example, as a caring parent, you see the out-of-control toboggan hurtling straight for your child, you feel fear, and you see the toboggan as *being frightening*. Or you feel disgust at a maggot-infested piece of meat, and you see the meat as *being disgusting*. Moreover, in the typical case, the emotional response, combined in phenomenology with the perception of the object as having the emotion-proper property, will involve the experience of the emotion as being *reasonable* or *justified*. One might put the idea like this: an emotional experience, in the sorts of cases I am considering here, typically involves an extraspective (typically perceptual) judgment, about something in the world as having an emotion-proper property (for example, the judgment that the meat is disgusting), as well as an emotional feeling, which is experienced as reasonable, directed toward that thing (for example, a feeling of disgust at the meat).²⁴

So an emotional experience typically *seems* to one to be reasonable or justified. But what makes it, in fact, justified? A possible reply is that the

emotion (disgust at the meat) is justified by the perceptual judgment (the judgment that the meat is disgusting). But this reply is not right. Rather, an emotion, if it is, in fact, justified, will be justified by something else external to the emotion itself and the perception: it will be justified by reasons, and these reasons will also justify the ascription to the object of the emotion-proper property involved in the perceptual judgment. Thus the fact that the meat is maggot infested is a reason that justifies your perceptual judgment that the meat is disgusting, and the fact that it is maggot infested will also justify your feeling of disgust. This relationship between (1) justified ascription of emotion-proper properties to the object of the emotion (the meat's being disgusting), (2) justified emotional response (your feelings of disgust directed toward the meat), and (3) justifying reason or reasons (such as the fact that the meat is maggot-infested) can be shown diagrammatically, where the lines represent justifying relations:



It can be seen that (continuing with the disgusting piece of meat as an example) the reasons that justify the ascription of disgustingness to the piece of meat (the fact that it is maggot infested, etc.) are the *very same* reasons that make feeling disgust justified on this occasion. It is neither one's perceiving it to be disgusting that justifies one's disgust, nor is it one's feeling disgust that justifies one's perceiving it to be disgusting; the justifying route is only from the bottom up.²⁵

The epistemology of the emotions, on the other hand, often begins at the top: one often first either notices that one is experiencing the emotion (top right in the above diagram), or one perceives the object as having the emotion-proper property (top left); only later does one become conscious of the reasons that justify both one's emotional experience and the content of one's perception.²⁶

Now, part of what lies behind the intuition that our emotions are a Good Thing and that they should be "listened to" is that they can play this epistemic role: they can enable us to see things in their true light and to make justified perceptual judgments in ways that we would not otherwise be able to do: emotions can reveal saliences that we might not otherwise recognize with the same speed and reliability. For example, we can immediately see that something is disgusting in a way that we would not be capable of if we were not capable of feeling disgust. Our emotional dispo-

sitions can, so to speak, *attune* us to the world around us, enabling us quickly and reliably to see things as they really are, and thus to respond as we should. In short, emotions enable us to *get things right*.²⁷

To have the right emotional disposition is not, however, *sufficient* for getting things right. Other factors can also unduly interfere with one's emotional response on an occasion, leading one to fail to get things right. I will mention two notable ones. First, one's mood can affect one's emotional response: for example, if one is in an irritable mood (perhaps through drinking too much coffee), then one is more likely to find a remark insulting and to get angry. Second, a recent emotional experience in relation to one thing can resonate across to some other, unrelated thing: for example, if one has just had the terrifying experience of being mugged in an alleyway, then one may be especially likely to be jumpy every time there is a knock at the door; your emotional disposition gets temporarily put "out of tune."

In short, then, the picture looks like this: if one is of the right emotional disposition, and if there are no other undue influences, then one will feel the right emotions, and one will perceive things as having emotion-proper properties when and only when they do have such properties. One's emotions will then help one to find one's way around the world and to gain extraspective knowledge, so one will be right to "listen to" them. But if one is not properly disposed, or if there is some undue interference with one's emotional response, then there is a significant risk of getting things wrong. Not only that; one's emotions can also *distort* perception and reason.

As I have already said, it is typical of emotional experience to consider one's emotional feeling to be justified and to perceive the object of one's emotion as having the emotion-proper property. So far so good. But what if, without one's knowing it, one's emotional response is *unjustified*, and the object of your emotion does *not* have the emotion-proper property that it seems to have? (Perhaps you think you have the right emotional disposition but you do not, or perhaps your mind is subject to other undue influences that you are not aware of.) In such cases (and here is the worry), one's emotional feelings tend to *skew the epistemic landscape* to make it cohere with the emotional experience: referring back to the diagram, the epistemic landscape tends to be skewed *downward*, so to speak: we seek out and "find" reasons—reasons that are supposed to justify what is in reality the unjustified ascription of the emotion-proper property, and that, at the same time, are also supposed to justify the emotional feeling. The feeling directed toward the object of the emotion, and the related perception of the object as having the emotion-proper property, tend to be *idées fixes* to which reason has to cohere. The phenomenon is a familiar one: when we are afraid, we tend unknowingly to seek out features of the object of our fear that will justify the fear—features that would otherwise (that is, if we

were not already afraid) seem relatively harmless.²⁸ This is surely part of what is behind the commonsense intuition that our emotions can mislead us: they are *passions*, which, like *idées fixes*, we can be in the grip of.²⁹

The skewing process can be continuous while the emotion is in place, operating on new information as it comes in. One's emotions and emotionally held perceptual judgments *ought* to be open to be shown to be wrong by new evidence, but when new evidence does emerge, one tends not only to be insensitive to that evidence, but also, for the sake of internal coherence, to doubt the reliability of the source of that new evidence.

An extreme case is Leontes in Shakespeare's *A Winter's Tale*, who becomes jealous of his wife Hermione and is convinced that he has been cuckolded by his boyhood friend Polixenes. Although his jealousy is not justified, everything now *seems to him* to justify his jealousy in what has suddenly become an emotionally skewed epistemic landscape: the way Hermione and Polixenes behave together, the sudden uncertainty about whether his daughter looks like him, the disappearance of his previously trusted friend Camillo, who is now a "false villain." He even rejects the evidence of the oracle of Apollo, that "Hermione is chaste; Polixenes blameless; Camillo a true subject; Leontes a jealous tyrant; his innocent babe truly begotten." Apollo, angry at having his word doubted, immediately wreaks his terrible revenge by bringing about the death of Leontes' son and wife. Only then does Leontes finally come to recognize that he has "too much believ'd his own suspicion"; and then it is too late.

A possible objection to my position here is that there is nothing special about the emotional case: people are generally subject to all sorts of well-documented cognitive deficiencies, such as the confirmatory bias,³⁰ and the emotional case is just an instance of this. One response to this objection, which I find independently attractive but will not pursue here, is that perhaps more of these cognitive deficiencies can be traced back to the emotions than might at first be thought. The other response, which I will put forward here, is that there is something special about the emotional case: emotional feelings, and emotionally held perceptual judgments about things as having emotion-proper properties, are *more intransigent* than are their non-emotional counterparts, and thus the skewing of the epistemic landscape (for the sake of internal coherence) tends to be toward the preservation of the emotionally held *idées fixes* at the cost of the unemotional thoughts.

Now, it is surely a reasonable and quite general epistemic requirement that one be willing and able to "stand back" to reflect on, criticize, and if necessary change our way of thinking of things. And this general requirement surely rightly ought to include critical reflection on the way that one's emotions can have this skewing effect. This is *obviously* the case when one knows that one's emotional responses are not as they should be—those atypical occasions when at the time one knows that one's emotion is not justified. But it is also the case when one has no particular reason to doubt

one's emotional responses: even then one should try to be especially watchful and reflect dispassionately on the evidential support for one's emotional feelings and for the related emotionally held perceptual judgments.

But doing this is not so easy, largely because one's epistemic landscape has *already* been skewed; so, like Leontes, one is not in a position, from the here and now of emotional experience, to take the dispassionate view of the evidence that the epistemic requirement demands. The problem is very familiar to everyday life: how to satisfy this epistemic requirement when one is in the swim of emotional experience. Consider this example. You feel in despair about your job. The job seems hopeless, and it seems to be hopeless for all sorts of reasons that seem to *justify* your feelings of despair: there are no decent prospects for promotion; most of your colleagues are people with whom you really have very little in common; you do not seem to be able to get the work done properly; the journey to and from home is a nightmare; and so on. Your friends, not in the here and now of this emotional experience, assure you that things seem this black only *because* you are feeling so despairing (you used not to be like this; perhaps some Prozac might help?). You try to stand back and see things as others do (maybe things will look a bit brighter in the morning). And you might succeed in doing this to some extent. But you could still think that it is your friends who are wrong: they believe these things because they do not see that things really *are* hopeless and how *right* you are to be in despair (Prozac might lift the despair, but the job will still be hopeless). The question remains: Is it you, or is it the job?

This leads me directly to a further, deeper worry about how emotion can distort perception and reason by skewing the epistemic landscape. So far, my focus has been on cases where one is aware through introspection that one is experiencing a particular sort of emotion; in the example just discussed, you are aware that you are in despair. But it would be a grave mistake to think that our emotional feelings are *always* transparent to introspection in this way: we can be ignorant of our own psychological states.

To begin with, as I have already mentioned, one can sometimes not be sure what emotion it is that one is experiencing—fear or excitement at the roller coaster. Second, as I have also already mentioned, one can have feelings without noticing them—such as that unnoticed irritation at the speaker. (A sort of limiting case here is feelings that are repressed in the Freudian sense.) And then third, emotions can continue to resonate in one's mental economy long after they are, as it might seem, "over." In all these sorts of cases (and others besides), emotion can distort perception and reason in the ways I have been discussing. But now, one is in the worrying position of not knowing what emotions, if any, are at work: one lacks introspective knowledge in this respect. One can therefore be inclined to think that one is being "dispassionate" when one is not, or to think mistakenly that one sort of emotion is at work rather than another. Thus one

has no way of knowing how to direct one's watchfulness in the quest for extraspective knowledge. One is in the position of having an epistemic requirement, which one knows of and acknowledges to be reasonable, but which one does not know how to satisfy.

Let me give an example. A long time ago you were very angry with a colleague at work because he failed to turn up to a meeting that you were chairing, and at which his presence was essential. How could he do this when he *promised* to be there? You thought your anger to be thoroughly justified on the grounds of his being so unreliable and inconsiderate. The following day, though, he came to see you with a full explanation, and was extremely apologetic. His son had been taken suddenly ill and had to be rushed to the hospital, there was no chance of getting to a phone, and so on. You put your anger behind you, as you should do, realizing that your anger, although understandable at the time, was not justified, for he really had a good reason not to be there, and a good reason why he could not give you advance warning. Later still—*much* later—you are asked to provide a reference about this colleague. Without your realizing it, the content of what you say is affected by the residue of your anger, which still lies deep in the recesses of your mind. Of course, you do not go so far as to state outright that he is unreliable and inconsiderate, for your memory of the incident is at best only hazy; and anyway, as it later emerged, he was neither unreliable nor inconsiderate. But still, unknown to you, for you think that you are being fair and dispassionate in what you say, your reference is not as favorable as it would have been if the incident had never taken place. Aware of the epistemic requirement, you ask yourself, "Am I emotionally involved here? Because if I am, I should be especially watchful." But the answer comes back, "No, I am *not* emotionally involved"; moreover, you might sense a certain puzzlement as to what *sort* of emotion might be at work on this occasion. And if you were reminded of the long-past incident, you might insist that any anger that you felt all that time ago is no longer at work, distorting reason.³¹

Where does this discussion leave us? Feelings are restored to their rightful place in emotional experience: intentional, and playing a centrally important role in our finding our way around the world. But then the worries begin to arise: our emotions can systematically mislead us. First, while one is in the swim of life, emotionally engaged with what is going on, one's epistemic landscape is liable to be skewed by one's emotional feelings, *idées fixes* to which perception and reason is forced to cohere. To avoid this as much as possible, one should see oneself as subject to the epistemic requirement to reflect on what one takes to be reasons, to make corrections where necessary, and to be aware that one should be especially watchful when one is emotionally engaged. But then the further worry arises that one can be emotional without knowing it, so one has no way of knowing

that one's perception and reason are being distorted, or in what ways. Even if one were to accept the idea (which I am inclined to endorse) that emotions are always somewhere at work in our psyche, and thus to accept that a special watchfulness is *always* required, one will still be no wiser as to *how* to apply this epistemic requirement at any particular moment. This seems to me to be especially troubling: lack of introspective knowledge impedes the attainment of extraspective knowledge.³²

So the view with which I began (and which I avoided calling "cognitivism") begins to seem not only incomplete but also unduly *optimistic*,³³ as if we emotional creatures remain firmly governed by reason, and as if emotional feelings do not systematically tend to mislead us and distort perception and reason, in ways that are not always knowable from the here and now of emotional experience. Rather, as we all know from our own experience, emotional life is often messy, confusing, and difficult.

NOTES

This chapter draws on material from two other papers where these issues are considered and developed in greater detail: Goldie 2002 and forthcoming. Many thanks to the editors of *Phenomenology and Cognitive Science* and *Emotion, Evolution, and Rationality* for allowing me to do this. Thanks also to Tim Crane, David Papineau, and Finn Spicer (I owe the expression "epistemic landscape" to Finn) for their help, and special thanks to Bob Solomon for his comments and suggestions, and for inviting me to contribute to this collection.

1. An example of this sort of view is in Nussbaum 2001. Nussbaum calls her view "cognitive" or "cognitive-evaluative" (23), and she holds that emotions are judgments of value. Other examples are Kenny 1963, Alston 1967, Green 1972, Davidson 1976, Solomon 1993, and Farrell 1980. There is a useful survey in Deigh 1994.

2. Nussbaum is again a good example here. So far as concerns bodily feelings, these, she says, are "without rich intentionality or cognitive content," or even "nonintentional"; and as there is variability in feelings across people and cultures, and as we should admit the possibility of nonconscious emotions, bodily feelings cannot be part of an emotion's identity conditions. So far as concerns what she calls "feelings with a rich intentional content," "the 'feeling' now does not contrast with our cognitive words 'perception' and 'judgment,' it is merely a terminological variant of them" (2001, 60).

3. Nowhere do I insist that bodily feelings are a necessary condition for emotion; whether the other sort of feelings is necessary, I am not so sure. I choose the expressions "center stage" and "centrally important" with care.

4. Unfortunately, even if it were in my powers to do so, I cannot provide here anything like a defense of this particular account of intentionality; I am afraid I will have to ask this much to be taken for granted. Crane 2001 contains an excellent and accessible discussion of the numerous problems that intentionality gives rise to.

5. See Armstrong 1968, Martin 1995, and Crane 1998 and 2001. Crane argues that intentionality is the mark of the mental; nothing that I say is inconsistent with this.

6. One might naturally say (as Bob Solomon has suggested to me) that the object of the sensation is the pain. Agreed. But if we were to take seriously the notion of pain as an *object* of sensation, all sorts of philosophical difficulties would arise. It is better to say, as Crane argues (2001, 78–83), that being in pain needs a part of the body as an object to “complete” it. And this is not contrary to linguistic practice: “I am in pain.” “Where is it?” “In my elbow.”

7. There may be good evolutionary reasons why this is so. See, for example, Griffiths 1997.

8. Of course one need not perceive one’s bodily changes under the description by which they would be picked out by the sciences. For example, you need not perceive an endocrine system change *as such*; perhaps all you need to perceive is what you think of as “that funny feeling in my guts.”

9. Throughout I use the term *reason* in the standard normative sense, in which, if a consideration is a reason, then it is a *good* reason. A *prima facie* reason is a consideration that appears *at first sight* to be a reason, but which may turn out, in fact, not to be a reason. For example, your seeing something as red is a *prima facie* reason for believing it to be red. But if you were wearing contact lenses that made red things look blue and blue things look red, then your seeing something as red is not a reason (that is, not a good reason) for believing it to be red.

10. The experiments by Schachter and Singer (1962) show this. Wollheim (1999, 115–28) has an excellent discussion of the role of feelings in emotion and of these experiments. Feelings can also mislead one about the condition of one’s body, as they do in the phantom limb example.

11. The belief that there is something frightening is thus purely quantificational.

12. For an argument for this, see Martin 1995, and for an alternative view, see Brewer 1995.

13. See the papers by Brewer, Hutto, and Smith in Goldie 2002.

14. See Austin 1946, 96–97.

15. It is a potential source of confusion to speak of the impersonal perspective of the sciences as “third-personal,” as does for example Chalmers (1996). By “the sciences” I have in mind here particularly cognitive science; I am not sure where, for example, empirical psychology stands.

16. Chalmers (1996) makes the same distinction, but he calls them “phenomenal” and “psychological” (i.e., what I call theoretical) concepts. Our ordinary, everyday way of thinking of emotions probably involves an amalgam or fusion of both sorts of concept (see Papineau 2000, 98). If so, the appropriate contrast is between, on the one hand, such fused concepts (a fusion of phenomenal and theoretical), and, on the other hand, *purely* theoretical concepts.

17. For such a materialist view, see, e.g., Papineau 2000.

18. Science, however, will presumably need to *mention* phenomenal concepts in order to explain the new powers and potentialities of thought, feeling, and imagination that arise from being able to use these concepts.

19. I discuss these issues in more detail in Goldie (forthcoming a), where I draw an analogy, in respect of emotional experience, with Frank Jackson's famous thought experiment (Jackson 1982 and 1986) of Mary, the scientist brought up in a black and white world, who knew all the scientific facts about color, but did not know what it was like to see red.

20. One can, however, have feelings toward one's own body that are not bodily feelings as I have characterized them. Here the object of the emotion is the body image (Gallagher 1995). For example, I can feel disgust at my obesity or anger at my useless arthritic fingers.

21. The difference between unreflective engagement with the world and reflective awareness of one's engagement should not be taken to be a stark one: one can be more or less aware of how the world strikes one. See Stocker 1983, 14. This account should be able readily to accommodate repressed feelings not available to be recognized through introspection alone.

22. See my discussion of Nussbaum in n. 2 above.

23. I argue for this in Goldie 2002.

24. As John Skorupski puts it, "The affective response typically carries with it a normative impulse" (2000, 125). The atypical cases are not like this: these are the occasions where one realizes *at the time* that one's emotional response is *not* reasonable or justified. For example, you feel afraid of the mouse in the corner of the room, and yet at the same time you know that your feelings are not justified. In these atypical cases, although the object might still *seem* to have the emotion-proper property (the mouse does *seem to be* frightening), one is not inclined, as one is in the typical case, to consider one's emotional response to be justified, and one withholds the perceptual judgment (that the mouse *is* frightening). There is, thus, the possibility of acknowledging, in one's own case, and at the same time as the emotional experience takes place, that things are not really as they seem: the mouse seems frightening, but you know that it is not, for you know that your fear is not justified.

25. None of the *relata* can be analyzed in nonnormative terms at pains of falling foul of Moore's open question argument; see Moore 1903. More formally, the relation between (1), (2), and (3) can be put as a schema: "An object *o* has emotion-proper property *F* iff it is possible for *o* to be the object of a justified emotion *E*; and the reasons, *R*₁ to *R*_{*n*}, that justify the ascription of *F* to *o* will be the same reasons as those that justify *E*." Emotion-proper properties that are related one-to-one to emotions will generally be at the "thicker" end (disgusting-disgust; hateful-hate; shameful-shame). Others will be much more complicated in their relations. There are a number of other issues that would have to be dealt with in a fully developed account, but I will have to put these to one side here.

26. One's reasons, then, will not be part of the emotional experience itself. An analogy with aesthetic experience might help here. One might have a certain aesthetic experience on seeing a sculpture (or a human face, or the curve of a valley) as being graceful. But one might not be able to articulate what makes it graceful, and, correlatively, what justifies one's feeling aesthetic pleasure on looking at it. Nevertheless, there will *be* reasons why it is graceful (perhaps it is the particular shape of it), for aesthetic properties depend on nonaesthetic properties (see Sibley 1965).

27. Having the right emotional disposition, the deployment of which will enable one to get things right, is a profoundly normative notion. As Aristotle saw, to have such dispositions is part of what it is to be virtuous (where the virtues are both prudential and ethical and involve virtues of thought as well as ethical virtues of character). As Aristotle put it, the virtuous person will feel—that is, have emotions—and act “at the right times, about the right things, toward the right people, and in the right way . . . this is the intermediate and best condition, and this is proper to virtue” (1985, 1106b20).

28. Remember, I am not concerned here with those atypical occasions (such as the fear of the mouse) when one knows at the time that one’s emotional response is not justified, but the emotion remains; for on those occasions one’s reason stands *opposed to* one’s emotional feelings, and one recognizes that it is one’s feelings that are in error.

29. Overintellectualizing accounts of the emotions struggle to explain how we can be *in the grip of* unemotional attitudes, such as judgments and beliefs.

30. See, for example, Nisbett and Ross 1980.

31. For some related empirical research, see Zillman and Cantor 1976.

32. In Goldie forthcoming, I discuss this difficulty in relation to the intellectual virtues and virtue epistemology. I also discuss the question of whether we can be properly blamed or held accountable for our ignorance.

33. For example, Nussbaum optimistically says that “emotions . . . do go away when the relevant beliefs about the object and about value alter. . . if I am convinced that the wrong did not really take place, or was not really a wrong, my anger will go away” (2001, 131).