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Author(s): Adrian M. S. Piper
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Making Sense of Value

Adrian M. S. Piper

If I were to agree with everything Elizabeth Anderson says in this powerful and finely conceived work I would not be doing my job.[1] So I will pass over her compelling critiques of cost-benefit analysis, rational desire theory, and "consequentialist"[2] moral theories, among many topics she dispatches successfully, with fierce intelligence and wit. Instead I want to focus on the central justificatory strategy that underpins her defense of her pluralist, nonconsequentialist, rational attitude theory of value. Anderson states at the outset that she is not that interested in such metaethical questions as whether value judgments express beliefs or emotions or other attitudes (p. xiii). But I think her own answers to these questions might have implications for normative and pragmatic issues of concern to her. So I want to try tinkering with the metaethical arguments in ways that might streamline her treatment of the normative and pragmatic ones somewhat.

I. EXPRESSIVE STATES

To say that someone or something is valuable, on Anderson's account, is to say that it is rational, that is, makes sense for someone to value her or it. To value that person or thing intrinsically is to have a "complex of positive [or favorable] attitudes" toward her or it (pp. 2, 17, 124). Favorable attitudes toward people or things are diverse: they include being inspired, attracted, interested, pleased, awed, emotionally involved, attentive, or concerned (p. 2). Anderson does not define what she means by an attitude, but she describes it, first, as an expressive state, and second, as "partly constituted by norms that determine [its] proper objects" (p. 3).

1. Elizabeth Anderson, *Value in Ethics and Economics* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993). All page references to this volume are parenthesized in the text.

2. I explain the scare quotes in "A Distinction without a Difference," in *Midwest Studies in Philosophy*, vol. 7, *Social and Political Philosophy*, ed. Peter A. French, Theodore E. Uehling, Jr., and Howard K. Wettstein (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982): 403–35.

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I want to leave aside this second clause for the moment and concentrate on the notion that an attitude is an expressive state of the agent. What kind of state is an expressive state? A brain state? A dispositional state? An emotional state? Or perhaps all of the above? What does an expressive state express? Emotions? Thoughts? Desires? Impulses? Perceptions? Or all of the above?

I will describe a yes answer to these questions as the *inclusive conception* of an attitude. On the inclusive conception, an attitude can express emotions, thoughts, desires, impulses, perceptions, or any of the other myriad internal states—brain, dispositional, emotional, and so on—that constitute our mental life. And to say that an attitude, on this conception, expresses any such state is to say that the bare presence of this state necessarily manifests its particular contents in overt physical change—as, for example, inner turmoil might manifest itself in rapid breathing, dilated pupils, increased heart rate, and agitated movement of the limbs. So the inclusive conception of an attitude implies that for any internal state constitutive of our mental life, there is necessarily some observable, physical manifestation of it.

Now on Anderson's view there cannot be a necessary connection between any such state of the agent (whether brain state, dispositional state, or emotional state) and a *particular* physical manifestation of it. For that would conflict with her later attempt to distinguish appropriate from inappropriate expressions of an attitude (pp. 83, 129). If the connection between an internal state and a particular physical expression of it is a necessary one, there is no point in evaluating it as appropriate or inappropriate. That physical expression of it is not subject to reform.

Similarly, Anderson's view cannot realistically imply that *any* such mental state—whether thought, desire, impulse, or perception—has *some* observable physical manifestation. For we learn to conceal and internalize our thoughts, desires, impulses, and perceptions in the process of socialization: to keep our thoughts to ourselves, to suppress our desires, to refrain from acting on our impulses, to register our perceptions without reacting to them. This skill of controlling and internalizing our reactions is, in essence, what the process of socialization teaches, and, as Nietzsche observed, it is the origin of the interiority of our mental lives. But any such state that, for reasons of socialization, individual constitution, or personal control, has no physically observable manifestation cannot be meaningfully described as an expressive state at all. So it cannot be true that, as the inclusive conception claims, all internal states constitutive of our mental lives are expressive states, nor, therefore, that all internal states constitutive of our mental lives conform to Anderson's conception of an attitude.

However, for later purposes Anderson will want to insist that anything that is an attitude is necessarily expressive. She will also want

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to insist that an attitude can be expressed appropriately or inappropriately. Since the inclusive conception of an attitude implies the rejection of both of these features, Anderson should reject the inclusive conception of an attitude.

By contrast, an *exclusive conception* of an attitude toward a person or thing might define it as a specifically emotional response, or disposition to so respond, to that person or thing, such that the emotion is caused in part by the agent's perceptions, thoughts, and beliefs about the object of valuation. On the exclusive conception, an attitude is an expressive state in that there is a necessary connection between the agent's inner emotional state and *some* overt physical manifestation. However, it excludes any necessary connection between any such emotional state of the agent and a *particular* physical manifestation, since Anderson needs to be able to distinguish between the attitude itself and the appropriateness with which it is expressed.

For the same reason, the exclusive conception of an attitude excludes any necessary connection between the agent's inner emotional state and any intentional *action,* whether of execution or of omission. Thus, the exclusive conception of an attitude excludes certain thoughts, desires, impulses, and perceptions unless they bear the right kind of causal connection to emotions. And it leaves open whether a particular attitude is expressed only in the most subtle and minimal overt physical changes or in gross behavior or action of an appropriate or inappropriate kind. For these reasons, Anderson should accept the exclusive conception of an attitude.

Let us assume, provisionally, that she does. Then to value intrinsically a person or thing, is, first of all, to respond with positive emotions to one's perceptions and beliefs about her or it. However, not just any favorable emotional response to a person or thing counts as valuing it. Positive valuations must be "governed by distinct standards for perception, emotion, deliberation, desire, and conduct" (pp. 2, 3). Parents who value—love—their children will feel not only proud when their children achieve, but alarmed when they are in danger, and disposed to rescue them. Parents who felt pride at their children's achievements but only indifference or regret rather than concern at their endangerment could not properly be said to value them at all. So to Anderson's account we can add that intrinsically valuing a person or thing requires not only a complex of favorable emotions and dispositions toward her or it, but also that this complex exhibit a certain internal consistency determined by our concept of valuation itself. Only a certain specific set of favorable responses, elicited under their appropriate conditions, counts as, for example, loving or respecting or admiring a person or thing. That is, our valuation concept provides both a criterion for identifying the constellation of favorable attitudes constitutive of it and also a standard of adequacy against which these responses can be measured.

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On Anderson's account, valuing a person or thing in a particular way requires that this constellation of favorable attitudes—perception, emotion, deliberation, desires, and conduct "*express* and thereby communicate one's regard for the object's importance" (p. 11). Here Anderson goes beyond the exclusive conception of an attitude I advocated above. That conception built in only the most minimal notion of expression, namely some overt physical manifestation of the agent's emotional state. The notion of expression Anderson invokes here builds in two further conditions: first, that an authentic valuation should "express [those] valuations in the world, . . . embody them in some social reality . . . actually establish the relationship to the object of one's concern which is implicit in one's attitudes toward it" (p. 17). This seems right. An agent who is not moved to establish some such connection with the object she values either does not really or deeply feel what she claims to feel, or else her purported values have strictly armchair status. There is a natural causal link between emotion and behavior expressive of it in all cases, no less so in the case of that complex of emotions partly constitutive of valuation. If one really values something, one is disposed to act accordingly.

However, we can grant this much without requiring, as Anderson does, that the connection between valuing and action be a necessary one. The connection may be merely sufficient, such that a failure or inability to express one's valuation in action would not imply that it was not an authentic valuation after all.

II. EXPRESSIVE NORMS

Anderson's second requirement, however, is that in genuinely expressing one's valuations in action, one *thereby* communicate one's regard for the object's importance to some possible observer or listener. To do this requires that others can identify our behavior as appropriate, that is, as meeting shared behavioral standards for expressing that valuation. This is the sense in which Anderson wants to claim that expressing valuations is governed by shared social norms relative to which others can recognize our behavior as expressing the valuations we intend to express by it. So in order to count as an authentic valuation, on Anderson's view, an agent must not only manifest overtly a positive valuational attitude. Indeed, she must not only also express that attitude in action that establishes a relationship to the object she values. In addition, the action must be intelligible to others as an expression of her regard for that object. If the action through which the agent expresses her connection and regard for the object valued does not (or could not) communicate that regard to other agents, she does not qualify as authentically valuing that object at all.

This is a very strong claim. But there is no ambiguity in Anderson's formulation of it. She argues that "I am capable of valuing something

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in a particular way only in a social setting that upholds norms for that mode of valuation. . . . To care about something in a distinctive way, one must participate in a social practice of valuation governed by norms for its sensible expression" (p. 12). Earlier I suggested that intrinsically valuing a person or thing requires not only a complex of favorable emotions and dispositions toward her or it, but also that this complex exhibit a certain internal consistency determined by our concept of valuation itself. So, as we saw, loving one's children requires pride on some occasions, alarm and a disposition to rescue them on others. This suggestion was consistent with the exclusive conception of an attitude, since it did not require a necessary connection between these emotional and dispositional responses on the one hand and action on the other. By contrast, we can now see that Anderson's account does, and more. Her idea is that one must conform one's action to the shared behavioral norms prescribing appropriate expression of a particular mode of valuation in order to be said to value something in that way at all.

The example she gives is that of honoring someone. Her claim is that if we do not physically do what counts socially as honoring her, for example, treating her deferentially, applauding her, or paying her obeisance under the appropriate circumstances, we cannot be said truly to honor her. This seems right. But these are all actions whose connections to valuational mental states of the agent is contingent at best. Honoring may usually include valuational attitudes such as respect, admiration, perhaps affection, or esteem. But the concept of honoring someone is not exhausted by the constellation of attitudes we take toward her, nor are any of those just named necessary conditions of it. It is much more closely linked to public performative rituals, and much more detached from any particular set of emotional states, in ways that other valuational attitudes are not. Honoring is in this way much more like promising or proclaiming than like appreciating or admiring.

To claim that one does not really value something unless one conforms to social norms for expressing that valuation seems much too strong, for it makes impossible inarticulate or concealed valuation, being at a loss to express the depth or intensity or particular quality of one's valuation of a person or thing, or of doing so awkwardly, or of trying to express one's emotional response and failing. To say that there is a natural link between authentic valuation and action is not thereby to say that there is a necessary link between them, nor to say that the action expresses that valuation successfully, nor that it does so in accordance with shared social norms for expressing that valuation.

A recent television commercial illustrates this point. A man takes a woman to a candlelight dinner at an expensive restaurant. The

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occasion is clearly a special one, through which he intends to express his feelings for her. Over drinks he gives her a small, wrapped gift, a jewel box seemingly intended for a ring. Her manner is expectant and loving. She open the box to find a ceramic pin with the cartoon face of a clown on it. She looks up at him in shock and astonishment. He smiles uncomfortably. "Next time, better call 1-800-FLOWERS," the voice-over intones. The implication is clear that he has expressed his affection for her inappropriately. Perhaps he has. But perhaps he intended to express something else. Perhaps he meant to portray himself as a clown and symbolically give himself to her. Or to communicate that they should lighten up in this relationship and not lose their sense of humor just because they were getting involved. Or to suggest that he loves her for the madcap clown she really is rather than the self-important facade she presents to the world, and to give her a means by which to advertise a more lighthearted self-image. The setting makes clear that he meant to show how much he values her, and also that he lacks the social resources for expressing in what exactly that valuation consists. Perhaps the culture contains no such resources, or perhaps he is just unschooled in the ways of love.

Thus, as it stands, Anderson's analysis disses dorks, geeks, nerds, and dweebs. But even for the most highly socialized and sophisticated among us, sometimes there really are no words adequate to express our gratitude for another's support, nothing we can do to demonstrate the depth of our affection, no way to express our heartfelt appreciation—and simply saying this, or doing nothing, doesn't do the trick, either. This doesn't mean that we do not have those attitudes.

If conforming to shared norms for expressing our valuations were a necessary condition of valuing something, it would be hard to see how new and original forms of social expression of these attitudes could arise, or what would motivate their creation, or how they could be recognized as original ways of expressing those attitudes. What of attitudes people in fact have that may not (yet) make sense to a society, such as the desire to rebel, detach, explore, or innovate? What of societies that do have norms needed to adequately express their members' reflectively endorsed valuations, but none for valuations that are recognizably among the panoply of human valuations but not reflectively endorsed? And what of societies whose norms for expressing their members' valuations are themselves not reflectively endorsable?

Anderson agrees that "a social order can be criticized for failing to provide adequate normative vehicles for the expression of attitudes that have come to make sense to its members. . . . If a society lacks the social norms needed to adequately express its members' reflectively endorsed valuations, the rational thing to do is to invent and institute

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such norms" (p. 18). But if people can make reflectively endorsed valuations in the absence of adequate social norms for expressing them, then expressing those valuations in conformity with the norms cannot be a necessary condition for the existence of the reflectively endorsed valuations themselves.

III. MAKING SENSE OF VALUE

This brings us to Anderson's conception of a valuation's making sense, of its being reflectively endorsable. Just as Anderson equates having the constellation of favorable attitudes constitutive of a particular mode of valuation with expressing it in norm-governed action, she also equates rational valuation with expressing one's valuations through reflectively endorsable norm-governed action. Thus, Anderson wants to distinguish between valuing something and that thing's being valuable. She improves on Mill's formulation by stipulating that something is *valuable* if it makes sense for someone to value it (pp. 91–92, 102, 124) and if it meets standards it makes sense for someone to value (pp. 114–15).

The concept of a thing's making sense is a central one for Anderson. Here she deploys two locutions. In some passages she speaks interpretively, of making sense *of* our attitudes. For example, she characterizes the quest for self-understanding as "an attempt to make sense of our own valuational responses to the world" (p. 3) and the coziness of a bedroom as making sense of "[one's] feeling snug when [one] retire[s] there" (p. 4). Later she suggests that "if either [of two very different and incommensurable ways of adequately expressing one's valuations of one's ends] makes adequate, but very different sense, of one's valuations, then reason permits the pursuit of either one" (p. 63), and that "one can make sense of one's own attitudes only by taking up a point of view from which others can also make sense of them" (p. 95), and that "to justify an evaluative claim is to appeal to reasons that make sense of particular attitudes toward the evaluated object" (p. 97), and finally that "justification is concerned with making sense of our concerns and attitudes" (p. 111).

In these passages Anderson treats some attitudes as a given. Making sense of them is then equivalent to finding the interpretation or explanation of given mental phenomena that makes them most comprehensible to oneself and others. On this reading, to justify one's valuations is just to explain them with reasons *why*. The interpretive locution has the advantage that it does not beg any questions about what valuations or attitudes any particular interlocutor might think one should have. It is a comparatively weak requirement on justification, in that it requires only that I understand your values, whether or not I share them. To complain that a valuation does not make sense

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is, on this reading, to complain not that it is personally unacceptable, but that it is unintelligible, that is, that it violates certain basic conditions of conceptual coherence and consistency.

In other passages, however, she speaks prescriptively, of what it makes sense *for* someone *to* do. Were two friends to become enemies, she argues, "it would make sense for [one] to stop cherishing" an ugly bracelet given her by the other (p. 19). Similarly, she says, it "makes sense for a person to value most [states of affairs] only because it makes sense for a person to care about the people, animals, communities, and things concerned with them" (p. 20), and "what it makes sense to do now essentially depends on what one has done in the past" (p. 34). Later she argues that "if goods are not commensurable, then it does not make sense to maximize their values" (p. 46). She defines a standard as "*authentic* if and only if . . . it could make sense for a person to guide her responses by it" and as *important* to a person "if it makes sense for her to care about it" (p. 48). Similarly, she says that "which higher-order good it makes sense to use in justifying a person's choices depends on the context of decision" (p. 54), that "it makes sense to value different goods in different ways" (p. 72), and that "the conditions that make states of affairs valuable are not other states of affairs, but the people, animals, and things it makes sense to care directly about" (p. 85).

In these passages, what it makes sense for someone to do is what there is reason for doing. To justify one's valuations is to demonstrate that the balance of reasons prescribes it. And to state that it makes sense for someone to do something is to state that the balance of reasons prescribes it. It is to advocate the doing of that thing. Thus, it presupposes and expresses a set of values with which one's listener is assumed to agree. The prescriptive locution in this sense imposes a much stronger condition on justification than the interpretive one.

Anderson's explicit definition of making sense supports the prescriptive locution but not the interpretive one. To judge that one's valuations make sense, for Anderson, is "to judge that they would be endorsed" from a hypothetical, common point of view in which people can both achieve one another's valuations and also reflectively endorse them. The process of reaching this point of view is a process in which "people interpret and justify their valuations by exchanging reasons for them" (p. 3). Part of exchanging reasons for one's valuations is being "able to tell a story that makes sense of [an] ideal, that gives it some compelling point, that shows how the evaluative perspective it defines reveals defects, limitations, or insensitivities in the perspectives that reject these valuings" (p. 92). Moreover, this process of justification is objective, on Anderson's account, if the participants in this dialogue can reach agreement or make progress when they adhere to the following norms of rational discourse:

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A. They acknowledge the possibility of a permanent gap between their actual attitudes and rational ones
B. They acknowledge the equal authority of others to offer criticisms and proposals
C. No one competent to participate is excluded from the dialogue
D. All apply reasons consistently to their own proposals and to others
E. They aim for agreement or a common point of view
F. They agree to work from mutually accepted reasons toward resolution of their differences
G. The process contains methods for introducing new considerations as reasons and for criticizing what are currently taken to be reasons (p. 93)

So one's valuations are valuable, that is, make sense, if they would be endorsed by others who, through adhering to norms A–G constitutive of the process of rational justification, comparison, and critique of one another's valuations, were to reach mutual agreement on their valuations. This process of justification is called for when people who have different values have some interest or need to reach agreement. It is possible, Anderson writes, when there is some overlap in the considerations each party accepts as counting for or against attitudes and judgments (p. 93). And it is required as a necessary condition of making sense of oneself and one's own values (pp. 94–95).

This account of rational value does require that others share some values at the outset. It presupposes "a background of socially contingent and historically evolving social practices and conditions" (p. 102), as well as common ground, minimally, in "shared intuitions or in curiosity, trust, and a willingness to try alien practices" (p. 105). It also presupposes that all participants agree either on what counts as a reason for or against something (norms D and F) or on how to introduce new considerations as reasons for or against things (norm G). Together these presuppositions constitute a quite substantial area of shared values. Anderson's claim is that unless one's valuations conform to the hypothetical point of view delineated by these norms, one cannot make sense of oneself or them at all.

IV. MAKING SENSE OF ONESELF

In this discussion so far I have been concerned to make room in Anderson's metaethics for valuational attitudes people can have but not express, or express but not in socially familiar or acceptable ways. I have wanted to insist on the existence of such *anomalous attitudes,* as I will call them, even in the face of social ignorance or incomprehension of them. I will now want to insist on the rational value of some anomalous attitudes even though they do not meet some of the ratio-

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nality conditions Anderson requires. I will want to show that such anomalous attitudes can be valuable, that is, rational, even though they are not reflectively endorsable by other members of a social community governed by norms for their expression.

Consider someone whose valuational attitudes are marginal with respect to all the social communities in which he moves. Suppose, for example, that the background of social practices and conditions in which he was raised is at odds with the two in which he now lives and commutes, that these two are at odds with each other, and that the two in which he now lives and commutes have alienated him from the one in which he was raised. Also suppose that because of his outsider status with respect to all three cultures, his intuitions, perceptions, and beliefs about the inhabitants of each are greatly at odds with the intuitions, perceptions, and beliefs the inhabitants of each culture have about themselves, and similarly at odds with the intuitions, perceptions, and beliefs each culture has about the others. Suppose further that this outsider status has virtually sated his curiosity and willingness to try alien practices by requiring him, as a condition of his own adaptation and survival, to study and gain extensive familiarity with the mores of each culture—to become more knowledgeable about each culture, in fact, than any single inhabitant of any of the three cultures is about her own. Moreover, suppose his outsider status has brought upon him repeated and consistent social ostracism, rejection, and punishment, so that his ability to trust any member of any of the three cultures is virtually nonexistent.

It is not implausible that, as the result of his experience as an interloper in all three social communities, his conception of what counts as a reason in favor of certain basic matters might be equally at odds with others' conceptions, so that it would not be possible to apply certain reasons consistently both to his and to others' proposals. That certain lifestyles were socially isolating, for example, might count as a reason against them for members of any of the three communities, but as a consideration in their favor for him; that certain activities would bring one face to face with one's own mortality might count as a reason against them for others but as a reason for them for him; that certain kinds of relationships would fill his life with connection to others might count as a reason against them for him but a reason for them for others; and so forth.

Similarly, it is not implausible that, given his experiences, he might not agree with members of any of the three social communities on how to introduce into the dialogue new considerations for or against things as reasons. By hypothesis he would be fully conversant with the practices members of all three cultures agreed on for doing this—something analogous, let us suppose, to following Robert's Rules of Order. But he might justifiably think these practices inadequate for

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introducing considerations that were radically unlike the considerations members of these cultures were conditioned to recognize as reasons. He might think that precisely because of their social cohesion and conformity, there were certain sorts of quite important reasons that members of all three communities simply were not psychologically or socially equipped to consider—that they just wouldn't "get it." And he might think that only quite radical presentations of these considerations—in theatrical or otherwise dramatic symbolic form, perhaps, or in acts of self-immolation or antisocial destruction, might lead the light to dawn. Being unwilling or unable to perform such acts himself, he might conclude that there was no way for him to tell the story that made sense of his ideals, that would give it a compelling point or reveal the defects, limitations, or insensitivities in the perspectives of an audience of interlocutors whose experiences were so radically different from and limited relative to his own. Although he might fully understand their valuations, he might realistically conclude that there was no way for him to make his valuations intelligible to them.

For all of these reasons, his valuations would not be rationally endorsable by other participants in the rational dialogue Anderson describes, nor might he think it worth his while even to participate in it. But this would not imply that he was unable to make sense of his own values. First, it would not imply this for the interpretive locution. He would be able to explain his attitudes and values in the same terms I have just described, offering reasons *why* he values and disvalues as he does that would enable us to understand his valuations even if we do not share them. Second, that his values were not rationally endorsable from Anderson's hypothetical common point of view would not imply that it would not make sense prescriptively for him to respond and act as he does. He could, by hypothesis, give realistic and well-grounded reasons *for* valuing solitude, silence, and confrontation with mortality, such that we would be compelled to recognize the rational integrity of his perspective even if we did not share it. That these values would not make sense from the shared perspective of a community of participants engaged in rational dialogue of the kind Anderson describes does not imply that they do not make sense at all.

Third and most important, that these anomalous values were not thus rationally endorsable would not imply that our marginalized agent could not make sense of himself. Anderson argues that "one can make sense of one's own attitudes only by taking up a point of view from which others can also make sense of them. . . . We can make sense of ourselves only by participating in practices of justification" (p. 95). By contrast, this agent would make sense of his own attitudes from a perspective to which no one else had access, namely, the perspective of having experienced the three disparate social communities in the unique and particular ways that he had. And he would be able

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to do this even though he had, by hypothesis, declined to participate in a social practice of justification of the kind Anderson advocates.

Now Anderson argues that "making sense of ourselves is not a matter of theorizing about an object whose properties we cannot affect. We make ourselves intelligible to ourselves by cultivating attitudes that make sense to us, by determining to act in accord with ideals we accept that have survived critical scrutiny" (p. 91). She claims that part of the quest for self-understanding requires that when we recognize in ourselves attitudes that we cannot endorse from the hypothetical common point of view governed by shared social norms of discourse, we reform these attitudes "so that they make sense in the context of an enlarged self-understanding" (p. 96). Thus, self-understanding, on Anderson's view, requires active self-determination through the cultivation of attitudes that are reflectively endorsable from the hypothetical common point of view.

Again I think this is too strong. It implies that we cannot make sense of what we cannot either endorse or improve, and so that those intractable and incorrigible parts of the self that are so necessary for bringing us face to face with our imperfections, our guilt, and our personal limitations must remain opaque or impenetrable to rational analysis. It also implies that we can easily improve what we cannot initially endorse, and I have yet to see an account of how this is supposed to work that does not degenerate into exhortations to bootstrap the triumph of the will over the flesh. Most people cannot even manage to stay on a low-cholesterol diet.

But my main concern is what it implies for the possibility of social and cultural change. Earlier I asked how new and original expressions of valuational attitudes could arise, if conforming those expressions to shared social norms were a necessary condition of their existence. The same question can be asked about new and original valuational attitudes themselves. Demographically mobile societies such as this one are constantly creating marginalized agents of the sort just described. Through upward mobility we may move from our original class backgrounds to higher ones, and to different ethnic or cultural groups, through education and professional training; through downward mobility and economic contraction we may move in the reverse direction, and thereby into other new ethnic or lifestyle communities—perhaps even into homelessness or penal incarceration; through travel, new technologies, or contact with other cultures that create new possibilities for experience or lifestyle, we may find our most basic values or lifestyle preferences undergoing radical revision. Anderson conceives the relevant contrast along Marxist economic lines, as between individualistic and social conceptions of rational attitudes. But a society as marked by heterogeneous social values as this one owes its plethora of anomalous attitudes at least as much to its ethnic and class diversity and mobility as it does to its capitalist economic structure.

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Agents who undergo these social, economic, and cultural shifts are regularly confronted with disparities between their own anomalous attitudes and those that are socially endorsed by the community at hand. Under these circumstances, one always faces the choice of to which source authoritative weight should be ascribed. Either one may conclude that one's own values are inappropriate, and take steps to reform them in accordance with the norms of the community, or one may conclude that the norms of the community are inappropriate, and take steps to reform them in accordance with one's own values. Those who are strongly identified with the norms of a particular community will incline to choose the former alternative; marginalized agents by definition have a greater capacity to choose the latter. Without this capacity, it is hard to see how social and cultural value change could occur.

When value change does occur, it does not require that one construct or even envision an alternative community that adopts and enacts the norms of rational dialogue Anderson describes, nor that one rely on such a hypothetical community to endorse and legitimate the anomalous attitudes one may know independently to be rational. A marginalized agent can recognize his anomalous values as rational if, to summarize briefly, (1) he can causally explain them by his experiences, (2) he can in turn cite these values as reasons for his behavior and attitudes, and (3) these values, and the experiences that form them, are internally coherent. Of course this does not imply that they are therefore morally acceptable to any actual or hypothetical community. Whether they are or not, what any actual or hypothetical community thinks about them is irrelevant to their rationality.

Therefore, social and cultural value change does not require that "if our lives are to be meaningful, then we must adopt a perspective informed by the expressive theory as our global mode of deliberating about and justifying our actions, emotions, and attitudes" (p. 83). Since rationality is itself a value, it is unclear why Anderson, after successfully developing a fully pluralistic theory of value, thinks she needs to ground it with monistic and global criteria of rationality. Social and cultural value change requires only marginalized agents whose anomalous values are sufficiently secure, independent of the community's, and well grounded in their experience to furnish the distanced critical perspective from which the community's can be found to be lacking. That is the kind of agent for which I believe a genuinely pluralistic, rational attitude theory of value such as Anderson's can and must make room.

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