nonresidential reasons (such as D2 desires) for adapting one's commitments to convenience or expediency. Yet the committed agent should entertain rational critique of his commitments since his respect for their grounds implies that he does not want them to be based on falsehoods.

7. Strength of Will: Commitment to some X implies the ability to act for X's sake and some significant level of success in doing so (whether or not X is attained), which is incompatible with a high degree of abrasion. Thus commitment is a phenomenon of wilful effort, liking "trying," but contrasted with setting and sustaining ends rather than merely attempting to enact intentions once formed. This effort of will is not just in response to adversity, for exceptionally resolute persons have little difficulty in acting on their commitments, that is because they have already made the effort to bring other motivations into line, and active effort to maintain their end or goal is now a lasting disposition of their will.

One advantage of this conception is the way it makes sense of our intuition that "strength of will" is enhanced by firm commitment. Following Ronald Milo, Illustrious suggests that an intimate person "does not make a sufficient effort to preserve strength of resolve even though this could have successfully been done had the person exercised powers of self-control." It should be apparent now that the "resolute" lacking in such cases is a projective effect of self-motivation.

In conclusion, this chapter shows that several concepts playing central roles in late-twentieth-century ethical theory and moral psychology cannot adequately be explained without the existential conception of striving will. In particular, the key concepts of care, volitional love, identity-conferring commitments, and integrity are clarified by the existential approach to personhood. It remains to be shown that this approach is compatible with an objective conception of the values worth caring about, as suggested by Illustrious's rich analysis and the concept of respect to which I have appealed. That is the task of the next chapter.

Overview. This chapter develops the idea introduced in chapters 12 and 13 that an existential conception of the will as an end-setting and motivation-maintaining capacity is compatible with moderate objectivism about the values that give reasons to set ends, initiate new projects, and form deep commitments. "He chapter begins with a review of the importance of this question about the nature of good lives for contemporary political philosophy, and then develops an existential response to Harry Frankfurt's subjectivist interpretation of the worth of what we care about. The analysis does not try to establish the metaphysical status of values but it does have normative implications (in particular in the concluding taxonomy of grounds for caring).

Introduction

This chapter concludes the argument for the book's first main thesis by showing that the existential conception of the will is compatible with an objective account of practical reasons for willing and so escapes charges of arbitrariness or irrationalism. Against Harry Frankfurt's subjectivist account of practical normativity, I argue that when caring is understood in terms of projective commitment, it always depends on objective (and even, in a weak sense, "universalizable") grounding value-judgments. Nor are these reasons for caring entirely derivative from already-existing cares or loves. There must always be grounds for the projection of any goals, yet these grounds do not necessitate action and need not themselves constitute presuppositional motivation.
Consistent with the account of sectarian commitments in the last chapter, I also maintain that the grounds for caring about something X are not generally exhausted by the product-values involved in realizing X or bringing about X’s good; for there are often other goods related to the process of pursuing X that are (without self-deception) provide at least part of the basis for devotion to X. Moreover, some grounds for caring about X may be accessible only to the self-agentic agents, depending on contingent features of their personal history, including past choices and standing projects or relationships. This chapter concludes with a preliminary taxonomy of grounds for projective valuing, which plays the same role in an eschatological view of the list of basic goods plays in “new” natural-law theories of practical reason.

I. Existential Objectivism

In chapter 13, we saw that the existential account of caring and volitiole love explains and supports Freudo’s theory on all but these two points: the existential conception of the striving will not require that the core of the self be constituted by “volitional ascensions” that, in turn, are determined by contingencies beyond the agent’s control; nor does it imply that the agent’s ultimate grounds for caring are necessarily personal or subjective. My goal in this chapter is to show that an existential theory of the will does not imply that the volitional constitution of our life goals or ground projects is ultimately arbitrary or without interpersonal justification. In contrast, we can explain the structure of projective motivation (chap. 9, secs. 4 and 5), I introduced the Grounding thesis, which says that goals and ends are projected upon objective grounds. This implies what I call existential overlap (EO).

EO: The goal-seeking and goal-pursuing activity of the striving will (projecting new final ends, modifying existing motives, and consolidating or focusing the motivation behind intended purposes already decided on by the agent) is always performed in light of values or goods that (appear to the agent as) good or at least partially justify the motives formed by volitional commitment and resolve, independently of any relation between these goods and the agent’s existing D.I.D. desires. In general, these values have the broadly atelic character of tending to provide nonindependently attainable reasons for ways of life, modes of caring, or different types of personal ethics.

This kind of existential view clearly rejects Sartre’s signature thesis that any practical orientation toward goals, relationships, and concerns that inform actions is an “original projection of myself” which causes the existence of values, appeals, expectations, and in general a world of practical significance to exist for me. Whether or not we exercise libertarian control over projective motivations in any sense, it does not experience itself as utterly unjustified or ungehobt due to lacking any foundation for its purposes. Rather, existential objectivism is analogous to the old endoimmun obstinate formula that the will always acts at some good; but it is liberated from the idea that the first-order goods) at which the will aims must be part of the agent’s own endrailmatic or even the collective endrailmatics of the agent’s community.

Despite its sharp departure from Sartre’s early theory of values, EO has a well-established place in the tradition behind my existential conception of the will. We have seen that Scoons and Kautz are objectivists about speciﬁcally moral values as overarching grounds for projective motivation (Chap. 1) and that Frankl is an objectivist about a much broader range of potential “meanings” to be found in potential causes, purposes, or undertakings (Chap. 12). This is unnecessary, because at the normative level, quite apart from metaphysical questions about value-realism, there are several reasons to think that the proper functioning of the human will presupposes objective values (of multiple kinds) and requires volitional agents to be at least moderately able to recognize and track such goals, taking them to be realities independent of their own subjective states, to-holding especially their desires.

Today, an interesting array of views in both materialist and Cartesian thought provide support for this view. In recent moral psychology, perhaps the most impressive is Jeffrey Blustein, who argues that “not all care is, All things considered, god care or equally good care.” He presses this point in order to show that one cannot build an ethic solely on the formal structure of the caring attitude, as Nel Noddings once suggested. Some personal projects are immoral, and others are “excessive,” focusing obsessively on one cause or principle while ignoring others to which the agent ought to attend. Care can be existential not only according to deontic standards but also according to other broadly ethical standards about what anyone ought to care about. “Plausible candidates are things that can be identified as fundamental and important human goods: knowledge, life, play, aesthetic experience, practical reasonableness (including morality), and sociability (love and friendship).”

Blustein’s list focuses on human goods, whereas EO recognizes grounds for projective motivation beyond the human realm, for example, in natural values like the flourishing of nonhuman species and ecosystems, in good reasons (among sentient entities), and possibly diverse beings. But Blustein agrees that such objective values provide a key part of the evaluative framework in which we can undertake “critical scrutiny of our fundamental cares and core commitments,” which in turn is crucial for “autonomy” in our deepest identity.
As we will see, such an objective approach has to be qualified in several ways to stand up to Frankfurt’s arguments for the opposite position, which we might call ontological subjectivism (55). Since Frankfurt draws together several antiaesthetic and antiexistential arguments from other thinkers, focusing on Frankfurt will help to show how E.O. can be made sufficiently flexible to capture the essence of human psychology on which subjectivists focus, without abandoning the idea that reduct-ordinary philosophical intuitions about the relationship of facts and values. In the next section, I put this project in historical context by arguing that recent political philosophy rests on the need to find an adequately objective understanding of moral concerns regarding good lives.

2. Caring and the Good in Recent Political Philosophy

As I suggested in chapter 2 (sec. 4), the question of whether there are objective ways of understanding goods that can inform individual and group decisions about how to live was raised in the twentieth century by communitarians and Anticommonists responses to neo-Kantian political theories. The revival of interest in questions about good character and good lives that were underemphasized in modern theories aiming primarily to provide criteria for justice in liberal societies. As we see most clearly in John Rawls’s Political Liberalism, these theories aimed to define justice in a way that would be neutral between many (though certainly not all) rival comprehensive conceptions of happiness for individuals and communities.

The hope of both pragmatist and more naturalist versions of the neo-Kantian project is to show that there are grounds (either in the nature of practical reason and agency itself or at least in predecessor as conceived in some political traditions) for principles of duty, justice, and individual rights that are largely independent of other values we may pursue in life. Hence, without threatening the objectivity of morality and the foundation of political justice, it is possible that other values should regulate our long-term goals or highest goals but also about whether these values are entirely subjective (within only to reference to agents’ best preferences) or objectively based in human psychology, sociology, religion, or in some other dimension of reality. It is, of course, this somewhat independ- from any comprehensive doctrine of “the good” that makes “moral- ity” in the neo-Kantian sense a leading moral concept or principle. Yet several twentieth-century authors, such as Elizabeth Anscombe, Alasdair MacIntyre, Bernard Williams, and Michael Sandel, have made different criticisms of this neo-Kantian project, both as a goal for moral theory and as a way of grounding political philosophy. In every case, these criticisms are driven by a desire to refocus attention on the question of how we can argue for the superiority of some form of shared life and some kinds of personal goals over others. The principles required for such a broad, ethical evaluation of political institutions and social life (the state, civil society, and the personal endeavors they support) unavoidably involves “thicker” conceptions of the good than a neo-Kantian conception of justice can provide. Thus an adequate political ethics cannot abstract entirely from the values that guide the selection of individual and group life goals.

Ber belief that this question needs a systematic answer, part of which may include an account of the virtues or perfections of character that make possible the pursuit and perhaps achievement of the best form of life, is, interestingly, not exclusive to those who reject the possibility of moral principles that are neutral at between a large range of comprehensive accounts of the good. In recent years, a significant number of other authors who are not as pessimistic about the neo-Kantian project of finding an ethics-independent basis for political philosophy have suggested that we also need substantive conceptions of “the good” and have looked for values that can ground ways of life or justify personal decisions. In addition to Bluestein, authors as diverse as Owen Flanagan, Joel Kupperman, Thomas Huxley, Stephen Darwall, and others have asked whether we have any objective criteria for what is worth caring about. Their work in moral psychology intersects with a growing literature on moral reasoning that attempts to base normative ethics on an account of caring. Some of the authors in this tradition see their project as complementary to neo-Kantian accounts of justice, and others do not. Moreover, similar themes have for decades concerned Continental philosophers writing on ethics, such as Buber, Sartre, Jaspers, Arendt, Levinas, and Ricoeur.

The main problem with all these recent attempts to revive ethics in its broader sense is that they lack a conception of the will adequate to the task. As far back as 1966, Elizabeth Anscombe told us that before significant progress could be made in ethics, we would need to address several more basic problems in moral psychology. Since then, following her lead, philosophers have devoted much attention to explaining the notions of intention, action, decision, and practical reason as well as to clarifying the differences between consequentialist and nonconsequentialist moral theories.

Yet, as we saw in chapter 3, these developments led to a conception of “will” that covers only decision or formation of intentions—which at most is conceived as a special kind of agent-causal process that occurs in selecting among multiple options. Thus, twentieth-century moral psychology failed to reach the heart of the problem that Anscombe recognized. Without a sufficient understanding of
of the will's unique motivational function, proponents of the broad ethical approach could not adequately explain how human persons form and sustain long-term commitments, identity-defining cares, or governing practical goals, the pursuit of which gives life meaning but also a large part of personal meaning or practical significance for the agent living that life. That is the lacuna I have tried to fill.

My existential construct will support the recent idea that a value-objectivist response to this question of "practical normativity" can be compatible with holding that a neo-Kantian analysis of the Right is a better basis for comprehensive conceptions of the Good for understanding the basic requirements of social justice and legitimate constitutional structures. It is possible to favor a deontological conception of justice duties and political rights without holding that the plurality of "comprehensive conceptions" of the good in contemporary societies shows that objective ethics at this level is impossible. One could simply hold that the concept of the Right is the primary criterion for evaluating the basic structure of society, with real theorists of the Good playing at most a secondary role in justifying a given society's public conception of political justice (it is the common point of reference in constitutional liberal).

If this is correct, then fundamental principles for political justice are determined by ideals that are definable and defensible largely in abstraction from the values that inform concrete life goals or existential projects, although these might play a secondary role by justifying some differences between just constitutional schemes across different societies. One can hold this, as Kant clearly did, without thinking that the question of the best life or what goods we should value is merely subjective, or without taking a relativistic view of the Good. As a result, one can accept that at least the formal structure of the Right is analyzable largely in independence from the Good, without accepting the implausible further claim that the particular content of political rights and democratic lawmaking can be understood wholly without reference to our substantive views about what human beings need and what ends and goods are worth pursuing for human moral agents. For it is difficult to interpret the scope of rights and to justify even the weakest types of legal paternalism (such as state support for the arts or prohibitions on polygamy) without reference to such goods.

Such a combination of political deontologism and ethical objectivism contrasts sharply with two theses recently defended by Jurgen Habermas (but also present in Rawls and other neo-Kantians): (1) that substantive accounts of the goods to be valued in human life always depend on some form of metaphysics that illegitimately presupposes appeals to religious faith or to disciplined essentialism in a theory of human nature; and (2) that "philosophy no longer has the right to intervene" in debates about substantive goods, since the "legitimate pluralism of worldviews,... prohibit[s] any form of paternalism in the area of genuinely ethical advice." In my view, these theses are both profoundly mistaken. The first is refuted by the plain fact, proven again and again in creative philosophical and literary work, that philosophers (along with novelists, playwrights, and screenplay writers) are capable of a descriptive phenomenology of different goods worth being valued and pursued, along with a critique of such values and their social conditions, without recourse to anything more "metaphysical" than reflection on human experience, critical psychology, sociology, and history—through they sometimes appeal to faith. Disagreements about thick goods within literature and film are really analogous in philosophical status to disagreements about what is politically just; they are articulated with relevant examples in search of collective rational consensus.

Habermas's second thesis commits a fallacy of misplaced neutrality, for the idea that persons must to some extent be free to form and pursue goods as they conceive them is itself a substantive defense of a theory of the Rights—as is any position concerning what issues the state should leave up to individual choice (and thus also to market forces). Moreover, philosophical analysis can at times even give direct advice about the goods that inform life plans and ways of life without violating political freedoms. The liberal approach to political justice cannot reject this, because neo-Kantian theories of justice obviously depend on a conception of the person as a willing agent who values goods and pursues life projects in their light. This metaphysical conception implies that the problem of what to will, or what values we should commit ourselves to pursuing, is in principle not a matter of being answerable in terms other than sheer personal preference (or DE desire), arbitrary selection on a whim, or blind acceptance of some traditional authority. As Joel Koppelman has convincingly argued, the liberal idea that persons should be free to pursue their own subjectively preferred values and goals, as long as this violates no moral requirements, does not entail that we cannot or should not judge, condone, reproach, or praise their choices and activities or argue with them about their priorities in terms external to their own "system of desires." In fact:

Such extreme reluctance to judge, from the outside, the lives of others apart from those small areas that are subject to moral judgment, lends itself to a sense of one's own life as having no relation to standards of excellence. From this it is a short step to a sense of one's own life as essentially meaningless. This is correct and it can also be defended from the opposite direction. Imagine a person who explains to a friend or relative the long-term goals upon which she has resolved or the highest values to which she has devoted
years of her life and unquantifiable amounts of blood, sweat, and tears. Now consider the effect when her interlocutor resists with no more than "well, whatever turns you on," or "that's nice, I suppose," or "if that's what you wanted. I'm glad you were free to pursue it." Such empty responses constitute only the most hollow form of "recognition"; they implicitly dis- miss the agent's "struggle" to no more than an expression of her brute passive preferences, which cannot have any further significance beyond her own subjective enjoyment of her projects—though it is certainly not why she thought them worth so much effort. In short, the concern and priorities around which our agent has built her life are implied by her interlocutor here to be as venom of its size at all, if the fact that they mattered so much to her couldn't be any evidence that she should consider their importance as well.

But if this view is justified, then what was their point for her? What her interlocutor implies is far worse than if he had criticized her goals or ques- tioned the wisdom or adequacy of her projects. At least then there would be recognized as having some universal human significance, however inade- quate it might be, in his judgment. This would be a far more reassuring recognition of her agency. By comparison, pure toleration based on the implication that the question is a matter of mere personal taste is necessarily offensive when the question concerns the core of one's practical identity. The ensuing alienation here for us requires them to matter in the broadly ethical sense and to be subject to broadly ethical judgment or be based on objective grounds.

3. Three Initial Reasons for Objectivism

When Frankfurt first tried to explain the importance of caring in human life, he seemed to recognize some of the reasons sketched above for an objectiveist analysis, yet he also insisted that in many cases, the only "impor- tance" that our cared-for object or goal has is that which we give it by caring about it. Although the latter theme has come to dominate his recent treat- ments of caring, in his 1982 essay Frankfurt aids the objectiveist by noting that, given the centrality of cares to our character and our concern about the value of our character, "a person may care about what he cares about—a question naturally related to "evaluation and justification." 26 At the very least, he thought that it makes sense to ask "whom ends to set for ourselves and what sort of character to strive for," and that to ask for a "genuinely objective sort of reasoning by which a person can establish or validate his ends." 27

3.1. Caring about the Worth of Our Cares

Indeed, the force of this point is far stronger than Frankfurt lets on: al- though some measures of character may be primarily reflexive (like integrity or loyalty to one's own projects), most measures refer to standards that are thought to be widely held or in principle even universally sharable, such as moral, aesthetic, or broadly ethical norms and ideals. If it makes sense to worry about how worthy our character is in these senses, this could only be because we believe that, in principle, we have access to some objective stan- dards for the worthiness of our character. To the extent that this question of merit is a function of how worthwhile our cares and loves are, it suggests that there must be objective grounds for or against caring about certain objects or caring in certain ways. So higher-order caring about one's volit- tional character, or reflexive concern to understand and approve of what one cares about, is now naturally construed in objective fashion as caring that one's first-order cares are well grounded or sufficiently guided by the real values there are in the world, which are not created by one's own will. 28 In other words, it is caring, about the axiological adequacy of one's cares.

In Saving Private Ryan, this is what the elderly Ryan means when he asks, at the Normandy grasslands of Captain John Miller, "Have I lived a good life?" 29 This question is intensely personal, and admittedly the standards for judging it are difficult, complex, and, as his case makes unusually clear, historically conditioned in irreparably or individually unique ways. 30 Never- theless, Ryan's question is interpersonally intelligible, and his wife under- stands that it means more than "Have I cared deeply about something or someone, no matter what or who?" For it includes, among other things, the question: Were my cares adequate responses to the sacrifices to which I am indebted—which in turn wouldn't: Were the objects of my care the sort of things that it is good to care about, given the individual sacrifices made so that I had a choice to live and had material conditions necessary for caring about things beyond myself? No advanced philosophical education is re- quired to understand what Ryan means when he asks his own less abstract, more existential, version of Socrates' eternal question, "How should one live?" The audience understands immediately and intuitively that Ryan could have done better or worse, and the movie reinforces the natural pre- sumption that this objective difference matters—not just for Ryan but for anyone (especially in reference to the past sacrifices of others).

This example illustrates why some kind of axiological objectivism is required to capture in philosophical theory the intuitive prephilosophical outlooks of most persons on the relationship of caring to values. If people naturally look for values that can ground, explain, or justify their cares, and
in the age of abstraction from comprehensive conceptions of the good, still plays a vital role in interpersonal, broadly ethical assessments of characters and lives.

3.2. The Intersubjective Inaccessibility and Criticizability of Cares

In the crucial passage quoted above, Frankfurt accepts another point in favor of objectivism: we generally presume that people’s cares, loves, and ideals are intersubjectively evaluable, and even if we reject particular evaluations of our life goals and projects, we cannot intelligibly reject the very possibility of such critique. As Charles Taylor has persuasively argued, following Hegel, “No one acquires the languages needed for self-definition on their own. Precisely because our inalienable ‘identity’ (consisting centrally of our cares and long-term deprivations) is so important, ‘We define this always in dialogue with, sometimes in struggle against, the identities our significant others want to recognize as us.’ Even in dialogue with ourselves, we have to understand our practical identity as ‘the background against which our tastes and desires and opinions and aspirations make sense.’ And to make sense to us, they must, at least in principle, be capable of making sense to others as well; hence to ‘define ourselves’ through personal commitments or cares, ‘we have to take at background some sense of what is significant,’ or what values have sufficient intrinsically important to merit attention from any relatively situated human agent.

Thus in Taylor’s view, as Joel Anderson explains, “There are grounds for disputing one’s sense of what is personally important that go beyond the experience of internal conflict,” or subjectivist norm of ‘internal coherence.’ We must articulate any robust self-conception in a ‘vocabulary of values’ that cannot be a private language game. Yet with a vocabulary, as Taylor says, we could not even ask, what constitutes a rich, meaningful life—as against one concerned with secondary matters or trivia. Moreover, the importance of many pursuits cannot be described without invoking the kind of ontic values and contrasts (between noble and base) that Taylor calls “true evaluation.” Thus our practical identities can be significant to us only within a horizon of intersubjectively intelligible values. If this were not the case, then the normative worth of our endeavors, relationships, and goals could not form the basis of what Taylor calls our personal “dignity” or “sense of ourselves as commanding (attitudinal) respect.” Although Taylor is surely right that popular views about what activities are worthwhile or commendable respect have changed radically since the warrior culture of Homeric Greece and now emphasize possibilities available in “ordinary life” much more than in earlier times, our pride in our activities and purposes still
The nature of challenges and the means to overcome them among the process-goods is a significant factor in the formulation of political strategies. The effectiveness of such strategies depends on the recognition of the inherent difficulties and the development of strategies that address these challenges. This requires a nuanced understanding of the various factors at play, including the role of political alliances, public opinion, and international relations. The goal is to create a robust framework that can adapt to the ever-changing political landscape.

3.1 Goals Asserted as Promises for the Well-Being of Mankind

A fundamental aspect of political strategy is the assertion of goals as promises for the well-being of mankind. These promises are not merely declarations but are the basis for political actions. They must be clear, specific, and achievable to gain the trust and support of the electorate. The process of goal-setting involves a careful assessment of the current state of affairs, the identification of challenges, and the formulation of strategies to address these challenges. This requires a deep understanding of the political landscape and the ability to anticipate future developments.

The nature of these goals is often complex, requiring a multidimensional approach that considers economic, social, and political factors. It is essential to create a framework that can adapt to changing circumstances and ensure the delivery of promised outcomes. This involves a combination of strategic planning, resource allocation, and monitoring mechanisms to ensure that goals are achieved in a timely and effective manner.

In conclusion, the assertion of goals as promises for the well-being of mankind is a critical aspect of political strategy. It requires a deep understanding of the political landscape, a clear vision of the desired outcomes, and the ability to adapt to changing circumstances. By creating a robust framework that can address the inherent difficulties and challenges, political leaders can ensure the delivery of promised outcomes and build trust and support among the electorate.

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Of course, the selection of other things that we use is not the only reason to believe that the object is important. We also have to consider the fact that our objective is important to us, both individually and communally, as it is a necessary component of our society. Thus, the object is given moral and objective importance by the society as a whole, and in this sense, it is a part of our collective heritage.

4. Frankfurter's Argument for Interdependence and Objective Importance

In Frankfurter's argument for subjectiveism, it is argued that the importance of an object is determined by its subjective value to the individual. According to this view, the importance of an object is determined by the individual's subjective experience and is not dependent on any external reference. Thus, the object is given moral and objective importance by the individual, and in this sense, it is a part of their personal heritage.

In summary, the object's importance is subjective and dependent on the individual's subjective experience. However, this does not mean that the object is not also important to society as a whole. The object is given moral and objective importance by the society, and in this sense, it is a part of our collective heritage.

According to Frankfurter, the object is given moral and objective importance by the society, and in this sense, it is a part of our collective heritage. The object's importance is subjective and dependent on the individual's subjective experience. However, this does not mean that the object is not also important to society as a whole.
them "unable to summon up enough conviction or interest to care deeply about anything at all." This points all support: the essential role of objective values as grounds for the projective motivation in caring. Many of the common reactions involved in caring about concrete particulars would not exist if the only experience of value essential to caring was the kind that is bootstrapped into being by caring. Yet Frankfurt sometimes implies that the very existence of personal importance and its difference from agent-neutral importance or normative worth are sufficient to show that caring is a process of creating new value that transcends any permissible guidance by rational deliberation about values independent of the will. For example, although he accepts that moral obligations are obviously important in the NW sense (they are worth caring about), Frankfurt suggests that in cases of personal dedication to an ideal with moral content, the agent is "probably not being moved most immediately by merely objective moral considerations"; rather, he is moved by his own "commitment" to this ideal, or his feeling it special emphasis in the structure of his life.

My projective analysis of caring clarifies the error here: Frankfurt is confusing personal appreciation of some moral value (which is the will's response to it) with the ground or basis for this movement of the striving will. Frankfurt means to deny that pure reason simply causes a desire to act morally and means to hold instead that caring about morality transudes such prescriptive desire. But a moral obligation need not function as a prescriptive motive in order for it to serve as the justifying reason in light of which the agent can commit himself to live by an ideal embodying or expressing that moral value. In doing so, he may go beyond what it requires universally of all agents, but the moral value still grounds such a supererogatory response to it. As I have argued in explaining Kierkegaard's notion of the existent choice, the objective ethical force of some value or norm must be distinguished from the personal act of enacting that value or norm, making it the basis for one's real-life commitment and self-will. 

Thus, even if caring is a distinctive resolve mode of such personal response to perceived values or norms, this could hardly entail that the agent does not have these values or norms in moral (reflectively or tacitly) as justifying reasons in so strongly taking them to heart.

That Frankfurt does not understand agent-neutral normative importance and agent-relative personal importance as independent in this way is clear when he writes that either kind of importance can function as the agent's ground for caring about something:

"he might claim that the thing is independently important to him and that it is worth caring about for this reason. Or he might maintain, without presupposing that the thing is antecedently important to him at all, that he is justified in caring about it because caring about it is itself something which is important to him." This last clause is ambiguous, but Frankfurt explains it by saying that when the agent or goal's importance derives only from caring, "the only way to justify doing this is in terms of the importance of the activity of caring as such," which "serves to connect us actively to our lives in ways which are creative of ourselves." In other words, Frankfurt holds that, in some cases at least, caring for some particular X needs no justification beyond the value that the process of caring about anything in general has for the agent because it lets him engage in meaningful willing that gives narrative shape or "dramatic continuity" to his life. This is what Frankfurt means when he writes that the significance to us of caring is thus more basic than the importance to us of what we care about. Needless to say, it is better for us to care about what is truly worth caring about, . . . However, the value to us of the fact that we care about various things does not derive simply from the value or salability of the objects about which we care. Caring is important to us for its own sake, insofar as it is the indispensably foundational activity through which we provide continuity and coherence to our worldly lives.

This is correct, because the power of caring involves a personal appropriation of value by the will which takes them as grounds for its projective endowment; in doing this, the will is performing its natural function, or realizing its existential idea, in a deeper way that it does in making epistemic decisions; it is helping to shape the agent's volitional character and thus his practical identity. This "good" of engaging willpower transcends the product-value of the ends projected, to be sure, but it also relates itself to these and other objective values as grounds for its activity rather than simply bootstrapping value into its activity or serving as its own ground. Thus the idea that a rich, autonomous personal ethos as the by-product existential value of caring in general could serve as the primary ground for whatever caring the agent discovers in himself (see chap. 12, sec. 6) was really developed to provide a generic agent-relative ground for caring when objective grounds are rather absent or insufficient. Frankfurt thinks there are such cases, as we will see.

4.2. The Nyerere Fallacy

Frankfurt's idea that loving or caring can be its own ground seems remarkably similar to Anders Nyerere's conception of divine agape as a love that
is unmotivated by any possible value in the persons or things it loves. As I suggest in chapter 9, Nygren-era by arguing that:

(i) if any objective value in the object X explains or grounds love of X, then
(ii) this value in X must cause love by attracting the lover, in which case
(iii) his love is erosic rather than agapic (or, more generally, projective) in structure. Hence
(iv) if a love is agapic (or non-erosic), then it has no objective grounds

As we saw, (ii) is an erroneous premise; values can inform the will in ways other than appetitive attraction or propositional motivation of any kind. Yet Frankfurter seems to make an error identical to Nygren's by treats erosic motivation or agape-love and self-satisfying love/care as dichotomous alternatives:

The loving activity of the passive [erosic] lover is motivated essentially by a self-regarding interest in maintaining or enhancing the likelihood that the object of his love will be useful to him. In active [projective] love, the lover is not motivated by any interest of this sort in the utility to him of his beloved. Rather he is motivated by an interest in being loved.

This dichotomy suggests that the "active" nature of loves—their independence from prior desires, including self-centered appetites—entails their independence from all objective grounds, or their self-satisfying status. This is just Nygren's fallacy. That is, it is especially noteworthy that Frankfurter_found in Nygren's Eros and Agape at the conclusion of his first essay on caring:

According to one theological doctrine, divine love is in fact bestowed without regard to the character or antecedent value of its objects. It is God's nature to love, on this view, and He therefore loves everything regardless of any considerations extrinsic to Himself. His love is entirely arbitrary and unmotivated—absolutely sovereign. When a person makes something important to himself, accordingly, the situation resembles an instance of divine love at least in a certain respect. The person does not care about the object because its worthlessness commands that he do so. Rather the worthlessness of the activity of caring commands that he choose an object which he will be able to care about.

This crucial but rarely noticed passage reveals how Nygren's failure to understand the real structure of projective motivation in analyzing divine

gap(s) provided a key inspiration for Frankfurter's subjectivism. He takes from Nygren the idea that absolute autonomy is determination solely by what is intrinsic to the agent, which entails lack of prior motivation, which entails unresponsiveness to values that exist prior to the agent's willing. In his most recent book, Frankfurter pushes this conception of divine agape to its most Sinnstaltische extreme: "God loves everything, regardless of its character or its consequences." Thus divine love is a totally uninterested about merit or any other kind of objective criteria. Echoes of this description of divine agape are clearly heard in his emphatic summary of the existentialist subjectivist view:

It is true that the beloved invariably is, indeed, valuable to the lover. However, perceiving that value is not at all an indispensable formal or grounding condition of the love... The truly essential relationship between love and the value of the beloved goes in the opposite direction. It is not necessarily a result of recognizing their value and of being captivated by it that we love things. Rather, what we love necessarily ascribe value for us because we love it.

I conclude that Frankfurter in his position by a misunderstanding of what makes love volitionally active or autonomous—what distinguishes that derives from a highly influential misconstrual of agape in the counter-relevance tradition. The result is an ES theory of willing according to which our fundamental cares are "brute" motives, just like brute D2 preferences, with no strong evaluative content: [T]he fact that a person cares about something... need not derive from or depend on any evaluations or judgments that the person makes or accepts... It may simply be a brute fact, which is not derived from any assessment or appreciation whatsoever.

But, thus far, Frankfurter's arguments for this view are preempted by the existential analysis of willing as projective motivation.

4.3. The Rejection of Strict Prioritization: Wolff's Analysis

Existential objectivism is compatible with different metatheoretical views about the status of objective values. For example, EO does not require an extreme realist view that something has objective value only "if it would be a good thing for it to exist even in a world without conscious, desiring beings, even if it were never experienced by anyone." EO can conceive objective value instead as "interpersonal or intersubjective value." Nor does EO require that my careings are arranged in a hierarchy that exactly mirrors "their ranking in some impersonal scale of values I aspire to." The values to which the ensuing responds need not be consciously or even ordered; they can be open to legitimately different ways of taking them up and embracing them.
as personal values. For Kekulé we may see a moderate version of the idea that what Blaustein and Nagel call "the personal point of view" is vital to human agency and must be respected by any viable moral theory or "conception of good lives.

This insight is central to Susan Wolf's critique of Frankfurt. She correctly notes that his reliance on the existential import of caring in general recommends that "one care about what one will be most fulfillment, rewarding, and satisfying to us to do about." Yet this implication introduces a formal equation seemingly at odds with Frankfurt's insistence on the discontinuities of volitional caring: it also allows anything we may enjoy caring about, however innocent. However, Wolf also presents another putative argument for subjectivism that we can find suggested in Frankfurt's writings. This argument works by rejecting a strict proportionalism view that "one's love of a person or object or activity should be proportional to its value or worthiness to be loved. One should love more that which is most deserving." That it involves such a strict desert criterion is a familiar objection against Aristotle's account of noble friendship, and Wolf rightly rejects such a criterion as "pompous, stiff, self-righteous, or naïve, foolish." Even if there are objective differences in the (costal and emotional) merits of different individuals, loving devotion to them should not be keyed precisely to such measures. "Just imagine the parent who loves one child more than another because one is better (smartier, perhaps . . . )?"

Parental love serving as a paradigm case in subjectivist arguments, Frankfurt points out that we love our children before we have "any relevant information about their personal characteristics or their particular merits and virtues," and he argues that this is "the species of caring that comes closest to offering recognizably pure instances of love." I take up this example again below, but my initial response is that important evaluative judgments do play a crucial role in "unconditional love;" one is the negative judgment that with close friends, and even more in the case of our children, certain kinds of objective criteria of merit ought set to guide our caring. The right attitude involves what MacIntyre calls "a genuine refusal to treat the child in a way that is proportional to its qualities and aptitudes," and a determination instead to provide them with unconditional love. As MacIntyre argues, this attitude can be systematic because there are objective social grounds for this; for example, this attitude will, the practice of parenting is grounded in realizing those social goods of nurturance and cultivation of age security in the child that only the childrearing art can provide.

Thus the rejection of strict proportionalism is a principled rejection of one possible kind of ground for love in a certain context, not a determination that practical reason should play no role in guiding the will in forming cares.
devotion to the exclusion of almost everything else can be justified (at least for a time).

In addition to such agent-neutral criteria for care objects and ways of caring, Wolf identifies a very important type of agent-relative consideration that begins to explain how agents may choose between different care options that all fall within the acceptable range on agent-neutral criteria. This is what she calls the agent’s "affinity" for a particular care object. I suggest that we understand affinity as including the fit between a potential project, goal, or object of care and a person’s talents, emotional dispositions, and less central aspects of his or her personal identity. For example, she writes in The Sound of Music that Maria has more affinity for the von Trapp family than for the abbey, though she loves both. One may simply find herself drawn to one kind of practice more than to competing options, even if the latter involve socially valued roles that one’s family, friends, or significant others expect one to play.

The tension between personal affinity and social expectation is a familiar theme in literature and film. A useful illustration is provided by the movie Steel Magnolias, in which the sexual desire of buffoonish and asexual for this sport, along with the opportunity to play it professionally, provides ample grounds for projecting her serious engagement in soccer as a practice—even though it conflicts with the traditional ideal of a marriageable young woman in her culture." However, it is crucial to recognize that although affinity itself is always agent-relative, the importance of affinity as a valid ground for volitional decision is universally applicable and so objective in authority. The importance of this criterion for authentic willing relative to other cultural considerations is precisely what Jean’s father has to learn in Steel Magnolias, and its function as a valid ground for the will has significant ethical and political implications. Affinity may include (2) desires and related emotional tendencies, but for the will, it functions not as brute attraction but rather, as an interpersonally recognizable and (within limits) defeasible reason for projecting prescriptive motives that go well beyond any preexisting appetites and emotions that are part of the individual agent’s prior personality.

This is not to say that culture-based expectations of significant others regarding the roles we should play are of no relevance or have no objective weight for the will. For example, any child of an Old Order Amish family starts life with a weighty reason for cultivating an appreciation of those values that the life of the Amish realizes in distinctive ways. But the judgment that considerations of this kind are generally less important or weighty than (often competing) considerations of personal affinity is a distinguishing mark of modern as opposed to strongly traditional cultures. To assess the objectivity superiority of this aspect of modern culture is therefore to judge that it better reflects the true relations between the values of personal fit versus fit with rigid or highly specified cultural prescriptions regarding what roles and relationships are appropriate to whom.

I regard it as a theoretical advantage of BTO that it makes such intercultural comparisons possible and perhaps even requires broadly ethical assessment of cultures. For it does not seem that our access to values that ground caring is entirely determined by a cultural frame that we can never criticize or assess. We can assess cultural attitudes both with respect to how well they promote and sustain the central elements in human flourishing and whether they make possible fully meaningful lives for individuals. Both of these approaches must pay special attention to how a given cultural outlook or worldview either clarifies or obscures the grounds for caring or volitional devotion that there are in the world and their relative weight or significance. We should want a conception of practical normativity that makes it possible, for example, to support Bill Cosby’s often-repeated argument that a culture that privileges machismo, violent self assertion on the model of the gangster, disdain for learning and courtesy, and conspicuous consumption is a corrupt culture that destroys many of its members and radically off their ability to appreciate much of what is most worth caring about in human life. It is difficult to see how any antilogical subjectivist like Frankfurter could support such a critique of the life idealized by gangsta rap or of the wider American culture of casual materialism and status-seeking out of which this highly influential subculture grows.

4.3. Does Optimality Entail Subjectivity?

The importance of personal affinity brings us to another major argument that Frankfurter offers for ESI—that, namely, that it follows from the rational optimality of any case or lives. By this I do not mean that Frankfurter thinks we can form cares or loves "at will"; he clearly rejects this as implausible. But he does assert that "caring about something differs not only from wanting it" but also "from taking it to be intrinsically valuable. Even if a person believes that something has considerable intrinsic value, he may not regard it as important to himself." I agree with this distinction, for we can think of many cases in which someone recognizes intrinsic value in some possible goal, relationship, or activity yet does not make it its own end. In The Sound of Music, the Abbess tells Maria that married life is also sanctified, but she
3. Therefore, since the consequence of \( t \) is false, the antecedent is false [by modus tollens]; A's caring about \( X \) is not justified by universalizable values.

The argument is valid; given that premise 2 is true in many cases of caring, if \( t \) were a conceptual truth, it would follow, at least for these cases. However, premise 1 falsely assumes that a value cannot justify caring about \( X \) unless it universally respects all similarly situated agents that they care about \( X \). This narrows the concept of justification or grounding to its strongest form. Values and practical considerations can rationally support caring about something or someone without universally requiring that all relevantly similar agents do likewise, or on grounds of irrationality if they do not. Hence I is false, and the argument is unsound. Frankfurt is correct that recognizing inherent value in some goal does not entail "that anyone has an obligation to pursue it as a final end." But this does not support ES; it is compatible with EO.

Another way to see the subjectiveist's error here is to recognize that caring about \( X \) can involve or commit the agent to a validity claim that is significantly weaker than the demand that everyone similarly situated care about \( X \) as much (or in the same way) as he does. Suppose, as the existentialist-optimist maintains, that caring about \( X \) essentially involves an evaluative judgment concerning the significant intrinsic value of \( X \), or the significant intrinsic value of the process of caring about \( X \), or both. Then, as Frankfurt himself suggested, the claim that these values exist (objectively, for all) may commit the agent to no more than the judgment that anyone similarly situated rationally could care about \( X \). This is still an important evaluative judgment; it says that a person will have goal-proof for caring about \( X \), if he chooses to do so. Minimalistically, this means that \( X \) does not fall below the acceptable threshold; one would not be wasting one's time on \( X \).

Beyond this, personal affinity may make all the difference. More robustly, the judgment could extend to the claim that persons relevantly situated ought to consider \( X \) carefully, or pay serious attention to \( X \) as a viable candidate for their concern, even if they pass it up for other options. For example, at a time when the nation lacks sufficient numbers of highly qualified teachers, a talented college student with an affinity for children has the imperative to consider teaching in our public schools as a valuable calling to which he ought to give serious consideration. This leaves the personal devotion required for such a career quite optional, but it says more than simply that a person who devotes his or her life to teaching in public schools has not wasted their potential. As Wolf sees, the objectiveist can contest herself with this kind of an objective validity claim in cases of rational optionality. The values that an agent caring about \( X \) cares about
grounds are indeed universally relevant, even if not taken up by all persons. Sometimes (as in the case of a career, political activity, or friendship), the judgment may be that X is one instance of a type of which it is rational to have at least one in our life. Frankfurt recognizes an analogous phenomenon when he explains the possibility of dispersive needs, no one of which is indispensable to us, although we must have at least one of the dispositions. In other cases (as with a sport or a hobby), the judgment may be weaker than that: one should choose something new or start having at least one hobby, although it may not be irrational entirely to exclude such pursuits if other callings demand all one’s attention.

Frankfurt seems to resist this view when he argues that “We can think of many things that might well be worth having or worthy doing for their own sake, but with regard to which we consent it entirely acceptable that as we is especially drawn to them and that they are never actually pursued.” He suggests a link devoted to meditation or to “compromising facts of knighthood errantry” as examples. Yet normally, it seems that in recognizing something X as having volitionally optional intrinsic value, we judge that although it is not omnipresent for any individual to pass up for the sake of other goods, still E and a caring about X would be more reasonable than caring about anything at all or being wasteful and that it would be a shame if no one in the world devoted significant time to X, even in the past. Surely the human race would be collectively poorer in a more rational and broadly ethical sense if King Arthur’s knights had never ridden across old Britain on their noble steeds—at least in story. History would also be less interesting without persons of great meditative devotion (as the fascination with such characters in popular film and literature shows). In any case, there may be some level of intrinsic value that we can recognize as significantly supporting some endeavor or undertaking, without judging that our community is poorer if it does not include even one person who cares about it. This would still constitute an objective value judgment in favor of such a care, should anyone decide to take it up.

Thus EO only requires a base fit between cares and the objective value of what is cared about. It does not demand caring strictly proportional to merits, and it is compatible with multiple rational options. As Blautz writes:

Actual caring should align to some extent with what ought to be cared about by everyone. Consequently, there is such that people care about of which it cannot plausibly be said that anyone ought to care about it. But if this caring generates personal value that is sufficient to support a sense of meaning and thus implies one’s integrity, the one who cares cannot see the value of what he or she cares about as entertaining or troublesome within.\

What Is Worth Caring About

My account explains these observations by saying that the values that are personally appropriated by the striving will as its reasons for projecting goals have normative significance for the agent, but in many cases, they may be committed only to the claim that they are important candidates for agents like her to consider and that others should recognize that her devotion has a basis beyond her own brute preferences. Others may disagree with her, but they are then disagreeing about substantive axiological judgments relevant for willing.

Moreover, EO includes a complexity cause some objective grounds for caring about something may be relevant only if the agent does or does not already have certain other cares. For example, having children may be rationally optional, but for a person who has embraced the value of raising children and has taken up this task, the individual value of each child is not rationally optional: he ought to care about each of his children (and in a way not proportional to merit alone, as we saw). Similarly, Wolf’s criteria of greater interest, appeal, or challenge may not be (as relevant to someone once they are committed to a particular purpose, career, and so on. But the fact that some criteria for caring take on new importance while others become less relevant as we change our cares (or alter what is personally important to us) does not mean that these criteria are merely subjective or derive all their authority from the agent’s existing motivational set. On the contrary, they are common to more voluntaristic territories or narrative environments (and not others), whether the agent likes it or not. Such practical worlds are generally self-sustaining but not totally self-sustained; they may include values that give the agent good grounds for framing new cares, some of which would take her into different axiological territories or narrative spaces. This reflexive relation between the rational grounds for caring and the current state of one’s will is part of any sufficiently complex existential objectivism.

9.3. Does Essential Particularity Entail Subjectivity? Rawls’ Analysis

It might be suggested that individual friends, close family members, or loved ones are an exception to the objectivist account I have sketched for rationally optional cares. Sometimes a romantic will go to the extreme of pretending that the lover need not care in the least whether anyone else in the world sees the slightest bit of value in his beloved. As Tracey Ullman sings in her (one) hit song, “I tell the others ‘don’t bother me’, ‘cause when they look at you, don’t see what I see.” While it is sometimes quite admirable to ignore the opinion of certain other people, taken to an extreme this view becomes a fiction, for it generally does tend to undermine what Frankfurt calls our “confidence” in our love to recognize that everyone
in terms of possessing multiply instealiable properties. Thus "[the signifi-
cance is the lover of what he loves is not that his beloved is an instance or
an example] of various valuable properties: its importance to him is not
generic; it is essentially particular."

I accept that such essentially particularistic love occurs—and although
Frankfort considers it basically nonrational in significance, I would suggest
that some conception of egotism make it a moral requirement to cultivate
precisely this kind of focus on the person as properly named or an abso-
lutely individual.69 The problem is whether we should think of all essen-
tially particularistic love, egotistic or otherwise, as arbitrary generosity. As
Barbara Herman notes with respect to Frankfort's view, "in loving, the
support for reasons is not any value inherent in the loved person or the
loving relationship. The welfare of the loved other is reason-giving for me
because, and only because, I care about him."70 According to ES, the uncon-
ditional authority to me of considerations related to my beloved's well-
being derives uniquely from a subjective condition of my psyche. As in
other internalist theoric1, "the value of what we care about does not work
in the generations of reasons" that move us; it is not the object's own
value, but rather our wish that object that gives the normative status of
reasons to the considerations that move us.71

This implies a radical asymmetry in caring relationships: all essentially
personalistic love becomes a blind gift that is entirely unrequested by the
beloved. But this is just as offensive as reducing a person to a personality
in the hospital. "Honestly, nothing about your personality or character
gave me any reason to care about you; it is just my nature to care about you,
though I have no independent reason to do so." Would the friend be any
happier about that explanation than a Kantian or utilitarian one?

To avoid both extremes, we need some way of guiding essentially
particularistic love in the beloved's real value, but without reducing this
value to a mere reification of some pattern or participation in some empty
form. If objective value could consist only of repeatable properties that
would require us to love equally anything exemplifying the same properties,
then this subjective argument would succeed; the particularistic caring that
exists in our lives would have to be entirely ungrounded. But this is not the
case, as several philosophers in the study of normative particularism have
recently argued. Among them, I will focus briefly on Joseph Raz's insightful
analysis, which makes possible an objectivist account of essentially particu-
laristic love.72

Raz begins by endorsing rational optimality in the sense that I have
already explained: a legitimate diversity of ends arises from "the partiality
of people to some people or goals which are all valuable, but to which some

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[The text continues without end]
people are attracted and committed, whereas others are indifferent.814 Raz has also developed at length the point that rationality makes sense as long as we do not conceive practical reason as an exclusively maximizing enterprise that could never give grounds for more than one option in any choice circumstance. My account differs only in that I do not take "attraction" to be what motivates personal commitment or caring itself. What I call the broadly ethical importance of hooks and goals or anything contrary to this, Raz calls practical respect for value; "partiality is permissible so long as it does not conflict with respect for what is valuable."815

Raz also defends the distinction between personal "attachment" to objects of love or devotion and the objective criteria of "suitability" that make such attachments worthwhile. "Attachment" here refers to what I (following Kierkegaard) mean when I say, "love." As Frankfurt argues, this implies a kind of value that is essentially agent-relative or particular because it derives from the agent’s attachment, caring, or volitional appropriation itself. Raz calls this special kind of value "personal meaning."816 Meaning is irreducible to the world by our attachments.817 In my view, the will has the power of creating this special kind of value, which "depends on the person’s attitude to the object or objective of the attachment."818 For the values that give us reason to attach ourselves to goals in this way are not similarly derivative. People can form attachments based solely on personal affinity, but "these are highly unusual cases"; normally we believe that "the people we love are suitable objects of our love. Otherwise the love is demoralizing to us," and its autonomy is undermined.819 The normal relation is that "our attachments appropriate (imperceptually) what, and make it meaningful for us."820

This is also what the proselusive model of the will implies: an agent responds to a range of worthwhile values by devotion to some of them or some instances of them, thus taking them up in to the personal fabric of her life. My argument here follows from Raz’s in emphasizing that the imperceptual values can be appropriated by volitional resolve without these values having to link up with any natural appetites for the agent’s own well-being. Yet the idea of prospective motivations is implicit in Raz’s language: "by assuming duties, we create attachments," thus generating a "meaningful life."821 Thus, as Frankel also argues (see chap. 12 sect. 5), Raz maintains that "the personal meaning of objects comes, and persists, depends on their imperceptual (agent-transcending) value, and is conditional on it. For things of value have to be appropriated by us to endow our lives with meaning."821 This formula captures the two conditions for existential meaning according to FQO: the first sentence expresses the objective condition, and the second sentence expresses the existential condition (requiring voli-

tional incorporation through prospective motivation).822

Within this framework, particularistic love can be grounded on the basis of an agent-relative criterion that differs importantly from personal affinity, which was defined relative to non-volitional features of the agent’s personal- ity. The new criterion is backward-looking: it consists in a complex set of historical relationships, including the agent’s past involvement with the potential object of care and relations with other persons who have cared about this or related ends or who have cared about goals or activities contrary to this object’s interests, and so on. Sometimes these relationships in themselves have powerful ethical implications. I suggested that Private James Ryan has a historically unique relationship with Captain John Miller that could not be repeated without the two agents being the same temporarily developing persons. We are all caught up in a web of debts to the past that we did not voluntarily choose, which often create backward-looking reasons for focusing on an irreplaceable object of care or devotion specified in a way that is unique to our shared history.823

Raz focusses on the beautiful case of Saint-Exupéry’s Little Prince, who is mortified to discover that the single rose whose looks so charmed him is not unique in appearance at all, but the Little Prince refuses to conceive mutuation in Dietzmann fashion as only a movement from the particular to the universal form that it instantiates.

He believes in the importance of uniqueness. He believes that uniqueness is the nature of love, which is for him the paradigm of all special attachments to people and to objects. He believes that both meaning and understanding, misery and happiness, arise out of one’s special, particular, non-universal attachments.824

Clearly this is what Stocker and Frankfurt believe too (maybe they read Le Petit Prince). But when the Little Prince devotes himself in a new way to his rose, he bases his love on "their common history," which originally originated from aesthetic attraction.825 The Little Prince sees his rose as unique because of the efforts he has already made at cultivating her.826 Thus agent-relative historical considerations help explain why (as noted in chap. 13) prospective motivation can sometimes transmute into pragmatic motivation: in some cases, actions in the past that were motivated by ordinary desires establish a historical sense of involvement or investment that the agent can then take as grounds for proactive devotion.827 As Machiavelli says, this also happens with the practice: "Someone may become a musician or a physician or a baseball player merely for money or out of altruistic desires; but once involved, he starts to see the importance of the profession’s unique type of excellence and to care about meeting these standards. Similarly, according to the complexity caveat (above), standing commitments to un-

personal ends may happen to bring us closer to particular individuals, giving singular importance to their unique personality and interests.
Raz actually argues that individuals who are the object of essentially particularistic love can become "irreplaceable" in two ways: the first is "de facto" uniqueness, due to certain aspects or features that happen to occur in this combination in others (often because of their complexity); the second is "logical uniqueness . . . and a common history is the only way to ensure it." This factor can explain parents' particularistic love for a child who is temporally unique, even if the children were born at a later time. Likewise, presumably Stocker's friend in the hospital would not be offended if, on asking Stocker why he cared enough to visit, Stocker reminded him that they had grown up as next-door neighbors, had shared good and bad times, and developed a friendship like none other in their lives. Historical contingencies that generate such agent-relative reasons are not problematic; rather, they are a familiar indicator of what Feigl and Korn [Feigenbaum] call the essentially temporal nature of human caring.

Similarly, though less exclusively, many grounds for attachment to a particular heritage or traditional way of life are temporally contingent and apply only to certain individuals. It may be the intersection of such shared traditions with other factors, such as career interests, hobbies, political or religious ideals, and the values of emotional affinity that singles out a given individual as uniquely important for us to care about (prior to our particularistic devotion to her). Alternatively, we could think of the uniqueness as located in the agent X's access to the value of another individual Y; although Y's worth is in principle accessible to others, in fact only X knows Y well enough to see it. This idea is familiar in popular culture; for example, Cindy Lauper sings "I see you're own color; that's why I love you." Whether the grounds for such attachments are historically unique in themselves or unique in their accessibility, they may not at first glance seem to be universal in normative force since they will be salient to only a few or maybe just one agent in certain circumstances. Indeed, the gestalt complex of reasons that individual X has for loving individual Y, as opposed to anyone else, may be relevant only to X because he shares a certain meta-physically unique trajectory through the web of historical relationships with Y (which include individuated grounds for caring about Y). But Raz points out that if we move up one level of abstraction from these particulars, we recognize them as at least instances of type of consideration or grounds that are universally important to all agents and that serve as legitimate reasons for anyone to form particularistic cares (within moral limits). Thus, "recognition of the value of unique attachments meets the condition of universalizability" as a requirement on values, and indeed "public recognition of personal attachments can be impartial." For we can each recognize the relevance to others of many particularistic grounds

for projective motivation that apply to them as a result of the historical facts of their lives, including their own previous actions, the actions of others to whom the agent is related, and their consequences. Thus we can judge, for instance, that Chief of Staff Marshall is not being unfair to other soldiers in risking so much to save Private Ryan, because of his unusual situation. Likewise, we judge that the child we nourished, fathered, or adopted is bound to us in an intimate reciprocity that grows from the date of his or her arrival, distinguishing the child as uniquely precious in our life.

Thus the love of persons as unique individuals— as that which we signify by their proper names rather than definite descriptions of "traits— fits within a sufficiently nuanced version of statist objectivists that recognizes backward-looking, historically conditioned grounds for caring. An essential feature of personalism is the capacity to will another person's good on such a basis. Without this, the kind of singular encounter with another person as Do or Thos, which Martin Buber calls the "I-Thou" relationship, would be impossible. More generally, Raz's analysis seems to answer (at least) Anderson's question for Charles Taylor, namely, how is it that "pluralistic notion of something having special value for me (and not for you) to be squared with the general prescriptive and motivating character that Taylor attributes to the good?" The general perspective is individualized and rationalized, and the historical development of selective involvement with some projects and persons (rather than others) occasioned by such personal appropriation of general values.

4.6. Do Objectivist Values Lack Noncircular Commonsense?

At this point, we can return to a case that is easier for the objectivist to handle. Although the realm of values is both complex and pocketed with indeterminacies, Wolf suggests that the objective importance of values such as truth should be obvious, "we do not want to be deluded about the things that we love and care about— even when the truth is painful." Although some people do prefer delusions, the normative value of truth has also been supported by Nozick's Experience-Machine argument and the related themes in the Matrix movies. Frankfurt's own critique of "badness" as an attitude that hampers communicative practices toward wantonness toward truth values also supports this point. Similar remarks, it seems, would apply to beauty, basic components of human welfare (much discussed in new-natural-law theories), and also environmental goods: persons who are entirely numb to such values seem even more deficient than those who recognize these values but neglect them for material gain or pleasure.
These likely candidates may explain why, at various points in his career, Frankfurt was more optimistic about identifying univocalizable grounds for caring. In addition to moral values, Frankfurt suggested that "imperative traditions, of style, of aesthetic" (which would surely include knowledge or of some other mode of ambition) (perhaps types of excellence) would make sense as "ideals." This search for grounds is important, even though we do not exercise immediate executive control over our caring, because "From the fact that what binds us to our ideals is love, it does not follow that our relationship to them is wholly noncognitive. There is considerable room for reason and argument in the classification of ideals and in the evaluation of their worthiness." And even though I can love someone as an unrepeatable particular without thinking that anyone who does not do the same is making a mistake, it is not as if loving are mereโ'brute facts in relation to which deliberation and rational critique have no place." This is surely right if our will is not entirely blind to reason or entirely lost in finitism. We can change our cares, and also do in the light of reason intelligible as others. Why then, does Frankfurt finally reach the conclusion that our identity-defining loves are incommensurable, and the practical question of how one should live "is inescapably self-referential and leads us into an endless circle"? I suggest that this error has three main causes. The first is that when he considers possible criteria for judging ends worth caring about, Frankfurt tends to focus on positive goods that are agent-relative, or conceivably part of the agent's endowment. In order for someone to judge between ways of life, it must be clear to him how to evaluate the fact that a certain way of living leads more than others (or less than others) to personal satisfaction, to pleasure, to power, to glory, to creativity, to spiritual depth, to harmonious relationship with the precepts of religion, to conformity with the requirements of morality, and so on. Without reliance on a metaphysical account of the human soul, any justification of such agent-relative values might seem to assume existing concerns or desire for them. Of course, Frankfurt recognizes that the value we find in our cares transcends the agent-relative value of their goals. As he wrote in 1962, the varieties of being concerned or dedicated, of loving, are important to us not quite apart from any agent-relative capacity for affording us which we care about may love. This is not particularly because caring makes us susceptible to certain additional justifications and disappointments. It is primarily because it seems to connect us actively to our lives in ways which are creative of ourselves and which expose us to distinctive possibilities for necessity and freedom. The problem with this is the implicit dichotomy: agent-relative benefits (such as emotional fulfillment) and existential by-product goods (such as developing one's practical identity) exhaust the alternatives. The possibility of agent-transcending goods in the end-product to be sought seems to be excluded from the start. Yet it is in such values that many of Frankfurt's contemporaries have looked for meaning. For example, Robert Nozick says The particular things or causes people find make their life feel meaningful all take them beyond their own narrow limits and connect them up with something else. Children, relationships with other persons, helping others, advancing justice, containing and transmitting a tradition, pursuing truth, beauty, world betterment—these make the most link you to something wider than yourself. The more intensely you are involved, the more you transcend your limits. Thus Frankfurt looked in the wrong place for objective criteria of normative worth. The second problem is the demand for prescriptive and imperative justification. In 1993, Frankfurt wrote that more philosophical attention is needed to what features of our ideals must have and to explaining "the basis on which a person can reasonably make a choice from among various worthy ideals." This way of posing the question asks for too decentralized a reason for caring. It supposes that having any rational ground for possessing some worthwhile activity or social cause as an end or for motivating oneself to pursue some ideal or the welfare of some particular person requires having a contravertive justification for spending time on this one goal to the exclusion of all other possible candidates. On this view, there cannot be objective values that ground caring unless they provide an agent voluntarily engaged in a given ethos "reasons good enough to justify him in living that way" as opposed to any other possible ways. This is an old fallacy frequently featured in critiques of libertarian accounts of moral freedom; it assumes that choice is irrational or arbitrary if it is not made by some algorithmic method or decision procedure that determines a single best outcome, or at least on the basis of reasons that single out one option as the exclusive best. This demand for a sufficient contravertive explanation leads to the conclusion that nothing is an objective ground for caring if it cannot explain, in terms free of all singular references, why the agent cared about one ground project rather than another or why she devoted loving attention to one unique individual as opposed to others.
who rank the same or even higher on a hierarchical criteria. On this view, even Platonic ideals such as social justice, beauty, or truth, whose importance is apt to seem most evidently objective or universally applicable, lose their objective status, for it is not generally considerations of value that account for the fact that a person comes to be steadfastly devoted to one ideal or value rather than to some other. 126 This is misleading, for personal affluence and historical relationships cannot do all the work of grounding our careers and life projects on their own.

Third, Frankfurter's subjectivist reveals Bernard Williams's influence, for it amounts to the thesis that every proposed reason for caring about anything is implicitly hypothetical or has to appeal to some care that is already in our "internal set." One cannot in advance identify "criteria on the basis of which" the question of what to care about can be answered without affirming definite answers to the question. 127 Yet this circularity should be troubling only if we start from the radically antitheoretical assumption that natural justification of values (including those that give normative worth to our careers) has to have a propositional structure, like Rawls's theory of justice, in which we first isolate a needed for deciding the question that is in reflective equilibrium with our considered convictions, then apply this criterion to uncontroversial instances, refine it, apply it to harder cases, and so on. The question of grounding values may be too fundamental to be answered in this way, but this would not make it "inextricably tautological" or uncontroversial; this is the kind of circle, unthawing to phenomenologists, that we always encounter when we can do little more than describe our experience of basic values and try to make clear the natural properties on which they seem to rest.

For instance, in his famous diary of wilderness experiences, the American naturalist (and father of environmental ethics) Aldo Leopold writes the following about his communion with a cranemate:

Our ability to perceive quality in nature begins, as in art, with the pretty. It expands through successive stages of the beautiful to values yet unassigned to language. The quality of the caves, I think, in this higher gamma, as yet beyond the reach of words. This much, though, can be said: our appreciation of the cranemate with the slow unwinding of earthy history... When we hear his call we hear no more bird. We hear the trumpet in the orchestra of evolution. He is the symbol of our untrammelled past. 128

This may seem closer to poetry than philosophy, and indeed, the study of philosophical theory is hardly the primary route to an appreciation of basic values. 129 One may need to experience the cranemate firsthand (in combination with many related experiences). One may also need a certain amount of biological understanding to "see" in the cranemate the value-gestures that Leopold perceives. It may also be true, as the Symposium teaches, that higher value-gestures in different domains worth caring about become more apparent to us only after we have turned to care about the lower ones. For example, a child who had already acquired at least a moderate love of charismatic mammal species (especially domesticated ones like dogs or cats) might find it easier to follow Leopold on the journey toward an appreciation of intrinsic values in wild animals, entire species, wilderness ecosystems as organic wholes, and so on.

5. The Reciprocal Relation between Value Insight and Volitional Resolve

To escape from Frankfurter's circle, we have to remember the medieval insight that there is a reciprocal relation between the development of volitional and of cognitive aspects of one's personality. In this chapter, I frequently portray this relation in its simplest form as an unconditional value insight grounding a volitional response. The actual relation is usually more complex, because beyond early childhood, the agent has almost always projectively willed some ends and acquired rudimentary cares. In the narrative process of human lives, such prior volitional activity (whether recognized or not) always, to some extent, affects and colors how various possible grounds for further projective willing appear to us; sometimes it even limits the range of grounds that we can consider.

But this ingrained dynamic in what we might call "broadly ethical education of human sentiments" hardly implies that all reasons for caring about anything new to us must be agent-relative or derive all their (potential) motivation from a specific ethic. Aldo Leopold has offered no compelling reasons to accept his conclusion that it is impossible "for a person who does not already care at least about something to discover reasons to care about anything. Nobody can pull himself up by his own bootstraps." 130 Surely people sometimes do change from being relatively "wanting" lives with no serious volitional cares or ascetic commitments to anything (even to their own pleasures). 131 If young children cannot "want," then this transition from wantonness to passionate devotion through the formation of ground projects is probably even part of the normal course of human development; as Kierkegaard's famous trinitatic from native "aestheticism" to "ethic" seriousness also suggests, people can pass from unattracting disengagement or superficial business to deep engagement through volitional caring.

Are we to conclude that the agent's sensitivity to objective values—or his practical reason in its most extended sense—cannot guide this process
at all, that it is entirely blind or only a matter of discovering proto-cares already given within the proto-self? These alternatives are far less plausible than the straightforward explanations that in response to an awareness of values that she did not create, however reflectively this awareness is articulated, the agent posits new final ends for herself? "Bootstrapping" cares into being is not problematic; it is the will's normal function, by contrast, the idea that all new selves being discovered and self-defining cares are highly counterintuitive since it is a radical revision to the ordinary practical standpoint of metaphysical agnostics. So the intelligibility of "bootstrapping" depends entirely on the agents being pulled up by what escapes.

To put the matter another way, existential objectivists will agree that most people already care about something (even if only halfheartedly) that can be appealed to in getting them to care about something else. For example, if they care about their shiny new Yamaha sports bike, then they will care about reducing motorcycle theft in their neighborhood, and no new projective motivation is needed to explain the latter: it is simply instrumentally related to preserving the present object of their concern. But it is quite different when an existing care for X encourages, facilitates, or leads to a new care for Y that is motivationally isolated from the first care. It can do this if caring for X spurs the agent to set logically independent grounds for caring about X or makes these grounds more salient, better understood, or appreciated. This is a common experience, which I have already mentioned in connection with friendship (see chap. 4, sec. 4); love of some persons P is likely to get us to pay more attention to what P cares about and to think about what the grounds for those cares might be. But taking up my friend's interests or practices need not be (only) instrumentally motivated for the sake of the friendship; these interests or practices become important to me in their own right. Likewise, two people who both care about the same goals or ideals may start to care about each other directly rather than merely as cooperators in a joint quest. This newly formed love may be able to survive the lapsing of some or perhaps even all of the cares that led to it.

Relations between one kind of care and grounds for others in, its "practical vicinities" are complex. Suppose that I already enjoy nature photography and have taken it up as a hobby—I visit exhibi=} focusing on wilderness photogennes, read articles about new ultra-high-density mountain sites, and print my own pictures of rivers and streams. Let us further suppose that I got into this hobby from the classroom rather than the fields; my grounds for taking it up came from studying aesthetic theories in a photography class, which helped me appreciate the aesthetic values of fine com- position and use of natural light in nature photography. I was never really a nature lover; I was more a lover of formal aesthetic theory and the art of photo composition. Still it would be nearly unsurprising, almost predict- able in fact, that once I had pursued this hobby for a couple years, the experiencing of being in settings of outstanding natural beauty would galvanize me to natural values that are related but not identical to aesthetic values in human expressive artifacts or artworks. The objective values of pristine de- serts, jagged mountains, or pristine landscapes might have been accessible to me before taking up nature photography, but they become more salient or evident to me as a by-product of my creative pursuit of photography based on an appreciation of aesthetic values realized in photee.

Suppose I respond to these natural values so strongly that I eventually drop nature photography altogether and spend my spare time as a naturalist in the field or as a lobbyist for environmental preservation. This development in my life would be anything but arbitrary; it would make narrative sense in my life story. Yet it could not be explained according to William's conception of internal reasons nor according to Frankl's similar model of reasons that depend on my existing cares, because it involves the generation of a new final end that transcends my present motivational set.

This kind of "break in care", i.e., one care, attactic commitment, or ground proj- ect to another is a very familiar feature in human biographies. Sometimes the emotional dispositions involved in the first care alter the agent's sensi- tivity or values that are relevant to the normative worth of other cares. For example, suppose that a nurse's devotion to very sick children in a pediatric cancer ward has generated a strong emotional reaction to children's suffer- ing. This in turn leads her to read about issues concerning child welfare and eventually to switch to a career as a social worker with the Division of Children and Youth or as an advocate with a foundation that works to reduce child abuse. Here the connection is obvious enough. But the links between earlier and later cares can involve all kinds of twists and indirect connections that no general theory could reduce to a short list of motifs. Suppose our nurse instead becomes a facilitator for parents struggling to care for children with disabilities; somehow her sympathy for children with cancer had made her more aware of obstacles faced by parents whose children have a different kind of problem. Maybe the explanation would in- volve a particular family that she got to know as her first line of work.

Given such narrative complexity, we can only say that in each case, activities involved in devotion to present goals and relationships have by-product effects on the agent's broadly ethical sensibilities. That is because cares are like peaks in a figurative landscape of practical interest and motivation. In this topological analogy, imagine the horizontal x-direction as value vari- ables and the vertical y direction as the volitional variable. Our neutral desires and learned tastes can move us horizontally along the x-axis, and even from there we can see a few mountains worth climbing. But we have
to work ourselves up the slopes (against voluntarist inertia and natural lassitude) to get a better view. Hence the paradox that agents who care sincerely about something worthwhile are better able to discern many other things that would be worth caring about, while agents who care about little care discern few reasons to care about anything. From our present peak, we can get a good view of such grounds on which they stand. Thus to educate the will, one starts by getting children to care about something whose value they can already appreciate, however humble, and then one helps them to recognize the new value vistas that their initial effort opens up for them.

But this metaphor fails in one respect: as voluntarist life, one does not necessarily have to move through a valley to get to another peak. One can sometimes leap from the top of one mountain to the slopes of another. The topographical metaphor also fails to capture the fact that intensive cares or lives can sometimes obscure the importance of other potential objects of care, even when contingencies of history and affinity would suggest them. Some voluntarist peaks are overshadowed in clouds of different colors that obscure our ethical vision. Caring passionately about something can obscure from our view personally relevant universalizable considerations in favor of caring about something else. For example, years of work prosecuting sex offenders might diminish a person's ability to appreciate the value of the erotic, even to such an extent that it creates relationship problems. Or years of work as a prison guard looking after violent criminals might make it harder for a person to appreciate the importance of mentoring, better opportunities, and second chances for adolescents headed in the wrong direction. Note that it would be overextrapolative to assume that such a person just lacked an "affair" for caring about a different kind of behavior. He might have been emotionally and temperamentally well suited for the role, but, given the devotion he put into his corrections work, the reasons for projecting a mentoring role might have become almost invisible to him. This is one of several reasons why our emotional readiness and relationships need to remain nested within a more fundamental devotion to ethical wisdom and virtue ideals that keeps our phantasms committed only to values from which our personal projects might otherwise cut us off.

As complex as the effects of the striving will can be on ethical sensitivity to worthwhile values, perhaps in a few cases, an existential version of Ots- tina's accent is possible: caring about a more highly specified activity or end awakens us to values of a more general or embracing kind. In such accents, new values open up to us at such stage that transforms the reach of those we already care about. Whether we pursue them or incorporate them personally into our lives depends on our will. Yet these values are not mere fantasies of our will, phantom shadows of our existing motives displayed on the screen of the world. They could not make personal meaning possible for us if they lacked the allure that Frankel emphasized. This is how Shaun Wolf puts the same point:

In addition to wanting to live in the real world, we want to be con-
ected to it—that is, we want our lives to have some positive relation-
to things or people or ideas that are valuable independently of us. This, I believe, is at the core of the desire to live a meaningful life. Thus Wolf, Nozick, Raz, and Blainey all give us similar reasons to favor existential objectivism. If they are right, HSO does imply one remarkable conclusion: the willingness that is most distinctive of personhood and through which life becomes personally meaningful is possible only because the world we inhabit is already "meaningful." full of domains of value worth caring about. In that sense, human autonomy is also dependent on a world of values it does not create. As Larmore argues in response to Nietzsche,

self-determination requires authoritative reasons and hence some val-
ues that "exist independent of our will... our lives cannot be ones of limitless self-creations... Our lives must indeed rest on respect for the claims that the world makes on us." 641

6. Toward a Taxonomy of Significant Grounds for Caring

In this chapter, I have argued that a sufficiently nuanced objectivist concep-
tion of values as grounding cares fits well with the projective explanation of caring supplied by the existential conception of striving will. Of course, this is far from providing a direct defense of objective values themselves. This task would require analyzing a wide-ranging and insightful body of recent literature in the "birth" of analytic aesthetics, such as Chibli's "Meaning and Aesthetic \False and Nozick's Philosophical Explorations. In different ways, the authors in this broad movement lead support to some version of the objectivist idea that in order to explain commitment and in order for an individual's com-
mittment to remain stable over time and to fulfill its role in the govern-
ance of action, enhancement of self-understanding, and constitution of
identity, one must assume the truth of moral realism and so make room for the possibility of moral facts. 642

Although I do not take up the burden of defending a complete objectiv-
istic theory of values or any metatheoretical account of value realism, it will be help-
ful to assemble in systematic form all the different types of values that I have mentioned at various points as possible grounds for projective
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motivation, especially in the form of ground projects, self-defining commitments, or cares. Organizing the table according to types of grounds rather than types of ends yields a taxonomy with a much clearer structure and order than the sort of goal hierarchies presented in the best available work on this topic in empirical psychology. This taxonomy serves as a sketch of an existential theory of "basic goods." Worthwhile Objects of Care and Other Grounds for Commitment

1. Agent-Transcending Product-Focused Reasons. Such reasons are independent of:

- the agent's prior cares, commitments, or desires and emotions in the agent's internal set;
- objective conditions for the agent's individual well-being, flourishing, or happiness (the material elements of the agent's welfare);
- higher-order goods of existential coherence and subjective meaningfulness (process-goods for the agent).

1. The moral worth of an end \( E \) (or the moral status of some way \( W \) of achieving \( E \)) irrespective of the positive or negative impact of realizing this end on agent's own flourishing:

- \( A \): \( E \) or \( W \) is required under a formal or deontic standard of universalizability or fairness or justice, given the intrinsic value of each individual (e.g., keeping a promise or protecting innocent persons from lethal threats when possible).

- \( B \): \( E \) or \( W \) is inherently good according to normative ethical standards; for example, \( W \) is a virtuous act aimed at \( E \) as a species of "the noble" as defined by an authoritative list of virtues of character.

- \( C \): Under such standards, taking an interest in \( E \) or caring about \( E \) is morally required of any person in the situation in which the agent finds himself or herself.

- \( D \): Devotion to \( E \) is itself an inherently worthy state according to nonmoral criteria of moral worth, such as the duties of age or as a universally caring response to neighbors and strangers; for example, \( E \) is the goal of showing mercy to a wrongdoer, or forgiving one who has wronged us, or reconciling persons who have been enemies.

2. The broadly aesthetic value of an end \( E \), irrespective of its value for the agent's well-being:

2a. \( E \) is an end whose realization would create some kind of made beauty in human works or communicate something important through art—which, in most cases, makes it the object of an artist's purpose.

2b. \( E \) is some form of natural (not made) beauty or harmony in chemical, mineral, or geological phenomena, land forms, or ocean environments that can be destroyed or preserved according to human choices.

2c. \( E \) is an end whose realization would develop the conception of beauty or aesthetic value in a tradition or practice in which the agent participates.

2d. \( E \) is an end whose realization is difficult or challenging for human beings, which thus presents an opportunity for developing and testing certain talents or capacities. These tend to be ends definitive of one's practice.

2e. \( E \) is a standard of excellence concerning the way in which difficult or challenging goals are properly pursued, which is internal to some practice.

3. The broadly ethical value of an end \( E \), which is not simply a function of the positive or negative impact of the intended outcome on the agent's well-being:

3a. Social goods. Although not an object of justice deontically conceived, \( E \) is an important component of the common good of individuals as parts of larger groups or communities—which, in many instances of this type, makes \( E \) the end definitive of some practice; for example:

- knowledge or theoretical justification as the goals defining empirical practice;
- the dissemination of such knowledge and understanding and the apprenticeship of persons into practices in general, as the goals defining practice of education;
- public health and the bodily and psychological health of patients, as the goals defining medicine and counseling;
- wise political decisions regarding the use and administration of public resources.

3b. Cultural goals. The devotion of groups of persons to \( E \) is part of a living tradition of human activity that fosters a sense of communal identity or creates some other cultural good; for example, preserving one's heritage and the monuments and works that embody it, or connecting persons to shared ethnic roots, or fostering civic fraternity.
III. Agent-Relative Process-Focused Reasons. Such reasons are not based on the agent’s desire for his own eudaimonia or flourishing, but on all the grounds for prospective motivation, they come closer to this. These considerations are based instead on the psychological requirements that living a coherently meaningful life, or living spontaneously, puts on the process of caring. Concern for these existential "goods," however, cannot accurately be construed simply as concern for one’s own happiness. Although well-being in the broadest sense
may involve these goods, in the cases that concern us, the action is not motivated by the prospect of these goods but as part of rationalistic, rather, the agent does not pursue them directly at all but only sees the pursuit of other possible ends as a means of these considerations as existential grounds for positioning, sustaining, and/or ordering these other ends as final for her. As this analysis suggests, these grounds are not once that can function entirely on their own terms; rather, they become relevant only in combination with other considerations relating to the value of the product to be willed as one's final end. That is, they properly arise as qualifying, amending, or outweighing considerations, not as primary considerations in favor of projecting end E (see chap. 12, sec. 3).

1. Prospective reasons concerning the process of caring about E:
   a. The case arises: we find ourselves with a fortunate opportunity to pursue E with likely success.
   b. Structural opportunity: commitment to E is psychologically possible for us, culturally possible, valued and endorsed by significant others in our life, is likely to win cooperation, and so on.
   c. Replacement commitment: E provides a sense of purpose and can fit into or enhance a coherent pattern of caring that generates existential meaningfulness in the agent's life.
   d. Liberal breadth: E is significantly different in kind from our other identity-defining commitments and personal projects, and/or pursuit of E requires activities and draws on talents or capacities that are not well employed in the pursuit of our other governing life goals—that promoting the process-good of supernormal prudential diversity in our life.
   e. Innovation and individualization: the particular construction of E that we seek and the activities involved in pursuing them are novel and/or different in interesting ways from those pursuits and goals that shape the distinctive character of significant others in our life—that promoting the process-good of individual diversification and repliability in our life.

2. Retrospective reasons concerning the process of caring about E:
   a. States derive our pursuit of E first developed for other reasons, such as its power to satisfy various desires, and now

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this pursuit appears outwardly to be an established part of our character on which others trust and rely. We feel too involved with E to turn back now without feeling disloyal and possibly also directionless.

2b. Existential coherence: commitment to E is required by, reinforces, or at least fits well with other prior commitments we have made and the shape of our life to date for example:
   a. E is the welfare of the child (by former marriage) of the person we are marrying.
   b. E is valued and pursued by friends to whom we have committed ourselves.
   c. Caring about E is, given the circumstances of human life, practically implied by caring about some other end F to which we are already devoted (for instance, caring about our children's education requires caring that they not be bullied in school).

2c. Personal affinity: we find that our commitment to E can be wholehearted or reserved, defining what were previously conflicting aspects of our will or persevering against such disunity—that promoting the process-good of prudential unity in our volitional life.

2d. Innate orientation to our quest for self-discovery, we find that our devotion to E is volitionally necessary for us as a volitional disposition that we cannot will to reject and that we were destined to express, given our personal essence or as the unique volitional character that individualizes us. This devotion is our individual age, our "personal function."\

The basic goods in this list fall into three out of four quadrants of a simple two-by-two matrix:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agent-Relative Product-Focused Reasons</th>
<th>Agent-Relative Process-Focused Reasons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agent-Transcending Product-Focused Reasons</td>
<td>[empty]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I have not listed any agent-transcending process-focused grounds in its fourth quadrant, because second-order goods realized in the process of pursuing first-order goods typically pertain to (or are directly realized in) the agent who is in that volitional process. For example, the coherence of his pursuits and the meaningfulness of his life are agent-relative goods and
hence are related to his history and circumstances in ways that agent-transcending goods are not. So rather than invent practical considerations for the fourth quadrant or the sake of abstract utopias, I leave it empty. By contrast, existentially subjectivist accounts can accommodate only some of the considerations included in the top-right quadrant.

Although many grounds for different types of care are accessible to reflection in human beings with the necessary experience or knowledge by acquaintance, this existential subjectivist account certainly does not claim that all the grounds on which our actual care or ground projects are based are known to each of us or even that with sufficient introspection, they can all be known. Sometimes the status and content of our care and ground projects themselves are misunderstood by us, and sometimes we are (to an extent) self-deceived about them. The grounds or considerations to which we respond in projecting some end may also not be ones that really justify pursuit of this end (as is always the case with radically evil projects but also with some morally neutral or good projects too). The objective grounds for caring included in my list are reasons that agents do consider in projecting final ends and can serve as sufficient bases for their care or commitments; but agents are sometimes wrong in this regard. My claim is only that each item on my list can sometimes serve as part of an adequate ground for serving a particular end.

A theory of authenticity is, in part, a systematic normative treatment of these items. Even when we do understand what our purposes are, and they were formed on the basis of adequate reasons, these reasons may not be entirely known to us. This does not entail that the volitional commitment involved in these purposes is inauthentic. Indeed, the opposite view is advanced in the Existentialist and Marxist traditions. As Henry Bergson writes in his mid-century classic:

'It is the essence of authentic commitment that it be grounded behind the intellectual eye and not merely in a demonstrable basis which we can get before us. The situation is thus less simple here: we cannot gain consensus of what grounds our action; there can only be an unconditional basis of action in so far as we are at "ins" disposal and not our own.'

'It is for this kind of reason that category I.4 is included in my list; it is justly true that some "callings" are categorized as religious because their grounds are mysterious and not fully knowable to their agent. But Bergson and Marx do not recognize their themes to religious callings, and Levinas would extend it to moral motivation, which he thinks is a response to a value that transcends human cognition (the infinity of the other). Even if we do not agree that all authentic commitment must be formed on the basis of a "calling" whose ultimate source is hidden from us, it is an interesting question whether some of the most passionate and intense types of human caring or ground projects are generally grounded in this way. Here I will say only that the main elements of existential subjectivism as sketched in this chapter do not decide this issue one way or another. Answers to these questions are further refinements or additions to the basic ECO framework, which is flexible enough to include a range of views that recognize the aliveness of values grounding the self-motivational activity that is human "willings" in its most primordial sense.

Nor in my submission of grounds for volitional projection into aesthetic, ethical, moral, and personal reasons meant to be exhaustive; aside from tradition and culture, more social convention and popular opinion are also sometimes taken as grounds for projective motivation. But this is usually a mistaken judgment or perception of normative worth. Aside from the personal grounds mentioned in the list, factors such as religious backgrounds, revelations, disturbing events, and many other distinctive experiences not catalogued here, can become the basis for the resolve in which a person steels himself projectively to new ends. My list is also limited to positive grounds that can in this right circumstances solidly support the agent's volitional response to them through care or personal devotions. It does not include those negative grounds that I survey in chapter 10 as reasons-in-view for projecting radically evil ends or any other reasons that it is always erroneous to take as grounds for caring. (Many of the considerations in my list could be taken as reasons to form projects that would be morally wrong in certain circumstances, but they are distinct from courage grounds that the will can only take as reasons for forming evil or destructive projects.)

This existential taxonomy of values worth caring about embraces but transcends the insights of the existensivist tradition and Frankfurt's alternativa. It gives proper place to agent-relative-process-focused considerations such as existential coherence and mutually reinforcing relationships among an agent's projects, for example, between friendship and other activities. Concern for process-focused reasons referring to the goods of effectiveness and practical coherence in one's own life is not egocentric, because these goods are required for volitional stability or sustainable devotion to any worthy while first-order goals. Too much cognitive dissonance or conflict among goals undermines commitment to any of our goals. Likewise, as the psychological study of intrinsic motivation has shown, confidence in a minimum level of control over one's environment and conditions of life is a precondition for strong volitional devotion to anything. Feeling that one is utterly at the mercy of forces beyond one's control is a strong predictor of
depression and general demotivation.114 A heroic agent may be able to pursue good ends even with little prospect of success, but only if she retains confidence in a minimum efficacious of her agency in the world. My existential account denies that adjusting one's ends in light of such considerations is rooted only in desire for eudaimonia. For such process-focused considerations do not by themselves generally provide sufficient reason for willing a first-order end; their relevance piggybacks on the presence of product-focused reasons for focusing or continuing various first-order projects. For example, a significant opportunity for success in a career as an engineer becomes relevant to me only if the goods produced by excellent engineering are already worth willing in themselves.

My tentative summary of the main positive reasons for projective willing is also "pluralist" in the sense defended by both Jeffrey Blustein and John Kekes. As chapter 7 made clear, unlike A-eudaimonists, my existential objectivism does not claim that every worthwhile good can be balanced in a unified narrative structure within a single life. Hence I agree with Blustein that "no particular configuration or nothing of... basic human goods follows from the claim that living a life that combines these goods in a coherent, harmonious structure is intrinsically good." There are many different ways of balancing goods worth caring about.115 Similarly, Kekes writes that "Living a good life requires the achievement of a coherent ordering of plural and [often] conflicting values, but coherent orderings are themselves plural and conflicting."116

The incommensurability of many nonmoral values and the fact that only limited combinations of them in different priority orderings are practically conceivable fits with several features of E0: (1) It helps explain the existence of rational optionality in judgments concerning what is worth caring about. It also explains the reality of what we might call soft dilemmas, in which we are forced to choose between things we care about equally or without relative priority up until now. (2) It fits with the fact that moral reasoning about fairness/justice is not the only source of insight into values worth caring about. (3) It also supports the idea that although reasonable life plans are not instantiations of a single recipe, there are objective limits: "not all possibilities are reasonable."117 In particular, there are "primary values" that determine what count as harms and benefits for all normal human persons, which are culturally invariant.118 In my opinion, we should also sort the "conditionality" of nonmoral values by giving overriding significance to strictly moral values (deontic requirements), but a defense of this claim goes beyond the scope of my present analysis.119

Conclusion
This chapter shows that the existential conceptions of striving will fit well with moderate objectivist approaches to the problem of practical normativity within contemporary analytic philosophy. It provides a theoretical basis for broadening our view of basic goods beyond those recognized by neo-Aristotelian natural-law theory and thus shows how to fill the lacuna in Kantian moral psychology without reverting to eudaimonism. Thus it is possible to develop an essentially powerful non-eudaimonist conception of willing without the dangers of irrationalism, subjectivism, and empty formalism. The resulting existential conceptions of personhood provides a better basis for a substantive ethic of the good life that can live within a broader deontological framework for moral norms.
77. Ibid., 542.
78. Ibid., 544. For this point, Anderson cites Schiffer, "Agent-Centered Restrictions, Rationality, and the Virtues."
79. Ibid., 544.
80. Ibid., 543. This principle was suggested by Nicholas Sturgeon as an alternative formulation of Anderson's own Kantian principle of respect for persons.
81. Ibid., 545.
82. Bluestein, Care and Commitment, 55.
83. Compare this to Kripke's account in "Inion and Troubled," which has to give up proving his princess even though he remains infinitely devoted to her. See any devotion of infinite renunciation in "Faith as Eschatological Trust in Inn and Troubled."
84. Frankfurt, The Reasons and Law, 59. This interpretation helps align Frankfurt's view of the conditions reached in ch. 12, sec. 6: the agent-related by-product benefit must not initially motivate the kind of care or love that can generate these benefits. As a result, at least up to some point, caring devotion can continue and be expressed in ways that do not happen to generate these benefits to the agent.
85. Bluestein, Care and Commitment, 27.
86. Ibid., 28.
87. Ibid.
88. Ibid., 30.
89. Ibid., 31.
90. Ibid. The problem here is that terminology is "disinterested" care can suggest aloofness or emotional detachment, but the kind of caring Bluestein has in mind can be emotionally focused in its concern for the target and is also comparable with caring for the target and other types of emotional bond with the target.
91. Ibid., 38.
92. Ibid., 39. But the example that Bluestein gives here is a self-interested caring about becoming slim.
93. Ibid., 46.
94. Ibid., 46-47.
95. If what is usually a hobby—e.g., building Lego models or collecting rare coins—becomes a deep commitment central to one's life-narrative, or even a ground project, then it is no longer properly called a hobby. One now builds Lego structures as fine art or makes a profession of coin collecting, etc.
96. Ibid., 49-50.
98. Ibid., 70.
99. Ibid., 71.
100. As Bluestein recognizes on 77.
101. For example, as her "Two Distinctions in Goodness," Kripke limits "intrinsic" value to values that something has in all possible circumstances (170) and holds that some "extrinsic" or context-dependent value is final or valued as "end." (172). I have been concerned primarily with the difference between final and instrumental value but without concerning all final value as tangible or as a potential "end" of intention.
102. Bluestein, Care and Commitment, 94.
103. Ibid., 98.
104. See also ibid., 88.
105. See ibid., 96.
106. See ibid., 102-3.
107. Ibid., 103.

1. Ordinarily, the cognitive and projective sides may form a whole experience and seem inseparable, although they can be distinguished in philosophical abstraction.
2. There is much discussion of list theories these days. For example, see Derek Parfit, Reasons and Persons, & Shelly Kagan, "Limits of Well-Being." (170, Nicholas Rescher, Objectivity, chap. 11.)
4. Of course, in his famous essay on "Existentialism and Humanism," Sartre ends up in what is really an unattainable position intermediate between objectivism and subpersonalism. Like Kant, he affirms that we make some kind of universal validity claim in choosing any value as a base for our decision; but he denies that such an evaluative validity claim has any objective truth-makers. It is no wonder, then, that this essay confuses the brightest undergraduates.
5. Bluestein, Care and Commitment, 33.
6. Ibid., 40-41.
7. Ibid., 40.
8. Ibid., 24.
9. Ibid., 64-65.
10. See Williams, Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy, chap. 10.
14. As a brief sample of such works, consider John Dozar's, "Moral Encounter," and "Moral Objectivity, Hunter's Sentiments of the Understanding."
15. Skippens, Chessman, 117.
16. Frankfurt, "The Importance of What We Care About," 91.
17. Frankfurt, "Comments on Machyren," 321. Note that this response was published in the same volume as Frankfurt's essays, "The Importance of What We Care About," and serves as a kind of addendum to that essay.
18. Frankfurt still appears to accept that a person’s character can fairly be judged on the basis of what they care about. For he says in *The Reasons of Love* that “What a person loves, or what he does not love, may be counted to his credit. Or it may discredit him if it may be taken to show that he has a bad moral character” (67). Other non-moral forms of praise and blame may similarly apply (as Thomas Hill argues; see chap. 11). Yet Frankfurt seems to think that this is compatible with holding that “love need not be grounded in any judgment or perception concerning the value of its object” (67). There is a prior justification here.

20. I have addressed historical conditioning of our duties in four unpublished talks on agent, “Time and Responsibility.”
22. Ibid., 93.
24. Ibid., 186.
26. Ibid., 93.
27. Ibid., 34.
28. Ibid., 35.
32. I. Anderson rightly notes, against Flanagan, that Taylor recognizes some broadly aesthetic or non-moral evaluative judgments as strongly evaluative (ibid., 95). Yet strong evaluation is fundamentally anticompetent, since it involves concretes between items that are entirely higher or lower and hence not subject to balancing against one another or to trade-off. In that sense, a broadly ethical affirmation or qualification of values that cannot be treated in consequentialist fashion is built into the idea of strong evaluation, which is therefore clearly tied to what I call atonic commitment.
34. Ibid., 23.
35. I.e., an evasion of the case of sport practices, in which the end is conventional, but its pursuit is challenging in beneficial ways, affording opportunities for the development of excellences.
36. From the song “Climb Every Mountain” by Rodgers and Hammerstein, in *The Sound of Music*, directed by Robert Wise (Twentieth Century Fox, 1965). Of course, in using this example I do not mean to endorse the sexism in this movie.
37. As Taylor says, one criterion for the worth of my life concerns “what kind of life would fulfill the promise implicit in my particular talents, or the demands incumbent on someone with my endowment” (ibid., 20). The criticism that someone has “wanted” his talents or “random” his calling is usually made in the illusory manner of a validity claim about relevant grounds for caring. See the further discussion of “personal life” in sec. 4.3.
39. Ibid., 14.
40. Emphasis added. As fate would have it, I wrote this example on October 11, 2004, before learning that Reeve had died that very day.
41. Frankfurt, *The Importance of What We Care About*, 92.
42. Blassing, *Care and Commitment*, 43.
43. Ibid., we “derives personal value from the immanent purpose.” This is also the view that Blasing finds in Loren Lomasky’s work (45).
44. Frankfurt, *The Importance of What We Care About*, 91.
45. Ibid., 93.
46. Note that this dissociative pair of diagnoses looks to mind for a case such as the person obsessed with not stepping on cracks in the pavement. He is either in the grip of some delusion about the effects or symbolic importance of stepping on a crack or recognizes the unimportance of his goal yet finds himself unable to break the habit.
47. Blasing, *Care and Commitment*, 47; citing Lomasky, 241.
48. Ibid., 47.
49. Ibid., 61. One explanation for this may be that the agent’s doubts about his judgments or commitments to values worth caring about undermine his trust in any apparent reasons to project new ends. Precisely because concern over objective grounds for caring is necessary for relational commitment, self- doubting and value-deprecation sap the will’s strength.
50. Frankfurt, *The Importance of What We Care About*, 91.
51. See my *The Meaning of Kirkegaard’s Choice*.
52. Frankfurt, *The Importance of What We Care About*, 92–93.
53. Ibid., 93.
54. In his latest book, *The Reasons of Love*, Frankfurt seems to drop the caveat from this claim and assert the stronger thesis that for all genuine cares, the only valid justification is ultimately this process-focused agent-relative existential value of caring itself (23–28).
56. Frankfurt, *Autonomy, Necessity, and Love*, 438. This passage is immediately followed by the analysis of active love as a pure ulterior motive, including even enjoyment of activities involved in living (see chap. 13, sec. 2.4).
57. Frankfurt, *The Importance of What We Care About*, 94, see n. 4. If anyone imagines that this reference to meaningless divine creativity was meant light-heartedly, they should consult Frankfurt’s essay “On God’s Creation.” In the innovative reading of Gosse, Frankfurt argues that in His original speech-acts, God...
fonna herself by first defining his own vocation without any prior reason for acting in order to rise in chains [16].

59. Ibid., 38.
61. Blumen, Care and Commitment, 44.
62. Ibid., 63.
63. Wolf, "The True, the Good, and the Lovable," 229.
64. Ibid.
65. Ibid., 230. This rejection is obviously linked to Wolf's well-known critique of "moral sainthood" (which unfortunately confuses sainthood as involving moral monstrosity and indefiniteness).
66. Ibid., 231. Indeed, everyone is familiar with parents who make the error, often with disastrous results.
68. Ibid., 43. He actually refers here to the love of infants and small children whose personal qualities cannot yet be a very significant criterion.
69. Mackay, "Depression and Anxiety," 90–91 (emphasis added).
70. Wolf, "The True, the Good, and the Lovable," 231.
71. Thus Wolf's version is more reasonable than Madonna's more assertive conception of self-respect: "Don't go for second-best, baby, put yourself to the test!" from the song "Express Yourself" by Madonna and Stephen Bray, on the album Like a Prayer (Warner Records, 1989).
72. Wolf, "The True, the Good, and the Lovable," 232. This is not to be equated with Nietzsche's claim that what makes something worthy of care is the potential for caring about it to give us distaste, grimness in comparison with peers, or ascendance over the pastoral miracles of the world. There are perhaps con-

cepts in which distinctiveness can be a valid ground for forming some project, but that cannot be generalized. Nietzsche's conception of the proper grounds for caring replaces ethics with the imperatives of the aesthetic avant-garde, which limit the will to a complex kind of egotism, reducing projects to mere дано.
73. Ibid. This way of construing Augustine's doctrine of 20s among saints is from being read as requiring strict proportionality between the value of final ends and the care we devote to them.
74. Ibid., 233.
75. Israel and Hersch, directed by Gadzert Chudza (Twentieth Century Fox, 2002).
76. Frankfurt, The Reason of Love, 12. The same point is made in each of Frankfurt's three essays on caring.
79. Frankfurt, "The Importance of What We Care About," 90.
82. Frankfurt, The Reason of Love, 13, my emphasis.

83. Blumen, Care and Commitment, 51.
84. Terry Umber, "They Don't Know," on the album You Broke My Heart in Seven Pieces (Staff Records, 1983).
85. I recognize that personal appropriation of some values by the will, taking them as initial grounds for projective motivation, often results in clearer or more nuanced understanding of their values themselves (this effect is especially clear when viewing particular persons results in "getting to know them" better). In other words, although an evaluative attitude of some kind proceeds and grounds every project, cognitive changes follow from the projective motivation. On this idea, see my essay, "Towards an Existential Virtue Ethics," 304–9. What I say there about moral decisionality I would now say about sensitivity to all the values that can racion-

ally ground volitional caring of all kinds.
86. Unless the question is one of just but that is a different question from love.
88. Nuddings, Caring, 5.
89. Ibid., 25.
90. Ibid., 18.
92. Ibid., 63.
93. Ibid., 44.
94. Blumen believes it is impossible to care universally about all persons, but he also contrasts aptly with existentialist accounts of ethics are not concerned with others in particular and unique persons" (Care and Commitment, 37). By con-

traet, I think that even apathy regarding others is distinguished from universal indifference precisely by taking the unattainability that makes essentially practical care possible as the ultimate ground for loving persons as their individuality as persons. 95. Herman, "Bootstrapping," 261.
96. Ibid., 257.
97. Ibid., 236.
100. Ibid., 8.
101. Ibid., 16.
102. Ibid., 17, n. 5.
103. Ibid., 18.
104. Ibid., 19.
105. Ibid., 20–21. Clearly, here Raus regards "attachment" as actively generated by the agent. He also distinguishes "caring" from endowment, as the existential approach requires, for: There is value in indeterminacy and disappointment. They have value because they too can be meaningful elements of one's life" (15). This insight is overlooked by Frankfurt when he argues that we have to be careful never to be frustrated by our care.
106. Ibid., 20.
107. A striking parallel is found in Blumen, who also affirms both these components as necessary for existential meaning:
"The values that govern our lives can endue our lives with meaning only if they are personal ones. Impersonal value alone cannot give my life meaning. . . . On the other hand, if something has value for me it does not possess beyond itself to self-transcendence value, if something that I care about is not believed by me to warrant my care because it has genuine worth and importance, then it cannot give meaning to my life. (Core and Concern, 48)"

108. In Saeg Prager Ryan, for example, Pruitar Ryan is partially individuated as an appropriate object of special attention for Chief of Staff George Marshall because he bears some risk of already at the Civil War. Though logically this scenario could be repeated, it was (what Ratz calls) "de facto" unique. It is also among General Marshall's grounds for devoting extraordinary effort and cost to saving Ryan that President Lincoln recorded such profound grief and collective indebtedness of all future Americans to the father of five brothers, all of whom were killed serving the Union army in the Civil War. Marshall's projection of the goal that "James Ryan be saved" is partially due to concerning that goal as including the historically unattainable specification, "so that what happened to this man during the Civil War shall not be repeated." And that in turn reflects his own sense of indebtedness, on behalf of all Americans, to that particular mother who "paid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom." Thus collective indebtedness can also single out our ends as uniquely significant as history unaffected, and one strand of the web of responsibility is woven to others in ways that we could never completely succeed.

110. Ibid., 23.
111. Ibid., 20.
112. I also make reference to this dynamic, for example, in explaining how certain types of radically evil will can be seen by others as grounded in agent-relative reasons (see chap. 10, sec. 2.2).
113. Ibid., 24.
114. Ibid., 26.
115. Ibid., 33.
118. Most of the rest of Ratz's analysis in Value, Respect, and Attitudes focuses on how to understand the universality of values that is a key source of their intelligibility, the social dependence of many values, and the status of moral values demanding respect for persons.
119. In her recent Presidential Address to the Central Division of the APA (March 2000), Elizabeth Straw offered a thematic solution to this problem that involves two conditions for love (1) desiring the good of the other, which does not depend on its ultimate or relational properties; and (2) desiring some kind of unity with the other, which is sensitive to its intrinsic and relational properties.

Although this is an interesting way of trying to avoid both extremes, the problem is that condition 2 presupposes a reductionistic conception of motivation, whereas condition 1 requires a broader conception of motivation. The existential model of willing will thus provide a more adequate basis for analyzing different forms of love, including not only agape (as I argue in chap. 9) but also romantic love, in which a kind of emotional union is intended. However, an existential account of romantic love must await a full existential theory of emotions that builds on the conception of willing will developed in this book.

120. J. Anderson, "Personal Lives of Strong Evaluators," 10. As Anderson notes, the problem with Taylor's account lies in his tight link "between ordering a good and being someone who is (33). His paradigm model of motivation leaves no room for projective motivations to take general value grounds and particularize them in personal projects.
121. Ratz's model also comes closest to what Anderson calls a "realist approach based on properties of situations," which can include individuating histories of agents and their self-interpretations (ibid., 34).
123. Ibid., 236.
124. See Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil, 42–43.
125. See Frankfurt, On/Beyond.
127. Ibid., 26.
128. Ibid.
130. Ibid.
131. Frankfurt, "The Importance of What We Care About," 93 (emphasis added).
132. Nietzsche, "Philosophical Explanations," 395. Nietzsche may have learned this from Woltz Frank (see 379–380).
135. See O'Meara's critique of the demand for uniquely rational options in Persons and Causes, 89–93.
136. Frankfurt, Reason as Love, 40, n. 4.
137. Ibid., 25.
138. Leopold, a Small County Apprentice and Strokes Here and Then, "Wisconsin," 96.
139. For this reason, I am not convinced by Frankfurt's argument that because of our young love for our children is not based on rational arguments, it must not be grounded in objective values (Reason of Love, 29). The intrinsic value of the child, his or her potential, and his or her historical relations to us are all good reasons for our love, although these values are not first revealed to us by reasoning.
about the implicit commitments of agency: the existential objectivist position is not a kind of Kantian rationalism extended to nonmental values. In addition to the rationalistic, subjectivist, and rational, a fourth approach inspired by Augustine is offered by Eleanor Strawson in her recent Presidential Address to the Central Division meeting of the APS (Chicago, April 2000).

140. Frankfurt, Reason and Law, 26.

141. Of course, volitional devotions to such an end makes an art form of it, which is something quite distinct from ordinary appetites for various fine-tuned pleasures (sexual, entertaining, etc.).

142. The qualifier "almost" is important here, given my suspicion of volitional necessity.

143. Wolf, "The True, the Good, and the Lovable," 236.

144. I believe this also to be an implication of Haidt's analysis of Darwin in Just and Fair.


146. See Adams, Front and Subject Goods, esp. chaps. 3-7; Audi, The Good in the Right Daseyn, Practical Reality, Kupfermann, Values ... and What Follows, Gewirth, Self-Fulfillment, Gerechts, The History of Value von Wright, The Ventura of Conscience, Harman and Thompson, Moral Relativism and Moral Objectivity, Luceo. Similar value terms from Social Philosophy and Policy reasserted in Paul, Miller, and Paul, The Good Life and the Human Good, Ryan, Will, Imaginaries, and Lauron, Rochon, Humanism, esp. chaps. 13, 14, and 16; Scarlach, What We Owe to Each Other; Tiberius, Dilemmata about the Good, esp. chap. 7. Of course expressive universalism theories still abound in contemporary metaethics, especially concerning moral norms; see, e.g., Blackburn, "Supererogation Revisited," Brandt, Fert, Values, and Morality Gibbard, Wise Choices, Apropos, and Nolt. "Nonrelativism about Normative Discourse." However, many authors now argue that emotions themselves involve a kind of anec-

ological evaluation of objects in the world in terms of whether they can be judged adequate or not; see, e.g., De Sosa, The Rationality of Aristotle, chap. 12 (although de Sosa eventually denies the contrast between subjective appropriation and objective apprehension of values, 319). Partially cognitive conceptions of emotion fit well with the Aristotelian idea that emotional tendencies are often more effective reflexes than value-judgmental dispositions.

147. Libertine, Commons, Values, and Moral Realism, 1-2.


149. I emphasize that my list includes most of the goods one finds in recent natural-law theories, such as the list of goods basic to well-being in Murphy, Natural Law and Political Naturalism, but my list includes goods that range outside human well-being altogether, such as environmental goods and abstract values. In that respect, any list is more like the ones found in the "phenomenological realist" school of Dietrich von Hildebrand.

150. Since I have said little about this kind of reason until now, an example is in order. In All Creatures Great and Small, James Herriot does not start out with the intention of working as a vet in Yorkshire, but he enters a lucky opportunity and becomes even more deeply engaged in Farmer's lovely prairie, the troubles and joys of the Yorkshire Fells, and the beauty of this land. This whole gamut of values worth caring about is crystallized or held together for this one individual by the initial prospect or opportunity, which is a historically unique prospective constitution.

151. I include this kind of individual ground to accommodate Frankfurt's idea of volitional necessities, although I do not endorse this idea.

152. Buggey, The Insider Melting, October 8 entry, 69.


154. See Footing, A Theory of Care and Distinction.

155. See Seligman and Abramson, "Learned Helplessness in Humans"; and Peterson and Seligman, "Causal Explorations and Depression.

156. Blumen, Care and Conscience, 25.

157. Kokos, The Morality of Species, 11; see also Krote, Moral Wisdom and Good Life.

158. Ibid., 14.

159. Ibid., 15.

160. Ibid., 19.

161. See Frankfurt's responses to Bernard Williams's contention that personal projects can trump impartial moral requirements: The Ventana of Moral Personality, chaps. 3 and 4.

Conclusion: The Danger of Willfulness Revisited

1. Here I want to acknowledge serious questions recently raised by John Updi-

port about what the notion of narrative unity can do in an existential account of virtue and whether it might not overemphasize planning relative to surprise or openness to being changed through encounters and unanticipatable events. See Updike's review of Kierkegaard after Nietzsche on Faith and Philosophy and his essay on this topic forthcoming in Jepson.


3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., 363. This is why, in his debate with an adversary here on immortality, Captain Piddock says that "our mortality defines us." See Tarr and Gwinn, directed by David Carson, written by R.J. Bennett (Paramount Pictures, 1994).

5. Ibid., 364. Unfortunately, though, Schlaw seems to refer to this from that we should move beyond the idea of "a will" as "the constellation of [freedom's] power" (ibid., 366). I hope to have shown instead that the idea of willing itself need not be rejected to overcome the dangers of pure voluntarism.


8. Ibid., 12.


11. Ibid., 14-15.