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Feeling Bad and Seeing Bad

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Outline of the four parts of Brady's argument

1. Presents previous evaluativist arguments and asserts that accepting a close connection between painfulness and negative evaluation doesn't force us to identify painfulness with the negative evaluation (pp. 403-405).
2. Argues that previous evaluativist accounts (Helm, Bain and Tye) fail the messenger-shooting test (pp. 405-409).
3. Presents a version of evaluativism involving sensation rather than bodily damage. And argues that evaluativism (both types) overcomes messenger-shooting. But evaluativism doesn't account for the "badness" involved in (unpleasant) painful experiences which provide motives to act. (pp. 409-413).
4. Sketches out a "more plausible" relational account involving "dislike." What is bad is the experience of having a pain sensation that one dislikes. And dislike can motivate and generate normative reasons. (pp. 413-415).

Part 1: The “Standard Form” of Evaluativism

- Unpleasant pain consists of two linked elements: a sensation of bodily damage or disturbance and an evaluation of that sensation.
- Focusing on the second element: The negative evaluation is of bodily disturbance.
 - Nelkin: More fully stated, pain involves both a phenomenal state (a C1 state) and a spontaneous, non-inferential evaluation of that state as representing a harm to the body (a C2 state). Only when the two states occur together does an organism experience pain.

Part 1: The “Standard Form” of Evaluativism

- Helm: Painful experiences are felt evaluations and which are a form of emotional response, akin to a perceptual experience. Unlike perceptions, however, the felt evaluations constitutive of pain hold our attention and motivate us to act.
- Bain: “The pain is unpleasant ... only because it further represents that bodily disturbance as bad for you. If, stepping into [hot bath] water, an asymbolic has a pain that is not unpleasant, that is because, even though the represented disturbance is bad for him, his pain fails to represent it as such; his pain lacks that layer of evaluative content” (from *What Makes Pains Unpleasant?*, 2012) (@404)
- Cutter and Tye: “Our pain experiences do not just represent the presence of tissue damage, but also (roughly) represent our tissue damage as being bad for us to some degree” (from *Tracking Representationalism and the Painfulness of Pain*, 2011, @91)

Part 2: The “Standard Form” of Evaluativism

- Presented through the messenger-shooting and Euthyphro arguments:
- Brady begins by presenting the messenger-shooting argument against the “bodily disturbance” brand of evaluativism:

“What we want to explain is the painfulness, and hence the badness, of the experience of pain. Evaluativism tries to capture this in virtue of a representation of some bodily condition as bad. But how can a representation of the badness of some bodily condition help us to explain the badness of the experience? Bodily conditions and experiences of those conditions are, after all, two different things.” (405)

Bain's Counter to Messenger-Shooting...

- In *What Makes Pains Unpleasant?* Bain had countered this by arguing that it's not unheard of for one type of badness to result in a different type of badness:

“How natural and intuitive is the idea that its seeming to you that things are bad for you in some way can itself be bad for you in another way.” (WMPU @586)

- He offers an analogy to grief whereby a loved one's death (a bad thing) produces the secondary negative effect of grief.
- And an analogy to fear whereby a projected bad outcome (e.g., being bitten) produces the secondary negative effect of fear when faced by a spider.

- He observes that there are different states in which things can seem bad to us, not all of which are themselves bad.
- For example:
 - “It might seem to me that my answer to the interviewer’s question is disastrous when I believe that it is, or have an intuition that it is, or suspect that it is.” (406)
- He argues that since there are different states in which things can seem bad to us, not all of which are themselves bad the explanatory gap remains. (406)
- His argument utilizes Bain’s description of pain as being intrinsically bad:
 - “Evaluativism leaves an explanatory gap: the account fails to provide a noncircular explanation of why it is that something’s seeming bad to you in an affective way is intrinsically bad, when other states in which things seem bad to you are not intrinsically bad.” (408)

Part 3: Brady's "Different Kind of Evaluativism"

- For Brady, a subject's being in unpleasant pain consists of...
 1. a sensation that represents a bodily disturbance or malfunction of a certain sort, and
 2. a negative evaluation of this sensation, where this latter is a form of or akin to a perceptual experience. (409)

Brady's argument for why the second approach avoids the Euthyphro Dilemma (412-13)

- Evaluativism is a relational account whereby two elements are required:
 - The whole experience consisting of a sensation and some desire or imperative or evaluation that is the bearer of the evaluative property, and that has normative and motivational force.
 - It is FALSE that we negatively evaluate the sensation as bad because the sensation is bad. For the sensation, by itself, is not bad.
 - “And since it is the compound experience of sensation plus evaluation that is painful and hence bad, it is false that the evaluation of the sensation makes this sensation bad.”
 - He argues that evaluativism is vulnerable to an argument that the overall evaluation is epistemic.

Why The Two Types of Evaluativism Fail (@413)

- Brady argues that since evaluativism involves an epistemic (rather than a normative) evaluation then it fails to explain the painfulness of pain.

“For if the badness of pain is, ultimately, epistemic, then it would seem that we are making some kind of normative error when we are motivated by a painful experience to do what we can to make the sensation cease – rather than, say, stopping seeing the sensation as bad. The thought that painful experiences generate practical reasons therefore sits uneasily with the evaluativist’s explanation of the badness of such experiences. And if a theory of painfulness cannot easily explain the platitude that painful experiences give us (defeasible) reasons to act, this might be regarded as sufficient to reject that theory. If so, then our second form of evaluativism fares no better than our first.” (@413)

Part 4: A “more plausible” account that relies on dislike (413-15)

- “A more plausible relational account should therefore appeal to an element that isn’t capable of misrepresentation. An obvious candidate, and one that is familiar from the pain literature, is the element of dislike. On this view, unpleasant experiences in general are constituted by bodily sensations that we dislike. For example, painful experiences are constituted by pain sensations that we dislike; unpleasant experiences of hunger are constituted by hunger sensations that we dislike; itches are constituted by feelings on the surface of the skin that we dislike; and so on.” (413-14)

How Can His Version of Dislike Supply Normative and Motivating Reasons (@414-15)

- As Bain argues, any valid explanation for painfulness must contain justifying and motivating reasons. But dislike generally doesn't allow for justifying reasons. So how can the dislike that accompanies bad pain in Brady's approach produce a justification or motive for action? As Brady himself points out:
 - "Mere dislikes, like mere desires, seem to lack the normative status to generate genuine normative reasons to act, or to give me good reason to do anything." (414)

He Argues that his Version of Dislike Supplies Normative and Motivating Reasons (@414-15)

- But Brady argues against this view by arguing that although an object may not be “intrinsically bad” I may have good reason to act toward or against it.
 - “Dislike can therefore have the kind of normative status that is capable of generating normative reasons, even though it is not itself a response to reasons.” (414-15)
- However at the end Brady admits that his account is incomplete. Work needs to be done to explain:
 - “...how disliking pain sensations that are not intrinsically bad can nevertheless make sense from the standpoint of our reasons and motives.” (415)