

THE VIRTUES OF CONTEMPORARY EMOTIVISM*

The core of Alasdair MacIntyre's *After Virtue* is an attack on emotivism: "... it is indeed in terms of a confrontation with emotivism that my own thesis must be defined" (p. 21). But at best MacIntyre's arguments apply only to an early emotivist strawman, for MacIntyre ignores the sturdier version that developed in later logical positivism. That neglected later emotivism develops key emotivist points into a more comprehensive and powerful system: a mature emotivist theory that passes unscathed through the MacIntyre gauntlet. This essay will describe that stronger contemporary emotivism and defend it against MacIntyre's critique.

In the early logical positivist fervor of *Language, Truth and Logic* – when metaphysics was being razed and a scientific philosophy was dawning – Ayer was somewhat intemperate in formulating emotivism.¹ No one denies it. Ayer later states that:

To say, as I once did, that these moral judgements are merely expressive of certain feelings, feelings of approval or disapproval, is an oversimplification.²

Despite Ayer's recognition of the inadequacy of his earlier view of moral judgments (as mere expressions of feeling), he continues to be chary of granting propositional status to pure value statements.³ But a way is open to retain Ayer's major points (conflicts at the level of purely normative statements are not subject to rational resolution and one cannot meaningfully ask which of such conflicting views is true) without denying that basic value statements are propositions and can thus have logical implications and be consistent or inconsistent with other value statements (as Ayer now insists such statements can do). This can be accomplished by treating such purely normative statements as value postulates which form the superstructure of moral frameworks. Ayer suggests something very similar when discussing the status of the logical positivists' principle of verification. In interviewing Ayer, Bryan Magee notes that that principle requires:

... that every true statement must be either a tautology or a deduction from an

observation. As people were very quick to point out, the principle of verification is itself neither of these things. What was its status? (Magee 1971, p. 57)

Ayer replies that:

... When this question was put to me, I said it was a stipulative definition. And of course if it is a stipulative definition, it's always open to someone not to accept the stipulation. (Magee 1971, p. 57)

This may or may not be an adequate way of treating the principle of verification, but it has promise as a characterization of purely normative statements: they are treated as stipulative postulates. They are then accorded meaning and logical implications but are still treated as beyond rational confirmation since "it's always open to someone not to accept the stipulation". There is no rational way of deciding on competing stipulations, so they are neither true nor false and the process by which they are chosen remains noncognitive.

This modified account preserves Ayer's most important claims concerning purely normative statements, and it matches the version of emotivism favored by Rudolf Carnap. In his 'Replies and Expositions' Carnap develops a version of noncognitivism to take the place of an earlier version⁴ which he now regards as "obsolete and unsatisfactory".⁵ In Carnap's revision he maintains that the correct analysis (or "rational reconstruction") of value judgments reveals "a pure value statement" which "does not contain any factual component" (Carnap 1963, p. 1011) but can have logical implications. So according to Carnap's later emotivism there are pure value statements that can serve as premises in logical deductions, with particular value statements as conclusions; and the pure value statements are noncognitive: they cannot be established by any logical or empirical procedure, and disagreement on such statements may endure when all questions of empirical fact and logical procedure are settled.⁶

The strength of contemporary emotivism lies in its clarification of the relation between such basic value postulates and ordinary evaluative judgments. And Herbert Feigl's work provides much of that clarification. Feigl distinguishes two types of justification – validation and vindication – which involve basic principles in distinct ways. Validation:

consists in the disclosure (exhibition, demonstration) of a conformity of that which is to be justified (the *justificandum*) with a certain principle or set of principles which do the justifying (the *justificans*) Justification as here understood [validation] thus invariably

involves at least an implicit appeal to some standards or norms which serve, in the given context, as principles of justification. (Feigl 1950, p. 115).

But justifying those standards or norms requires a very different type of justification, of a pragmatic nature: *vindications* which consist in showing that the proposed standards will promote certain goals or interests. For example, Feigl argues that the logical positivists' "weaker verifiability criterion" should be regarded (as Ayer now regards it) as a *proposal* of a criterion for what will be counted as meaningful; and its justification (vindication):

... must then consist in showing that its adoption will produce the sort of clarity that we seek. ... In other words, if we do not wish to open the floodgates to countless questions which by their very construction are in principle unanswerable, then the adoption of the confirmability criterion is indispensable. (Feigl 1950, p. 134)

But this is not a validation of the criterion. Instead it is a proposal that – given his wishes and interests and values – Feigl favors. Other wishes may yield other proposals.

Further questions can be raised. We can ask whether the exclusion of unanswerable questions should be one of our values, and at that point the values employed in the above vindication may be subjected to an ethical validation, using presupposed basic ethical principles. But those ethical principles may in turn be subjected to question, and vindication may be required for them also. And it is that final type of vindication with which we are primarily concerned. When validation processes are exhausted and ethical disagreement remains, then:

Obviously we have reached the limits of validation. Just as in the other domains of justification, we may disclose the ultimate presuppositions; we may explicate the principles of validation of moral judgments. (Feigl 1950, p. 135)

But this may not settle the issue, for there may be basic differences in value interests and purposes. As Feigl draws the contrast with other areas of vindication:

The vindication of the principles of meaning and knowledge is so trivial precisely because, given the purpose of language and knowledge, there are no genuine alternatives for fulfilling them. But we do know of alternative systems of moral norms. An aristocratic ethics such as Nietzsche's and a democratic one such as Jefferson's are clearly incompatible with each other. (Feigl 1950, p. 135)

And when such fundamental differences occur, the resources of

rational argument are exhausted:

... there are limits beyond which rational (i.e., logical and/or factual) argument cannot be extended. Intelligent reflection concerning means and ends, conditions and consequences operates within the frame of basic evaluations. Beyond those limits there could be only conversion by persuasion (rhetoric, propaganda, suggestions, promises, threats, re-education, psycho-therapy, etc.). (Feigl 1952, p. 669)

The basic distinction is one between justifications within a presupposed framework, in which there is concurrence on basic principles and on the general methods of weighing evidence, deriving implications, etc.; and the quite different process of selecting frameworks, standards, criteria. The latter (vindication) is (at least at the basic value level) a process of nonrational persuasion, of the proposal of postulates, of decisions and preferences and interests which are neither true nor false and which are not subject to proof or disproof. The former (validation) is a process of rational debate and empirical research, involving factual claims that may be confirmed or falsified (within the given framework).⁷

Thus in Carnap-Feigl emotivism the validation of value claims is neither esoteric nor impossible. In fact, validation is often merely grading of the sort that Urmson (1950) describes. And such grading (validation) claims will be factual, and will be made in terms of accepted evaluative categories. But there will remain a quite different use of evaluative terms – at the final vindication level – in which basic evaluative standards are at issue, and at that level pure value statements are not subject to either verification or falsification. At the basic value-vindication level evaluative terms play a double part. One is asserting value principles (which will form a framework for argument at the validation level). The other is emotive: to persuade, influence, condition a favorable disposition toward the proposed value postulates.

Emotivism's key claims – that at the level of pure value disputes there is no fact of the matter and no rational debate and evaluative terms function persuasively – are preserved, and a cognitive use of evaluative terms (in validation) is acknowledged. Furthermore, the distinction between noncognitive vindication and cognitive validation opens up a clearer view of how and why evaluative language functions.

At the *vindication* level evaluative words state (propose) basic value principles, and they emotively promote those principles. And in the *validation* usage the emotive force is generated. As an example of the validation-level development of emotive meaning, consider use of the

word "good". Its most common use is in ordinary grading processes (at Feigl's validation level). The usage will occur early and often, as the child is exposed to a variety of value orderings: foods, behaviors, bedtime stories. The learning of "good" is complex but it is not a unique or even unusual procedure. An analogous set of stimulus discriminations and generalizations must be learned when the child masters such words as "useful" and nonevaluative terms like "large" and "heavy".

But an additional element is inevitably learned: what Osgood calls the affective meaning (Osgood *et al.*, 1957, 1975) (or at least one part of the affective meaning) and Stevenson (1937, 1949) calls the emotive meaning. As Arthur Staats describes the process:

... it is important to indicate that language stimuli occur contiguously with emotion-causing stimuli in our learning experiences, and this gives certain important properties to language. That is, in our language-learning experience, certain words are systematically paired with particular emotional stimuli. Even on the basis of naturalistic circumstances we can see that words like *joy, happy, play, dinner, pretty, sweet, good* and the like are systematically paired with certain types of "emotional" stimuli. (Staats 1968, p. 13)

This classical conditioning account of emotive word meaning is the perfect complement to the grading-validation use of "good". If something is called "good" by virtue of its high grading then it will usually have those features which human beings (or at least a certain group) find desirable. "Good" will be used of (and paired with) favored foods, toys, paintings, pole vaults, poems. Thus "good" will (through association with a multitude of primary and secondary reinforcers) become itself a conditioned positive reinforcer.⁸

Since the grading (validation) usage generates positive emotive meaning through classical conditioning, it is clear why the key evaluative words in grading processes are important at the level of persuasion (vindication). When rational argument (validation) is exhausted and disagreement remains then questions of basic values arise and the persuasion process comes to the fore. And the most persuasive language instruments will be those with the greatest emotive force: such words as "good", which in grading-validation processes have been associated with pleasing objects and experiences and have thus become strong secondary reinforcers.

So emotive force inevitably attaches to evaluative terms in validation (grading) uses, and in contemporary emotivism the functions of evaluative language at the two levels (vindication/validation) are distinct

though importantly linked. With these points established, the antiemotivist arguments of MacIntyre can be answered.

After Virtue might almost be considered an extended polemic against emotivism. Certainly MacIntyre regards emotivism as his adversary and as the nadir of degenerate post-Aristotelian ethics:

... it is indeed in terms of a confrontation with emotivism that my own thesis must be defined. ... Emotivism has become embodied in our culture. ... What once was morality has to some large degree disappeared – and ... this marks a degeneration, a grave cultural loss. (MacIntyre 1981, p. 21)

MacIntyre marshals several distinct arguments for his attack on emotivism, and the remainder of this essay will be devoted to answering those arguments. Just as MacIntyre defines his view “in terms of a confrontation with emotivism”, so the characteristics and strengths of contemporary emotivism may be clarified in answering MacIntyre’s critique.

The first three arguments in MacIntyre’s antiemotivist battery form a natural grouping. MacIntyre states that:

Emotivism has been presented by its most sophisticated protagonists hitherto as a theory about the meaning of the sentences which are used to make moral judgments. ... But as a theory of the meaning of a certain type of sentence emotivism plainly fails for at least three reasons. (1981, p. 12)

Taking each of those reasons in turn:

The first is that, if the theory is to elucidate the meaning of a certain class of sentences by referring to their function, when uttered, of expressing feelings or attitudes, an essential part of the theory will have to consist in an identification and characterisation of the feelings or attitudes in question. (p. 12)

But contemporary emotivism claims merely that in the vindication context evaluative words are used for their conditioned (in validation settings) emotive force. Thus (to the extent that the words are used persuasively) the terms are simply secondary positive reinforcers. When the evaluative terms are considered as stating value postulates or in standard validation (grading) uses, they are not necessarily emotive at all. No specification of feelings is required at either level.

Consider MacIntyre’s second criticism:

... emotivism, as a theory of the meaning of a certain type of sentence, is engaged in an impossible task from the beginning, because it is dedicated to characterising as equivalent in meaning two kinds of expression which ... derive their distinctive function in our language in key part from the contrast and difference between them. (p. 13)

MacIntyre notes that the most common use of evaluative terms is not in persuasive appeals, but rather in impersonal and rational arguments. In contrast, persuasive appeals depend on status, affection, respect, special relations. But that difference is emphasized, rather than neglected, by contemporary emotivism. At the persuasive (vindication) level, persuasive success turns not only on the conditioned emotive force of evaluative words, but also on the many other factors that may enhance emotional persuasiveness. In contrast, when value claims are made at the validation level (in a framework of acknowledged basic values, or – in MacIntyre’s terms – within the rules of a given practice) such emotive appeals are clearly out of place, and impersonal rational argument is required. There are, as MacIntyre notes, “good reasons for distinguishing” the two uses; but when that is done, it is clear that evaluative terms perform important functions at *both* the impersonal validation level and at the personal-persuasive-vindication level, and it is also clear that contemporary emotivism recognizes both levels.

MacIntyre’s third argument fares no better.

The emotive theory . . . purports to be a theory about the meaning of sentences; but the expression of feeling or attitude is characteristically a function not of the meaning of sentences, but of their use on particular occasions. (1981, p. 13)

But according to Carnap-Feigl emotivism sentences employing evaluative terms at the vindication level do not merely express emotions; instead they serve a dual function: they state basic value postulates, and they emotively promote those postulates. Certainly at that level the use and function of the evaluative terms (and the sentences in which they occur) is quite different from their use and function at the validation level; but – in perfect accord with MacIntyre – that is not because of a meaning difference. “Equality is good” means the same whether it is being used (vindication level) to promote the acceptance of a controversial postulate for social ethics, or is being stated as an obvious premise in a quite dispassionate argument (validation level) concerning (for example) the relative merits of various economic systems. The statements mean the same, but function quite differently. In the latter use, the truth of the statement is assumed (it is part of the value framework in which the discussion occurs), and the emotive force of the evaluative terms is irrelevant; in the former use, speaking of the truth or falsity of the statement will not make sense, and the emotive content of the terms is vital.

In another criticism MacIntyre charges that emotivism “. . . entails

the obliteration of any genuine distinction between manipulative and nonmanipulative social relations”, because:

If emotivism is true, this distinction is illusory. For evaluative utterance can in the end have no point or use but the expression of my own feelings or attitudes and the transformation of the feelings and attitudes of others. . . . The sole reality of distinctively moral discourse is the attempt of one will to align the attitudes, feelings, preferences and choices of another with its own. Others are always means, never ends. (1981, p. 23)

But the distinction “between manipulative and nonmanipulative social relations” is possible for contemporary emotivism. It is true that “in the end” – at the most basic level of value questions – evaluative utterance emotively promotes basic values and attempts “the transformation of the feelings and attitudes of others”. But contemporary emotivism emphasizes that most evaluative utterances are not at that level. Instead, most value discussion occurs within a shared framework of value principles, and the discussions can thus be rational, impersonal and nonemotive. But even at the most fundamental level, where evaluative utterance is emotive, it is not the case that for emotivists “others are always means, never ends”. Of course an emotivist may have basic values that approve treating others merely as means. But an emotivist may equally well have basic values that mandate respect and concern for all human beings – perhaps for all sentient creatures – as ends-in-themselves, and not merely means for one’s own selfish interests. Certainly when an emotivist encounters someone with fundamentally different values, the emotivist will believe rational argument futile. And if the emotivist endeavors to persuade the other individual to revise fundamental values, then emotive – rather than rational – methods will be employed: emotive language, perhaps a novel or drama. Such appeals are emotive; but why should attempting to change or enlarge feelings necessarily involve treating individuals as means rather than ends? Goya’s *Disasters of the War* and Remarque’s *All Quiet on the Western Front* are powerful emotional expressions of the horrors of war; but are Goya and Remarque treating their viewers/readers as means rather than ends? Can’t appeal to emotions, appropriately made at the appropriate level, be just as respectful of persons as are rational arguments? In any case, emotivism can draw a genuine distinction between a level at which emotive appeal is appropriate and a level (of shared basic values) at which it is inappropriate; and emotivists can regard others as ends (rather than means) at both levels.

MacIntyre's next criticism is that emotivist moral agents are bloodless abstractions, deprived of social-historical context. He believes that this "ghostly character" develops because the emotivist self:

... cannot be simply or unconditionally identified with *any* particular moral attitude or point of view... just because of the fact that its judgments are in the end criterionless... Everything must be criticised from whatever standpoint the self has adopted, including the self's choice of standpoint to adopt. (1981, p. 30)

The result, according to MacIntyre, is a loss of any individual substantive content, a sort of ghostly disembodiment:

The self thus conceived, utterly distinct on the one hand from its social embodiments and lacking on the other hand any rational history of its own, may seem to have a certain abstract and ghostly character. (1981, p. 31)

But the ghostly self who haunts MacIntyre is not an emotivist self. It is instead an existentialist self, a self "lacking any necessary social identity", a self completely defined by its own choices. The emotivist self is no such autonomous shade. To the contrary, the emotivist self is the quite solid and robust product of its conditioning, shaped by the complex contingencies of its environment to have certain basic (defining, if one prefers) values. Certainly the emotivist self recognizes that those basic value commitments have no final guarantee or justification, and that a different environment would yield different basic values. But such a recognition need not lessen the contemporary emotivist's commitment to his/her own basic values; nor will it make the emotivist less inclined to foster such value commitments in others. Emotivists might well agree that "proper moral views" require moral education and training: to develop the "right kind" of moral desires one cannot depend on "autonomous moral choice" or a natural intuitive moral faculty. If we want people to be concerned for the happiness and welfare of all we must educate those wants. People must learn (in Aristotle's terms) to want to do what is good, must be educated to desire the good; or in Skinnerian terms, the benefit of others must become a conditioned secondary positive reinforcer. But that requires the right training, the right environment, rather than a ghostly "choosing".⁹

This brings us to another of MacIntyre's points against emotivism. Contemporary emotivism certainly rejects any final rational grounds for basic learned values; but it does not follow – as MacIntyre supposes – that because there is ultimately no rational grounding for such basic values there can be no genuine commitment to them. MacIntyre claims

that there is an obvious contradiction in supposing that values "... which we adopt for no reason [can] have any authority over us" (1981, p. 41). But there is no such contradiction. One can be genuinely and profoundly committed to values which are not rationally derived but are instead learned, conditioned. The emotivist asserts that such basic values have no rational grounding, are adopted "for no reason". But to suppose that "unreasoned" commitments can have "no authority over us" is gross overintellectualization. Many of our most profound commitments – such as to friends and family and lovers ("love is not love which alters when it alteration finds") – are not rationally grounded; if the emotivist places our most basic values in a similar category, that does not entail a lessened commitment to those values nor a weakening of their authority over us. Or perhaps MacIntyre means that only values rationally arrived at *should* have authority over us. But that is equally implausible. Why should we be obliged to spurn the non-rational authority imposed by our deepest affections? I see no reason to embrace such a superKantian metaethics.

MacIntyre's final two arguments against emotivism take a different tack. Instead of arguing that emotivism is a false theory, MacIntyre argues that emotivists are dishonest and that – if successful in promoting emotivism – they will render ineffectual their own use of value language. Emotivists mistakenly and misleadingly advocate the use of moral language to persuade, while the emotivist theory denies the objective value standards which are required to make such uses meaningful. But emotivists fail to consider:

... the difference it would make to morality if emotivism were not only true but also widely believed to be true. Stevenson, for example, understood very clearly that saying 'I disapprove of this; do so as well!' does not have the same force as saying 'That is bad!' He noted that a kind of prestige attaches to the latter, which does not attach to the former. What he did not note however – precisely because he viewed emotivism as a theory of meaning – is that the prestige derives from the fact that the use of 'That is bad' implies an appeal to an objective and impersonal standard in a way in which 'I disapprove of this; do so as well!' does not. That is, if and insofar as emotivism is true, moral language is seriously misleading and, if and insofar as emotivism is justifiably believed, presumably the use of traditional and inherited moral language ought to be abandoned. (1981, p. 19)

Or as MacIntyre sums it up:

When I was setting out the case in favour of an amended and restated emotivism, it appeared to be a consequence of accepting the truth of emotivism that an honest man would no longer want to go on using most, at least, of the language of past morality because of its misleading character. (1981, p. 240)

There are two parts to MacIntyre's critique: one, if emotivism is widely accepted then evaluative words will lose their emotive force, and will not be useful for the persuasion processes of the emotivist; and second, that if one sincerely believes in emotivism then use of evaluative terms must be dishonest.

But neither claim is true. First: evaluative language would not lose its conditioned emotive force if emotivism were widely accepted. Were there consensus on an emotivist denial of fundamental objective values, the secondary emotive conditioning of value language (in validation processes) would continue unabated; and to suppose that such emotive content would evaporate at the vindication level (when absence of objective final values is acknowledged) is to underestimate the persistence of emotive conditioning. "Milk" and "honey" continue to emotively connote wholesomeness, even if we agree that milk is high in cholesterol and honey is fattening. And "good" will continue to be associated (at the validation level) with positively reinforcing experiences; the resulting positive emotive conditioning does not wait upon ultimate value objectivity.

Nor is the emotivist use of evaluative language dishonest. In contemporary two-level (validation/vindication) emotivism, the honest emotivist need not eschew evaluative language at either level. Evaluative terms can be cognitively employed at the validation level, within shared value frameworks; and such terms can be used quite differently at the noncognitive, persuasive, basic vindication level for their – inevitably accumulating – positive emotive content. Evaluative language is obviously unobjectionable for classifying, grading, drawing logical implications (at the grading-validation level); but why should its emotive use, in broadening sympathies and appealing for emotional ties, be regarded as dishonest? The noncognitivist's use of evaluative language for emotive persuasion (at the vindication level) is not a dishonest appeal to a nonexistent "objective and impersonal standard". It is simply the use of emotive language to shape emotions, expand sympathies and develop (through secondary conditioning) value feelings. In such emotive conditioning processes one employs language that has developed emotive force. "Good" acquires emotive coloring in validating-grading processes; "approve of" does not.

Of course evaluative language can be misused. We may regret the huckster's use of evaluative terms as a substitute for a more informative account of the product's standing at the (agreed-upon) grading level.

But there may be disagreements in which considerations at the grading-validation level are exhausted and no accepted metagrading standards are at hand. On such occasions we legitimately appeal to emotional persuasion, employing emotively loaded evaluative terms. Through such use of persuasion people may develop new feelings and new sympathies. And as Stevenson notes:

This is often the only way to obtain ethical agreement, if there is any way at all. It is persuasive, not empirical or rational; but that is no reason for neglecting it. There is no reason to scorn it, either, for it is only by such means that our personalities are able to grow, through our contact with others. (1937, pp. 29-30)

Thus such persuasive use of evaluative terms has considerable benefits. And only a view which overemphasizes the purely rational, critical uses of language – to the neglect of the more affective elements and emotive uses – disparages such benefits. Used appropriately at the level of final vindication, emotive language serves a very different function than does the use of evaluating terms in grading-validation processes. It is nonetheless a legitimate, distinct and useful function, based not on pretense of objective values but rather on accumulated emotive content and potential emotional development. It is an emotive rather than a rational appeal; but it does not follow that it must be dishonest, any more than a drama or novel is dishonest when it attempts emotively to enlarge sympathies.

Acknowledgment of a legitimate emotive use of evaluative terms leaves open the possibility of abuse (by using value terms emotively when empirical or logical argument – at the validation level – is not exhausted). But emotivism warns of such abuses; it does not foster them. Closer attention to contemporary emotivism would minimize abuses of emotive language, for emotivism does not celebrate the triumph of feelings over intellect. To the contrary, it carefully distinguishes between: the small (but important) realm of basic noncognitively chosen value principles (appropriately influenced and revised by emotive persuasion); and the logical and empirical inquiries of the validation level. It promotes closer attention to exactly where emotive appeals occur, and encourages closer examination of the precise source of evaluative differences. If such differences stem from conflicting basic value preferences, this can be recognized more readily and much spurious argument eliminated. If instead there is agreement on basic values, then (guided by contemporary emotivism) arguments can be

confined to empirical and logical issues, and emotive appeals scorned as inappropriate. Thus far from pandering to emotive manipulation, emotivism is more likely to focus value arguments on the logical or empirical or terminological questions that are usually at issue in ethical disagreement.

NOTES

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¹ But even then Ayer was careful to note that "... it is only normative ethical symbols, and not descriptive ethical symbols that are held by use to be indefinable in factual terms" (1946, pp. 105f.).

² Ayer (1949), p. 238. Ayer makes a similar comment in Ayer (1977), p. 155. Stevenson agreed with the need for such revisions (Stevenson 1961, p. 79).

³ For example, Ayer (1946), p. 22.

⁴ Which Carnap had proposed in Carnap (1935).

⁵ Carnap (1963), p. 1000n. Like Ayer, Carnap states that "... logical empiricists long ago abandoned the formulations of the earlier period ... as oversimplifications" (Carnap 1963, p. 1009).

⁶ It is interesting to note how close Carnap's developed view of ethics is to his position on external and internal questions in Carnap (1950). Carnap's distinction between external and internal questions is a tool for dealing with ontological issues; but its correlation with his views on ethics is obvious. Just as answers to external questions are neither true nor false, because they are not factual assertions; in an analogous manner, questions concerning basic value positions – value frameworks – cannot be given true or false answers, but instead call for basic value choices. Once external choices have been made, internal questions can be answered through logical and/or empirical means; and given basic value commitments, internal questions of the goodness or badness of an act can also be answered, with the same methods. In both cases, the framework-defining answers are not true or false, but are certainly not meaningless; rather, they are like selections of postulates.

For another excellent logical positivist development of noncognitivism, see Reichenbach (1951), especially pp. 280–292. Reichenbach's work is particularly effective in balancing the emotive nature of pure value statements with their function as argument-guiding postulates. Carnap (1963, p. 1013) states that had he spent more time on the subject: "... the direction of my own work would presumably be closest to that of Stevenson and Reichenbach."

⁷ Feigl provides a superb account of the type of distinction – validation/vindication – being considered. But Carl G. Hempel's work might well have been used to explicate the distinction. In Hempel (1965) he distinguishes (what he calls) "instrumental" from "categorical" judgments of value. Hempel's distinction is quite similar to Feigl's, and Hempel makes effective use of it in dealing with value questions in relation to science.

C. L. Stevenson (1950, pp. 83–84; 1963, p. 231) is aware of such a distinction, although he does not describe it in as much detail.

⁸ Stevenson (1949, p. 592) indicates his awareness of this process, although he does not examine it in depth. In *Ethics and Language* (1944, pp. 88–89) Stevenson mentions a similar process, although he there gives a somewhat different (and excessively mentalistic) account of how it works.

⁹ MacIntyre (1982, p. 308) speaks of the Kant-Reid-Kierkegaard-Sartre “notion of fundamental uncaused and unreasoned choice” as the origin of ghostly mental agents. But basic emotivist values cannot be placed in that category, for while emotivists insist on fundamental unreasoned value beliefs they deny that such value beliefs are uncaused.

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