

EVALUATIVELY INCOMPLETE STATES OF AFFAIRS

By: Michael Zimmerman

[Zimmerman, Michael](#). "Evaluatively Incomplete States of Affairs," *Philosophical Studies*, 43 (1983): 211-224.

Made available courtesy of Springer Verlag: <http://www.springer.com/philosophy/journal/11098>

The original publication is available at www.springerlink.com

*****Note: Figures may be missing from this format of the document**

1. THE BEARERS OF INTRINSIC VALUE

Ever since the publication of G. E. Moore's *Principia Ethica*, the concept of intrinsic value has been much discussed by philosophers. Moore's own discussions of the concept are penetrating, but they are often hampered by his omission to identify precisely the sort or sorts of entity of which he thinks it appropriate to predicate intrinsic value. At times he talks indifferently of individual objects, of the consciousness of individual objects, of the existence of individual objects, of states of individual objects, and of types of individual objects as bearing intrinsic value.¹ This is needlessly confusing. Far preferable is the following stipulation by Roderick Chisholm:

Only states of affairs have intrinsic value.²

This is preferable simply because it seems both possible and plausible to reduce all predications of intrinsic value to ascriptions of intrinsic value to states of affairs and also because, on such reduction, we have just one sort of entity with which to deal. For instance, if someone claims that pleasure (or virtue, or knowledge, etc.) is intrinsically good, we can interpret this as a claim to the effect that the state of affairs [someone is pleased] (or [someone is virtuous] , or [someone knows something] , etc.) is intrinsically good.³

I shall take (I), then, to be true. But Chisholm also makes the following stipulation:

(I) All states of affairs have intrinsic value.

This is (almost) an implication of the following definitions, first introduced by Chisholm and Ernest Sosa, based on the primitive concept of intrinsic betterness.⁴ (In these definitions, 'p' and 'q' are of course restricted — by (I) — to ranging over states of affairs.)

(D1) *p* has the same intrinsic value as *q* = df. it is not the case that *p* is intrinsically better than *q* and it is not the case that *q* is intrinsically better than *p*.

(D2) *p* is intrinsically indifferent = df. *p* has the same intrinsic value as its negation.

(D3) *p* is intrinsically neutral = df. there is a state of affairs *q* such that *q* is intrinsically indifferent and *p* has the same intrinsic value as *q*.

(D4) *p* is intrinsically good = df. there is a *q* such that *q* is intrinsically indifferent and *p* is intrinsically better than *q*.

(D5) *p* is intrinsically bad = df. there is a *q* such that *q* is intrinsically indifferent and *q* is intrinsically better than *p*.

Actually, one problem with these definitions, standing alone, is that it is consistent with them to say that a state of affairs *p* has the same intrinsic value as a state of affairs *q* and yet *p* is neither intrinsically good, nor intrinsically bad, nor intrinsically neutral, nor intrinsically indifferent. This is because, in the absence of any

data to the contrary, it is possible to insist that no state of affairs has the same intrinsic value as its negation. To rule out this possibility, the following assumption must be made:

(A1) There is an intrinsically indifferent state of affairs.

But I see no problem with this assumption, and I shall accept it.' Now, when (A1) is conjoined with the foregoing definitions, it turns out that one implication is that every state of affairs is either intrinsically good, or intrinsically neutral, or intrinsically bad. This, however, seems to me an undesirable result.⁶ Some plausible — or, at any rate, tenable — theories of value imply that some states of affairs have no intrinsic value, that is, that some states of affairs are neither intrinsically good, nor intrinsically neutral, nor intrinsically bad. For this reason, I think it preferable to say, first of all:

(DO) p has intrinsic value = df. p is a state of affairs and either there is a state of affairs q such that p is intrinsically better than q or there is a state of affairs q such that q is intrinsically better than p .⁷

We may then replace (DI) with the following:

(D1') p has the same intrinsic value as q = df. both p and q have intrinsic value and it is not the case that either is intrinsically better than the other.

(D2) through (D5) may be retained (along with (A1)).⁸

I shall call a state of affairs which lacks intrinsic value evaluatively incomplete and one which has intrinsic value evaluatively complete. It should be noted that, while (DO), (D1'), and (D2) through (D5) do not imply (as (D1) through (D5) do) that (II) is true, nor do they imply that (II) is false. That is, the revised definitions are compatible with theories of value ranging from those which assert the truth of (II) all the way up to 'holistic' theories according to which only those states of affairs which are fully determinate (complete 'worlds') are evaluatively complete. It should also be noted that there are certain axioms to which Chisholm appeals in his system of logic of intrinsic value which can no longer be accepted on the revised definitions.⁹ For these axioms apply only where the variables range over evaluatively complete states of affairs. One such axiom is the following:

(A2) For any states of affairs p , q , and r , if it is not the case that p is intrinsically better than q and also not the case that q is intrinsically better than r , then it is not the case that p is intrinsically better than r .

It may be that a state of affairs p is intrinsically better than a state of affairs r , and yet it will also be true (by (DO)) that, for any evaluatively incomplete state of affairs q , p is not intrinsically better than q and q is not intrinsically better than r . However, I shall not endeavor here, in light of the revised definitions, to revise the system of logic of intrinsic value to which Chisholm subscribes, for that is not my purpose. Instead, I shall investigate some of the reasons for which it might seem plausible to contend that some states of affairs are evaluatively incomplete.

2. A SAMPLE THEORY OF VALUE

Consider the following version of hedonism — a 'quantitative' version -which, though roughly stated, is perhaps sufficiently precisely stated for present purposes.

(H) (1) (a) There are states of pleasure and states of pain which have other than neutral intrinsic value;

(b) nothing else has other than neutral intrinsic value;

(2) (a) the higher the intrinsic value of a state of pleasure or pain, the greater the quantity of pleasure or the less the quantity of pain associated with it, and vice versa;

(b) the lower the intrinsic value of a state of pleasure or pain, the less the quantity of pleasure or the greater the quantity of pain associated with it, and vice versa.

We may supplement H with the following stipulations: a state of pleasure is a state of affairs which logically implies that someone is pleased; a state of pain is a state of affairs which logically implies that someone is in pain; and quantity of pleasure or pain is a function of both intensity and duration and of nothing else. In fact, for purposes of illustration, we may assume that: duration of pleasure or pain is measurable in principle; intensity of pleasure or pain is measurable in principle; duration of pleasure is commensurate with duration of pain; intensity of pleasure is commensurate with intensity of pain; and the degree of intrinsic value of a state of pleasure or pain is the same as the quantity of pleasure or pain associated with it, and this quantity is itself computable as the degree of intensity multiplied by the degree of duration.¹⁰

Consider now the following two states of affairs: (A) [Smith is pleased to degree of intensity 10 and degree of duration 5] and (B) [Jones is pleased to degree of intensity 20 and degree of duration 2]. Which, if either, is intrinsically better? The answer, of course, depends on just what theory of value is to be presupposed. However, an advocate of H would have a ready answer. He would say that, while both A and B intrinsically good, A is intrinsically better than B. Why? Because (10×5) is greater than (20×2) .

A more complicated example of how H may be applied is the following. Consider, along with A and B, the following two states of affairs: (C) [Brown is in pain to degree of intensity 25 and degree of duration 2] and (D) [Black is in pain to degree of intensity 10 and degree of duration 4]. And now consider these two conjunctive states of affairs: [A and C] and [B and D]. Which is intrinsically better, according to H? The answer is to be found in the following computation. The degree of intrinsic value of [A and C] is (10×5) minus (25×2) , that is, 0; the degree of intrinsic value of [B and D] is (20×2) minus (10×4) , that is, 0. Hence both [A and C] and [B and D] are intrinsically neutral, according to H, and neither is intrinsically better than the other.

Of course, the foregoing illustrations are idealizations in that the intrinsic value of states of affairs is hardly ever, if ever, amenable to such exact computation. Nevertheless, the illustrations are useful. For whether or not the intrinsic value of states of affairs is ever amenable to such computation, the fact would seem to remain that, for any two states of affairs which have intrinsic value, one is intrinsically better than the other or both have the same intrinsic value. That is, every state of affairs which has intrinsic value has a determinate intrinsic value.¹¹

But what would an advocate of H say when asked which of the following two states of affairs is intrinsically better: (E) [Jones is pleased to degree of intensity 20] and (F) [Smith is pleased to degree of intensity 10]? It might at first seem that he would say that E is intrinsically better than F. But, even if an advocate of H would say this, he ought not to. For, given clause (2) of H (together with the stipulations that follow), he ought to acknowledge that the intrinsic value of neither E nor F is strictly computable; for there is no quantity of pleasure associated with either, since the element of duration is lacking in both. Perhaps there is a sense in which E has a 'better chance' of being good than F — I shall elaborate on this in the next section — but, strictly speaking, both E and F are, according to H, evaluatively incomplete states of affairs. If H is correct in this regard, then (II) is false.

It should again be acknowledged that a state of affairs may be evaluatively incomplete according to one theory of value and yet evaluatively complete according to another. For instance, had H been supplemented, not with the stipulation that quantity of pleasure or pain is a function of and only of intensity and duration, but with the more elaborate stipulation that quantity of pleasure or pain is a function of and only of either intensity and duration (when both are present), or intensity alone (when duration is absent), or duration alone (when intensity is absent), then the advocate of H would have had a rich enough theory of value to allow him to say that E is intrinsically better than F. Of course, a theory of value more complex than H may imply that not only E and F, but also (for example) A and B, are evaluatively incomplete. For instance, someone who believes that the intrinsic value of a state of affairs is a function of and only of both the quantity and the 'quality' of any pleasure or pain associated with it, and who does not supplement this contention to accommodate states of affairs where

either quantity or quality of pain or pleasure is absent, ought to refrain from assigning any intrinsic value to A and B and, hence, ought to refrain from pronouncing either one intrinsically better than the other.

3. DERIVATIVE VALUE

According to many theories of value, many (if not all) evaluatively incomplete states of affairs have the following notable feature. They cannot occur unless some evaluatively complete state of affairs occurs (assuming that some states of affairs are evaluatively complete). Consider F, for instance. Let us assume that F is evaluatively incomplete. Whenever F occurs, a state of affairs such as A also occurs. It can happen, of course, that F occurs and A does not, but only if A is 'replaced' by some state of affairs involving a different degree of duration. Let us assume for the moment that A and states of affairs like it are evaluatively complete. (This is controversial, of course. Perhaps A is evaluatively incomplete and only more complex states of affairs are evaluatively complete. But the assumption is made here only for purposes of illustration.) Then A has a (determinate) intrinsic value. F, being evaluatively incomplete, has no such value. Still, when F occurs, it may be said to have a derivative value, this value being a reflection of the non-derivative, determinate intrinsic value of the state of affairs 'in virtue of which' it occurs. For example, suppose that on some occasion A occurs; then F does also. A has a non-derivative intrinsic value of 50; hence, on the occasion in question, F may be said to have a derivative value of 50. If, on some other occasion, F occurs in virtue of (G) [Smith is pleased to degree of intensity 10 and degree of duration 20], then, on that occasion, F has a derivative value of 200.

Actually, this picture requires complication. For even if we may say that, when A occurs, F occurs 'in virtue of' A, still A will not be the only state of affairs in virtue of which F occurs on that occasion. Suppose that on some occasion [A and C] occurs; it seems just as correct to say that, on that occasion, F occurs in virtue of [A and C] as to say that F occurs in virtue of A. But, given H, [A and C]'s intrinsic value differs from A's; so what is F's derivative value? Perhaps it is best to say the following. A state of affairs p occurs in virtue of a state of affairs q just in case (i) q is distinct from p, (ii) q entails p, and (iii) q occurs.¹² A state of affairs p occurs basically in virtue of a state of affairs q just in case p occurs in virtue of q and there is no state of affairs r such that p occurs in virtue of r and r occurs in virtue of q.

We may then say that, if (on some theory of value) q has an intrinsic value of n, but p has no intrinsic value, then, if q occurs at time t and p occurs in virtue of q, p has, at t and with respect to q, a derivative value of n. In addition, if at t p occurs basically in virtue of q and there is no other state of affairs r such that p occurs basically in virtue of r, then p may be said to have, at t and simpliciter, a derivative value of n. The reason for insisting that q's relation to p be, on the occasion in question, unique in the manner just described is so that the following sort of case may be handled. Suppose that we were to adopt the view that just who experiences pleasure makes a difference as to the intrinsic value of the pleasure concerned. Ross, for example, thinks that it is better, *ceteris paribus*, that a good man should be happy than that a bad man should be." Now, suppose we accept what Ross says, and suppose that, on some occasion, the following states of affairs occur, where Smith is a good man and Jones a bad man: (J) [Smith is pleased to degree of intensity 10] and (K) [Jones is pleased to degree of intensity 10]. Let us say, for simplicity's sake, that both J and K are evaluatively complete, indeed, that their intrinsic values are 30 and 10, respectively. What value is to be assigned to (L) [someone is pleased to degree of intensity 10]? On some theories, L would have an intrinsic value, just as J and K are presumed to have an intrinsic value. But how to decide what intrinsic value L has (given the disparity between the values of J and K) seems to me a very tricky problem. Any such decision would seem to have an ineliminable element of arbitrariness. For this reason, it might appear preferable to deny that L has any intrinsic value, especially since L cannot occur unless some such state of affairs as J or K occurs, a state of affairs that does have intrinsic value. On this view, L may be said to have on the occasion in question, with respect to J, a derivative value of 30 and, with respect to K, a derivative value of 10. Note, however, that, on this view, L has no derivative value simpliciter. This is just as well; for if a derivative value simpliciter had to be assigned, the assignment of such value would apparently have to be just as arbitrary as the assignment of intrinsic value would have to be on the view that L has intrinsic value, and yet it is just such arbitrariness that was supposed to be avoided by appealing to the evaluative incompleteness of L.

But let us return to E and F, that is, to [Jones is pleased to degree of intensity 20] and [Smith is pleased to degree of intensity 10]. I said that perhaps there is a sense in which E has a 'better chance' of being good than F. This may now be made a little clearer. E is not intrinsically better than F (from the perspective of an advocate of H), since neither E nor F has a (determinate) intrinsic value. Nevertheless, if an (impartial) advocate of H were presented with a choice between promoting E and promoting F, it would clearly be reasonable for him to choose to promote E rather than F. Why? Because, all else being equal, E has a better chance of having a greater derivative value (simpliciter) than F, than F has of having a greater derivative value (simpliciter) than E. Or, in other words: given that, if E were promoted it would occur basically in virtue of an evaluatively complete state of affairs E*, and, if F were promoted, it would occur basically in virtue of an evaluatively complete state of affairs F*, it is reasonable, all else being equal, to expect or assume that E* is intrinsically better than F*. In this sense, then, E may be said to be 'preferable to' F, even though E is not intrinsically better than F.

4. TWO PROBLEMS RESOLVED

While I do not subscribe to H, I do think it plausible to say, in accordance with H, that such states of affairs as E and F are evaluatively incomplete. But if these were the only sorts of states of affairs of which it might seem plausible to say that they are evaluatively incomplete, perhaps it would seem even more plausible — it would certainly be simpler — just to assert (II) and to reject any theory of value according to which there are evaluatively incomplete states of affairs. However, it seems to me that there are certain sorts of states of affairs to which it is very plausible to ascribe evaluative incompleteness. Indeed, far from being the simpler course to follow, failure to ascribe evaluative incompleteness to such states of affairs gives rise to serious problems. I have in mind two sorts of states of affairs in particular here those which involve intentional attitudes and those which are disjunctive — and I shall say something about each in turn.

Consider the problem of assigning intrinsic value to pleasure, where pleasure has an intentional object. Many states of pleasure perhaps appear intrinsically good. But what of pleasure in the bad, that is, pleasure whose intentional object is bad? Many philosophers think that such pleasure is itself intrinsically bad.¹⁴ (Some, of course, disagree.¹⁵) But, even while there is considerable agreement amongst philosophers concerning the intrinsic value of pleasure in the bad, there is considerable confusion concerning the intrinsic value of pleasure simpliciter. Should pleasure simpliciter be said to be intrinsically good, even when it occurs only in virtue of pleasure in the bad, which is intrinsically bad? Some philosophers say that this is indeed the case and seek to dissolve the air of paradox by appeal to such notions as 'organic unities' and 'defeat'.¹⁶ While there is perhaps nothing formally objectionable about such appeal, there is nevertheless an aura of mystery that surrounds it. This mystery can, I think, be dispelled by noting that such appeal appears implicitly to be predicated on the assumption that (II) is true. If (II) is rejected, it seems that such appeal can be avoided. For example, someone might accept that the following state of affairs is evaluatively complete, indeed, that it is intrinsically bad: (M) [Smith is pleased at Jones's pain].¹⁷ This same person might understandably feel reluctant, therefore, to say that (V) [Smith is pleased] is intrinsically good. Of course, he might be equally reluctant to say that N is intrinsically neutral or intrinsically bad. But only if (II) is true must N be one or the other. If (II) is false, then it is open to one to claim that M is intrinsically bad and that N is evaluatively incomplete.

Another example: sometimes it is claimed that knowledge or true belief is intrinsically good.¹⁸ But Smith's knowing that Elm Street runs into Oak Street seems not to be intrinsically good, while his knowing that promises ought to be kept or that virtue is its own reward perhaps is intrinsically good. Of course, it is debatable whether any knowledge is intrinsically good. Be that as it may, let us assume that (O) [Smith knows that Elm Street runs into Oak Street] is intrinsically neutral, while (P) [Smith knows that promises ought to be kept] is intrinsically good. If we assume this, what are we to say of (Q) [Smith knows something]? Again, it seems paradoxical to assert that Q is intrinsically good, especially if it occurs only in virtue of O. Perhaps a more plausible claim to make is that Q is evaluatively incomplete.

But let us return to the question of the intrinsic value of pleasure (where pleasure has an intentional object), and let us now complicate matters by introducing the question of the intrinsic value of displeasure. It was said that there is considerable plausibility in saying that (V) [Smith is pleased] is evaluatively incomplete. Presumably,

if this is said of N, it ought to be said also of (R) [Smith is displeased] , since, just as some pleasure (such as pleasure in the bad) appears to 'go against the grain' from an evaluative point of view, so too some displeasure (such as displeasure in the bad, which is, arguably, intrinsically good) seems to 'go against the grain' from an evaluative point of view. But, it might be objected, there is a problem here. If pleasure can on one occasion be good and on another occasion be bad and displeasure can on one occasion be bad and on another occasion be good, and if this is supposed to render plausible the suggestion that N and R are evaluatively incomplete, are we to infer from this that N is not preferable to R? Surely, it might be said, there is a 'better chance' of N's being good than of R's being good. While I doubt that this is in fact true, this point may nevertheless be accommodated by one who takes both N and R to be evaluatively incomplete. For it might be that, the world being as it is, there is comparatively little chance that bad pleasures and good displeasures will occur, even though both are conceptually possible. If this were so, then N would have a better chance of having a greater derivative value (simpliciter) than R than R would have of having a greater derivative value (simpliciter) than N. Hence N could be said to be preferable to R (in one sense), even though it is not intrinsically better than R.

I turn now to a consideration of the assignment of intrinsic value to disjunctive states of affairs. Such assignment is problematic. Let us assume that the following states of affairs are evaluatively complete: (S) [there are rocks] and (7) [Smith is pleased to degree of intensity 1 000 000] . Let us assume, in fact, that S is intrinsically neutral and that T has a positive intrinsic value of 1 000 000 (and we may thus take T to be extraordinarily intrinsically good). What intrinsic value is to be assigned to [S or T]? It might at first seem that [S or 7] should be said to have an intrinsic value of 500 000. But this cannot be right. Note that, whenever S occurs, so does [S or T] , and it seems quite wrong to say that, just because there are rocks, something of very high intrinsic value occurs. For reasons of this sort, Chisholm says that states of affairs like [S or T] are intrinsically neutral.¹⁹ But this does not seem quite right either. Two different but related cases point up problems with such an assignment of intrinsic value. First, Chisholm also says that the negations of intrinsically good states of affairs are themselves intrinsically neutral.²⁰ This seems right. For instance, not-T is not to be confused with (U) [Smith is displeased to degree of intensity 1 000 000] . But now consider a choice between promoting [S and not-T] on the one hand and [S or T] on the other. It is surely reasonable, *ceteris paribus*, to choose to promote the latter rather than the former; yet Chisholm says that both states of affairs are intrinsically neutral. Second, consider a choice between promoting [S or T] on the one hand and [S or V] on the other, where V is [Smith is pleased to degree of intensity 1] . Surely choosing to promote the former is more reasonable, *ceteris paribus*, than choosing to promote the latter; yet Chisholm says that both states of affairs are intrinsically neutral. These problems may be avoided by noting that, if (II) is rejected, we are not committed to assigning any intrinsic value to disjunctive states of affairs. It will remain true, however, that such states of affairs, when they occur, will normally have a derivative value (simpliciter), since they cannot occur unless one of their disjuncts occurs, and such a disjunct will itself normally have either a derivative value (simpliciter) or an intrinsic value. Indeed, while it is clear (for reasons pointed out by Chisholm) that [S or T] ought not to be said to be intrinsically better than S, it seems plausible to say that this is so because [S or T] has no intrinsic value at all; and it is still open to us then to say that it is reasonable, *ceteris paribus*, to choose to promote [S or T] rather than S (and, especially, rather than [S and not-T]) since the former has (*ceteris paribus*) a chance of having a derivative value (simpliciter) greater than zero. So, too, it seems reasonable, *ceteris paribus*, to choose to promote [S or 1] rather than [S or V] , since the former has (*ceteris paribus*) a better chance of having a derivative value (simpliciter) greater than that of the latter than the latter has of having a derivative value (simpliciter) greater than that of the former.

5. CONCLUSION

The main point of this paper has been to show that the concept of evaluative incompleteness deserves consideration. In addition, I have suggested that it is plausible to accept that certain states of affairs in fact are evaluatively incomplete. But I have not sought to prove that this is so; indeed, I do not know how such proof might be given. Just which states of affairs, if any, are evaluatively incomplete is an extremely vexed question, and it is not one to which I have attempted to supply any systematic answer. My aim has been merely to point out that it is arguable that certain states of affairs are evaluatively incomplete — a fact that ought not to be

overlooked due to an unquestioning acceptance of (II) and a fact which, certainly, ought not to be ruled out by fiat due to an adherence to definitions and assumptions which imply that (II) is false.²¹

NOTES

¹ See especially: [131, Chapter VI; [11], Chapter VII; [12], Chapter VIII; and [10].

² This stipulation is to be found, either explicitly or implicitly, in a number of Chisholm's publications, among which are the following: [8]; [5]; [4];] 6].

³ I shall use square brackets thus to distinguish the designation from the expression of states of affairs. Chisholm does not use this device, and he would designate the states of affairs as follows: someone being pleased, someone being virtuous, someone knowing something, *etc.*

⁴ [8], p. 247. The definitions are repeated in [5], p. 24; [4], p. 264; [6], p. 298. (Often Chisholm uses 'intrinsically preferable to' instead of 'intrinsically better than'.) Note, too, that (II) is explicitly noted by Aqvist in [1], p. 260 (see his claim (xix)) to be an implication of *all* the various logics of intrinsic value which he constructs as an elaboration on [8].

⁵ Chisholm and Sosa are aware ([8], pp. 247-248) that (A1) must be assumed true if their definitions are to be acceptable. In fact, they seek to prove the truth of *what* I call (A1) (they call it theorem (T8)) on the basis of (D2) and some other assumptions (they call these assumptions (A1), (A4), and (AS)). But their assumptions (A4) and (AS) will not do for my purposes, for the same sort of reason that I shall shortly give for rejecting what both they and I call (A2).

⁶ At one point in [5] (p. 23), Chisholm says that it is perhaps better to say, not that all states of affairs have intrinsic value, but that only those states of affairs which are *actual* (that is, which *occur*) have intrinsic value. Perhaps this is so, but the matter is very difficult. (Cf. [17], pp. 112-113, where Ross says that it is *facts* and only facts that have intrinsic value; and note that Chisholm takes a fact to be a state of affairs which is actual (definition D5.4 in [7]).) At any rate, it is not on this basis that I shall later adduce considerations which cast doubt upon the truth of (II).

⁷ A word of warning: it is not to be assumed that Chisholm's primitive concept (expressed by 'is intrinsically better than') is the same as that concept (expressed by 'is intrinsically better than') used in this definition. In fact, Chisholm tells me that he is inclined to accept the following principle:

For every *x* and *y*, if *x* is intrinsically good and *y* is not, then *x* is intrinsically better than *y*, and if *x* is intrinsically bad and *y* is not, then *y* is intrinsically better than *x*.

Acceptance of this principle would defeat the purpose of the present project, and I mean 'is intrinsically better than' to be so understood that, for all *x* and *y*, if *x* is intrinsically better than *y* or *y* is intrinsically better than *x*, then *both x* and *y* are *possibly* such that they have intrinsic value and hence (given that, for any *z*, if *z* is possibly such that it has intrinsic value, then *z* is necessarily such that it has intrinsic value) *both x* and *y* are *in fact* such that they have intrinsic value. (Cf. claim (viii) by Aqvist in [1], p. 260.) We might in this regard compare the following principle:

For every *x* and *y*, if *x* is hot and *y* is not, then *x* is warmer than *y*.

I am inclined to reject this, and my rejection would parallel the rejection of the first principle. Is a stove warmer than the number 2? It seems odd to say so. At any rate, it seems reasonable to say that, for all *x* and *y*, if *x* is warmer than *y*, then *both x* and *y* are possibly such that they manifest a certain temperature.) Whether this points to a difference between Chisholm and me in principles concerning the same concept or to an invocation of different concepts, is a matter that I do not quite know how to resolve. In this regard it is worth noting, also, that in [16] Philip Quinn presents a definition, (d3), which appears to imply yet another slightly different use of 'is intrinsically better than'.

⁸ Note that one implication of (DO) is that, if a state of affairs *p* has intrinsic value, then some other state of affairs *q* has a *different* intrinsic value. This is perhaps an unfortunate implication. This implication could be ruled out by appealing to *two* primitive concepts — those of intrinsic value and intrinsic betterness — and the spirit of (DO) could then be preserved by postulating that, for any two states of affairs *p* and *q*, if *p* is intrinsically better than *q* or *q* intrinsically better than *p*, then both *p* and *q* have intrinsic value.

⁹ [8], p. 247; [5], p. 24; [4], p. 264; [6], p. 298.

¹⁰ Cf. [9], pp. 33-35.

¹¹ This is an implication of both (D1) and (D1'). It is a controversial contention, but I shall assume its truth. (This matter is discussed in considerable detail by Quinn in [16] .) Even if it is false, it is presumably true that every state of affairs which has intrinsic value is either intrinsically good, or intrinsically neutral, or intrinsically bad, and that it cannot have more than one of these values. As will be seen, as long as this minimal assumption is granted, (II) is open to question.

¹² I intend for 'entails' to be construed very strongly here. Perhaps Chisholm's definition ([7] , D4.5) will do: *p* entails *q* = df. *q* is necessarily such that (i) if it occurs then *p* occurs and (ii) who ever accepts it accepts *p*. ¹³ [17], p. 72. ¹⁴

¹⁴ Cf. [3], p. 23, N. 31; [13], Section 125; [17], p. 136ff.; [5], p. 127ff.

¹⁵ Cf. [18], p. 25.

¹⁶ See [13] , p. 27ff.; [5] ; [4]. Note that, if *L* (in the last section) is to be said to have intrinsic value, then presumably at least one of *J* and *K* must be said to be an organic unity, given their respective intrinsic values.

¹⁷ Of course, someone else might think that *M* is evaluatively incomplete, citing the absence of any or all of the following: the degree of intensity of pleasure; the degree of duration of pleasure; the moral character of Smith; the moral character of Jones; whether or not Smith deserves to be pleased; whether or not Jones deserves to be in pain; whether or not Jones is in pain; whether or not Jones' pain is intrinsically bad, extrinsically bad, or some combination of the two; whether or not Smith believes Jones's pain to be intrinsically bad, extrinsically bad, or some combination of the two; and so on.

¹⁸ Cf. Plato in [15] , 345b and in [14] , 292b; Aristotle in [2] , Book VI; Moore in [13] , p. 194ff. It should be noted that none of these philosophers would in fact endorse *without qualification* the claim that knowledge is intrinsically good.

¹⁹ [6], p. 298.

²⁰ It is partly for this reason that Chisholm distinguishes, by means of (D2) and (D3) above, between intrinsically indifferent and intrinsically neutral states of affairs.

²¹ I am indebted to Paul Bowen, Roderick Chisholm, Philip Quinn, Ernest Sosa, and a referee for this journal for helpful comments on earlier drafts of this paper.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- [1] Aqvist, Lennart: 1968, 'Chisholm—Sosa logics of intrinsic betterness and value', *Nous* 2, pp. 253-270.
- [2] Aristotle: *Nicomachean Ethics*.
- [3] Brentano, Franz: 1969, *The Origin of Our Knowledge of Right and Wrong*, translated by Roderick M. Chisholm and Elizabeth H. Schneewind (Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., London.)
- [4] Chisholm, Roderick M.: 1972, 'Objectives and intrinsic value', in *Jenseits vom Sein und Nichtsein*, edited by Rudolf Haller (Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, Graz).
- [5] Chisholm, Roderick M.: 1968-9, 'The defeat of good and evil', *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association* 42, pp. 21-38.
- [6] Chisholm, Roderick M.: 1975, 'The intrinsic value in disjunctive states of affairs', *Nous* 9, pp. 295-308.
- [7] Chisholm, Roderick M.: 1977, *Theory of Knowledge*, second edition (Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N.J.).
- [8] Chisholm, Roderick M. and Sosa, Ernest: 1966, 'On the logic of "intrinsically better" ', *American Philosophical Quarterly* 3, pp. 244-249.
- [9] Feldman, Fred: 1978, *Introductory Ethics* (Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N.J.).
- [10] Moore, G. E.: 1942, 'A reply to my critics', in *The Philosophy of G. E. Moore*, edited by P. A. Schilpp. (Northwestern University Press, Evanston).
- [11] Moore, G. E.: 1912, *Ethics* (Oxford University Press, Oxford).
- [12] Moore, G. E.: 1922, *Philosophical Studies* (Kogan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co., Ltd., London).
- [13] Moore, G. E.: 1903, *Principia Ethica* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge).
- [14] Plato: *Euthydemus*.
- [15] Plato: *Protagoras*.
- [16] Quinn, Philip L.: 1977, 'Improved foundations for a logic of intrinsic value', *Philosophical Studies* 32, pp. 73-81.
- [17] Ross, W. D.: 1955, *The Right and the Good* (Clarendon Press, Oxford).

[18] Smart, J. J. C.: 1973, 'An outline of a system of utilitarian ethics', in *Utilitarianism: For and Against*, by J. J. C. Smart and Bernard Williams (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge).