

An Apology for Inapt Emotions

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ABSTRACT. This paper examines how we may fail other people in their capacity as affective beings, but instead of looking at failures of justice, I examine failures of love and care. Our evaluative attitudes and emotions—when they are fitting—are affective responses to the world that tell us things about the world: they tell us what is funny, what is blameworthy, what merits despair. They also—both when they are fitting and when they are not—tell us things about the person who has the response. When we ignore the reasons of fit that support someone’s evaluative attitude or emotion, perhaps because we take extrinsic reasons such as prudential reasons to be overriding, we may be participating in a system of affective injustice, or we may simply be failing to care about the importance to that person of having fitting attitudes and emotions. Both justice and care can require that we attend properly to other people’s reasons of fit. Evaluative attitudes and emotions are fitting when they reflect the way in which their object really matters, but because it is in subjective experience that something matters, fittingness is fundamentally subjective. It is only by idealizing in a certain way that we can speak—figuratively—of fittingness as “intersubjective.” Justice does require that we determine what is and is not “intersubjectively fitting,” and so we must rely on the figurative notion of “intersubjective fittingness.” Nevertheless, because the subjective experience of those we love and care for must matter to us in a way that exceeds the requirements of justice, we might fail those whom we love by applying

only “intersubjective fittingness conditions”—rather than subjective fittingness conditions—when assessing the reasons of fit for their evaluative attitudes or emotions. Some acts of care—such as helping someone identify what they subjectively value—call for a focus on what is subjectively fitting for them. However, unconditional love requires something entirely different; when we love unconditionally we step outside of any evaluative stance and thus outside of any stance from which reasons of fit are relevant, and step into a stance of acceptance.

I. INTRODUCTION

Despite the fact that most human beings are endowed with a messy blend of emotional and rational capacities, some moral philosophy (particularly in the Kantian tradition) still approaches the question of how we are to treat other people as a question about how we are to treat others *qua* rational agents. This obscures the ways in which people are vulnerable to mistreatment specifically by virtue of the fact that we are *not* rational agents. The discussion of what has been termed ‘affective injustice’ has called attention to one of these vulnerabilities by identifying a way in which people may be wronged when their emotions are judged and regulated. In Amia Srinivasan’s coinage of the phrase, the injustice takes place specifically when unjust conditions—such as racism—give rise to a conflict between different kinds of reasons in favor of or against certain affective states: “reasons of prudence and reasons of aptness come apart, generating a substantive normative conflict” (2018, 127); the injustice faced by members of oppressed groups is that of being subject, disproportionately, to the burden of facing this conflict. In Srinivasan’s central example, “victims of oppression must choose between getting aptly angry and acting prudentially”; racism generates situations to which anger is the fitting or apt response, but the negative stereotype of African Americans as angry people causes anger to frequently backfire, creating prudential reasons to refrain from anger. Thus, prudential reasons and reasons of fit or aptness tend to point in opposite directions for African Americans, who then have to sacrifice either acting prudentially or expressing fitting emotions; put differently, they must either sacrifice “making the world as it should be” or “affectively appreciating the world as it is” (2018, 127).

Alfred Archer and Georgina Mills suggest that we should characterize affective injustice “broadly as an injustice faced by someone specifically in their capacity as an affective being” (2019, 76). In order to account for affective injustice in the way that Srinivasan has, we must add to this an assumption about one aspect of our affective lives, namely, that our attitudes and emotions have fittingness conditions such that they can be either fitting (if the conditions are met) or unfitting (if the conditions are not met), and that there is some value to having fitting attitudes and emotions. An attitude or emotion is typically taken to be fitting when it “accurately

presents its object as having certain evaluative features” (D’Arms and Jacobson 2000b, 65). I am going to make two additional assumptions about fittingness, the first of which is known as “normative response-dependence,” and the second of which Cullin Brown has dubbed “response-dependent normativity” in order to distinguish it from (mere) normative response-dependence.¹ The assumption of normative response-dependence is the assumption that what the evaluative features of an object are is a function of what the fitting attitudinal or emotional response to the object is, rather than the other way around. The assumption of response-dependent normativity is the further assumption that what determines what a fitting response is—namely, what determines whether or not the fittingness conditions have been met—is a product of some process that *itself* begins with our attitudes and emotions. The assumption of normative response-dependence denies “response-independence,” namely the claim that evaluative features of objects exist in some prior and independent way, and that for a response to be fitting the response must reflect these preexisting features.² Normative response-dependence also differs from a form of response-dependence that would take all of the attitudes and emotions that reflect our dispositions to determine the evaluative features of the object to which they are responses, without checking for whether fittingness conditions have been met in order to filter out attitudes and emotions that are unfitting; such a position would be descriptive rather than normative.³ Response-dependent normativity goes further than normative response-dependence. As Brown (n.d.2) argues, a normative response-dependent theory (that does not also assume response-dependent normativity) may take the question of whether fittingness conditions have been met to depend on normative facts that exist prior to and independent of any of our actual responses; for instance, a normative response-dependent theory might take this to depend on a prior and independent account of the human good. In contrast, theories that assume response-dependent normativity insist that the construction of normativity itself takes place through a process that begins with the raw material of our responses themselves. Put differently, *we* are the sources of all normativity, and so we are the sources of the normativity that enables us to judge whether fittingness conditions have been met. I am making my assumptions

1. Brown (n.d.2). Brown identifies normative response-dependence and response-dependent normativity as two separate positions, and argues that Shoemaker (2017; 2022), not recognizing that these two positions are distinct, only supports normative response-dependence and does not make the additional commitment to response-dependent normativity. Following Brown, I am endorsing both normative response-dependence and response-dependent normativity.
2. Most scholars interpret P. F. Strawson’s “Freedom and Resentment” (1962) to have been so groundbreaking in part because of how it offers a “response-dependent” rather than a “response-independent” account of moral responsibility. The attitudes that I will discuss in this paper include, but are not limited to, what Strawson named the “reactive attitudes”; I am interested in a wider range of evaluative attitudes and emotions than just those that are responses to another person’s “quality of will” and that serve to hold others responsible.
3. Shoemaker (2022) refers to this descriptive form of response-dependence as “dispositional response-dependence.”

explicit here because affective injustice has been described as involving a threat to a particular aspect of our affective lives—namely, to having emotions that are fitting. This threat may be a serious one for various reasons, but given my assumptions, one of these reasons is that the evaluative features of objects are a function of our fitting attitudes or emotions. Making the assumptions that I do, I can say that affective injustice arises when targeted people’s attitudes and emotions are threatened by the pressure of extrinsic reasons—such as prudential reasons or moral reasons—that tell against having certain attitudes and emotions, even when they are fitting, and/or even when they could serve as the raw material that we draw on in the process of producing the normativity by which we can judge whether fittingness conditions have been met.

So understood, affective *injustice* would be included in, but not exhaust, a more expansive category, of ways in which people could be wronged or poorly treated in their capacity as affective beings, given the assumptions of normative response-dependence and response-dependent normativity. To treat someone *unjustly* in their capacity as an affective being is one way that we might mistreat them, but there are also other ways that we might treat people poorly when we respond to them in their capacity as affective beings.⁴ I will focus on one of these other ways: we may fail to (successfully) love or care for people in their capacity as affective beings. Because I take both impartial justice and care for particular others to be valuable, I think that it is worthwhile to identify failures in both realms. The concept of affective injustice captures, within a justice-centered framework, one way in which we fail people in their capacity as affective beings; I aim to identify a parallel concept within a framework that centers love and care. My focus, then, is on how we fail those whom we purport to love or care about, given that they are affective beings, where the failure is tied to an expectation for their evaluative attitudes or emotions to be justified either by extrinsic reasons or by reasons of fit (or both).

To briefly preview what I will argue: There are several ways that we may go wrong in our responses to the evaluative attitudes or emotions of people whom we love or care about:

- We might offer them extrinsic reasons for changing their attitudes or emotions, regardless of whether they are fitting or unfitting, and thereby fail to acknowledge the way that fittingness matters;
- We might judge the fittingness of their attitudes or emotions in cases in which this judgment is problematic precisely because the attitudes or emotions reflect their *subjective* experience of the object to which they are responding. In doing so, we may fail to care about or accept their subjective experience in the way that our care or love

4. David Plunkett is also concerned with the narrowness of the term “affective injustice”—given that “unjust” is not the only normative term we might want to apply to identify what is wrong or bad in our treatment of others in their capacity as affective beings—but he seeks to broaden the term in different ways than I do. See Plunkett (2021, 127).

demands. While care and love generally require attention to the subjective experience of those we care about or love, different kinds of care and love require different kinds of attention to this subjective experience.

- The evaluative features of an object may be a function of subjectively fitting responses, and/or of what we might figuratively call “intersubjectively fitting” responses. What is required in order for fittingness conditions to be met will differ depending on whether we are considering subjective fittingness or “intersubjective fittingness” (a phrase that I will place in scare quotes to indicate that it is merely figurative); we might fail to recognize this and consequently apply the wrong criteria, thereby sidelining the subjective experience of the person whom we care about or love. An evaluative attitude or emotion might be “intersubjectively unfitting” and at the same time subjectively fitting. Loving or caring about someone requires that we empathically join them in their subjective perspective to understand what is subjectively fitting for them, to whatever extent this is possible. In this kind of love or care, fittingness remains relevant and we might be able to help someone whom we care about distinguish between their fitting and unfitting attitudes and emotions, but if we are to do this we must recognize the importance of what may be plural and conflicting determinations of fittingness.
- Furthermore, in the case of *unconditional* love there is a way in which fittingness becomes, at least at times, irrelevant; in moments of unconditional love, we must respond to the fact that something matters to our loved one not by normatively determining whether they are making a mistake about what matters, but rather by stepping outside of a discriminating evaluative stance and into a stance of indiscriminate acceptance. From a stance of indiscriminate acceptance all their significant attitudes and emotions—including those that we would judge to be unfitting if we were to evaluate them on grounds of fit—matter to us as part of what we accept about them. In moments when we are called upon to love unconditionally, a focus on fittingness (even subjective fittingness) would miss the point. In fact, an attitude of insistently refusing to suspend a concern with fittingness is itself unfitting because it does not construe its object (our beloved) as having the evaluative feature of being unconditionally lovable. In addition to recognizing reasons of fit and/or extrinsic reasons that can support or undermine an evaluative attitude or emotion, there are reasons of love for accepting a loved one’s attitudes and emotions, regardless of whether these are supported by any other kinds of reasons.

Before unpacking each of the ways in which someone might fail to respond well to the evaluative attitudes or emotions of those they love and care about, I offer a description of the occasion on which such failures crystallized in my mind as falling into different categories, depending on whether someone offers extrinsic

reasons or reasons of fit. The eliciting event was the death of Ruth Bader Ginsburg, on September 18, 2020—it was erev Rosh Hashanah and my spouse and I were gathered with friends for the holiday meal, on Zoom of course (given that this was 2020), when the *New York Times* announcement flashed on the screen. My emotional response to her death was an immediate deepening of the despair that I had already been feeling. It was early in the pandemic and Trump was still in power; there were six and a half weeks to go before the 2020 election that restored some hope for me, and we were still months away from the covid vaccine that lifted another weight. In that moment, the added catastrophe of RBG's death gave me the feeling that the state of the world was utterly hopeless. People who cared about me—my friends, and my spouse—told me that I should not despair, and among them they offered two kinds of reasons: extrinsic reasons, and reasons of fit.⁵ Some of my friends said: You shouldn't feel despair, because RBG would want you to get up and fight, and despair will crush your motivation. "May her memory be for a revolution," they and other people said in the following days, in place of the customary "may her memory be for a blessing." These friends urged on me reasons that were quite similar to the kinds of extrinsic reasons that Srinivasan identifies as embedded in the claim that anger is counterproductive in the fight against racism. I bristled at being confronted with these extrinsic reasons, and it was easy for me to dismiss them: how dare anyone tell me not to feel what was so obviously fitting to feel?! But it was my spouse's response that bothered me more. She pointed to reasons of fit. And indeed, she may have been right that despair was *not* fitting to feel, despite its having seemed obvious to me that it was. It is not the judiciary that really matters, my spouse—who was a brilliant political theorist—argued; the shift to putting so much emphasis on the judiciary has taken power away from where it should be, for political power in a democracy is properly located in the legislative; thus, she concluded, despair is unwarranted—it wrongly takes its object, RBG's death and the expectation that she would be replaced by a conservative justice, as worthy of despair. So why was I hurt by this response, since my spouse had not in fact ignored reasons of fit? What she had admonished me for was having an emotional reaction that did not *correctly* reflect what mattered in the situation. Isn't that one of the things that we normative theorists do, and do so well? Don't we seek to correctly identify the evaluative features of an object or an event—in this case, RBG's death—by demanding what are called "reasons of the right kind" for construing it as having these features? Shouldn't I appreciate her trying to disembarrass me of my unfitting emotions, emotions that she believed were not supported by good, justificatory reasons of the right kind? And shouldn't I still appreciate her wanting to do this, even if her reasoning turned out to be flawed? This paper includes an attempt to answer these questions, and to say why love can require caring about what matters—*correctly or incorrectly*—to one's beloved, rather than, or at least in addition to, caring about whether or not what matters

5. Here I would be remiss not to thank the one friend who listened without telling me how I should feel.

to them is what should matter. This attempt is complicated, emotionally, by the fact that two months after RBG died, my spouse died, and so I cannot address my thoughts to her.

II. EXTRINSIC REASONS AND REASONS OF FIT

So far I have been referring, loosely, to ‘extrinsic reasons’ such as prudential or moral reasons, and ‘reasons of fit’, but it will be important to get more precise about these terms before continuing. I will do so by giving a little context and then drawing on Pamela Hieronymi’s illuminating distinction between what she calls ‘extrinsic reasons’ and ‘constitutive reasons’ for attitudes such as believing or intending, as well as for more affect-laden attitudes or emotions, such as resenting, fearing, admiring, or being hurt.⁶

Reasons of two different kinds are often conflated in a way that can muddy questions of value. If the evaluative features of objects are response-dependent and more specifically, if they are dependent on our fitting attitudes and emotions, then the way to determine what is insulting, fearsome, admirable, funny, trustworthy, and so on—more generally, what something’s evaluative features are—is to decide what attitude would count as the right response to it. That to which an attitude of admiration is the right response is thereby admirable, that to which an attitude of amusement is the right response is thereby funny, and so on. To know whether some particular attitude is the right or justified response to something, we need to examine the reasons that support that attitude. This is where we run into what Justin D’Arms and Daniel Jacobson have called the “conflation problem” (2000a, 732), and that became known as the “wrong kind of reasons problem” (Robinowicz and Rønnow-Rasmussen 2004): the problem is that not all reasons in support of an attitude are related in a relevant way to the evaluative features of the object to which the attitude is a response. D’Arms and Jacobson illustrate this point by noting that there are prudential reasons not to fear the wolf that is coming toward you, since the wolf will smell your fear, but these would be reasons of the wrong kind for concluding that the wolf is not fearsome; it *is* fearsome, but the fact that there are good reasons not to fear the wolf seems to imply otherwise (D’Arms and Jacobson 2000b, 87). If we conflate reasons that bear on the question of what an object’s evaluative features are, which are the “right kind of reasons” for counting the object as actually having those evaluative features, with other kinds of reasons (including prudential and moral reasons) for having the attitude that one has in response to the object, then we will be unable to infer anything about the evaluative features of the object just from knowing that the response was supported by good reasons. In Srinivasan’s example: anger at racism construes racism

6. Hieronymi draws and develops the distinction in several places, including Hieronymi (2005; 2006; 2019).

as wrongful, and that to which an attitude of anger is an apt response has the evaluative feature of being wrongful. There are prudential and/or moral reasons not to become angry at racism in cases in which anger would be counterproductive to the aim of resisting racism, but these would be the wrong kind of reasons for concluding that racism is not wrongful. Only anger (or perhaps resentment of the wrongness of racism, as a “cognitively sharpened” version of anger)⁷ can “affectively appreciate . . . the world as it is” (Srinivasan 2018, 127) by construing its racism as wrongful. Srinivasan’s “counterproductivity critic,” who counsels African Americans not to become angry at racism, fails to distinguish between kinds of reasons, and in so doing runs roughshod over the reason—a reason of fit—for anger.

Hieronymi offers a way to distinguish between these different kinds of reasons and in so doing she identifies not only why reasons of fit, or what she calls “constitutive reasons,” are the only reasons that are relevant for knowing something about the *object* to which an attitude is a response, but also—and more importantly for my purposes—what these reasons tell us about the *person* who has the evaluative attitude. She proposes that we reject the definition of a reason as “a consideration that counts in favor of an action or attitude” (2005, 437), because this definition does not allow us to distinguish right from wrong kinds of reasons, and instead “think of a reason as a consideration that bears on a question,” for then we can distinguish between kinds of reasons “by distinguishing between kinds of questions on which a consideration can bear” (2005, 438). A consideration becomes a reason when it stands in a certain relation to the question on which it bears. That is, it becomes a reason because of the relation “between the question on which the consideration bears and the attitudes of which it counts in favor” (2005, 438). Hieronymi suggests that we consider the relation between “*settling a question and forming or revising an attitude*” (2005, 447; emphasis in the original). When the relation is a constitutive relation, then settling the question “amounts to forming the attitude” (2005, 447). For instance, settling the question of “whether *p*” amounts to forming the attitude of belief (that is, the belief that *p*), so “reasons that (are taken to) bear on whether *p* [are] the ‘constitutive’ reasons for believing *p*” (2005, 447). We believe *p* by virtue of settling the question of whether *p*, and we settle the question when we are convinced by the reasons that (are taken to) bear on the question of “whether *p*.”

Affect-laden evaluative responses such as resenting exhibit a similar pattern. To understand such cases, it is crucial to note that a person only takes a consideration to be a reason that bears on an evaluative question if that consideration

7. D’Arms and Jacobson argue that not all emotions can be characterized in terms of their cognitive content or judgments, but that there are subclasses of emotions that each constitute such a subclass by virtue of their sharing some belief; they refer to these as “cognitive sharpenings” of an emotion (D’Arms and Jacobson 2003, 137–38). Myisha Cherry could be said to be cognitively sharpening the anger that she takes to be the fitting response to racism, calling it “Lordean rage” (named after Audre Lorde); as she stipulates, this form of anger depends on one’s having the belief that “I am not free while any [other] is unfree” (2021, 24). (I think that this belief is, unfortunately, false in the actual world, and so one must idealize in order to hold the belief.)

matters to them in some way—otherwise, they would not have an affect-laden, evaluative attitude in response to it. If I resent you because of some way that you treated me, my resentment reflects both the fact that your treatment of me matters to me, and that I construe your treatment of me as wrongful; that is, it matters to me in a particular way, a “wronging” kind of way. My settling the question (in the affirmative) of whether you have wronged me, given the way that your treatment of me matters to me, amounts to my forming the attitude of resentment, so considerations that I take to bear on whether you wronged me in a way that matters to me are constitutive reasons for resenting you.

In contrast to developing an attitude on the basis of constitutive reasons, when one finds extrinsic reasons for an attitude convincing, finding the reasons convincing is not constitutive of having the attitude. The fact that resenting you will teach you a lesson is (even given that I value teaching you a lesson) an extrinsic reason for resenting you; by being convinced that resenting you will teach you a lesson, I do not thereby form the attitude of resentment. Settling the question of whether resenting you will teach you a lesson does not have a constitutive relation to having the attitude of resentment. It merely motivates me (if I want to teach you a lesson) to try to cultivate the attitude of resentment. And it tells me nothing about whether your treatment of me has a particular evaluative feature, namely whether it was wrongful.

Hieronymi’s distinction allows us to establish which reasons can tell us anything about the evaluative features of the object to which an attitude is a response: only constitutive reasons do. It is constitutive reasons—as Hieronymi characterizes them—that I will take to be reasons of fit. Thus we can say that our affect-laden evaluative responses reveal how we have settled questions of what matters about the object to which we are responding: we settle them on the basis of reasons of fit (when there are such reasons). Reasons of fit may of course be judged to be *bad* reasons, so we will still need to consider what justifies the claim that some evaluative response is apt or fitting, that is, that fittingness conditions have been met. For instance, you might take my not having your dinner ready when you arrive home to be wrongful because you take my not making dinner to be a consideration that bears on the question of whether I have wronged you; perhaps you expect me to make dinner every night because you work hard at the office while I only take care of the children all day. Your resentment constitutes your settling of the question of whether I have wronged you. You have a reason *of the right kind*—it is a constitutive reason, a reason of fit—and you may take it to be a good reason, but anyone who has internalized social norms according to which your expectation is illegitimate will judge it to be a bad reason of fit, and will judge your attitude to be unfitting.

Hieronymi’s distinction, however, doesn’t *just* enable us to isolate those reasons that tell us something about the evaluative features of an object; it calls attention to something else that is unique about constitutive reasons, namely, that they provoke attitudinal or emotional responses that are not directly voluntary. After

commenting that “you can only believe what you take to be true” (Hieronymi 2019, 64), and so one cannot voluntarily adopt a belief just by choosing to, the way one can choose to perform an ordinary action such as raising one’s hand, Hieronymi makes the same claim about certain attitudes such as “resentment, gratitude, trust, admiration, contempt, and satisfaction at a job well done,” which “are, like belief, attitudes for which we can be asked our reasons, but which we cannot adopt at will” (Hieronymi 2019, 66). However, beliefs, and evaluative attitudes, are also not completely involuntary, in the way that, say, having a headache is. Instead, “our beliefs are up to us in the way that our answer to a question is up to us,” when an answer to a question is understood as “the resolution of a question arrived at in one’s own mind” (2019, 65). Thus, crucially, our evaluative attitudes tell us something about the *person* who has the response. They tell us what this person’s “take” on the world is (Hieronymi 2019, 68). In learning what someone’s take on the world is, we don’t just learn about the world; we learn about the person, in their capacity as an affective being: we learn what matters to them. Hieronymi expresses this by saying that these attitudes “are not about the wrongdoer, but rather about the one wronged” (Hieronymi 2019, 60).⁸

When we settle a question for which there are reasons of fit, our answers—and our attitudes that amount to them—are what Hieronymi calls “commitment-constituted”:

Whenever one has an attitude that can be formed or revised simply by settling for oneself a question or set of questions (regardless of how the attitude was in fact formed), one is committed to an answer to the relevant question(s). One is committed in the sense that, if one has the attitude, one is answerable to certain questions and criticisms—namely, those questions or criticisms that would be answered by the considerations that bear on the relevant question(s). (Hieronymi 2005, 449–50)

The set of evaluative responses that Hieronymi counts as “commitment-constituted” tell us something important about their bearer: what their commitments are, or put differently, what matters to them. In finding out what matters to them, we find out something about them that they cannot voluntarily control in any direct way, but for which they are answerable. Hieronymi thus presents the evaluative responses on which she focuses as always open to justification; we may be asked for reasons of fit to justify to others our having settled a question in the way that we have. This critical questioning can determine whether our reasons of fit are good reasons, that is, whether our attitude is fitting, and other people may challenge us by judging our reasons of fit to be bad reasons. Later I will suggest that some of what matters to us should *not* be treated—at least not by those who unconditionally love

8. Thus the title of her article, “I’ll Bet You Think This Blame Is about You,” a play on Carly Simon’s “I’ll bet you think this song is about you” in “You’re So Vain.” Carly Simon’s song, as Hieronymi interprets it, “is not really about the person or persons to whom it is addressed, at all. It is about the singer. It is not about the womanizer; it is about his victim . . . He will hear her criticism, and he will correctly hear it as a criticism of him, but, vain as he is, he will miss the source of her criticism, in her mistreatment, and so miss its importance—it is a criticism *of* him, but it is *about* her” (Hieronymi 2019, 79–80). It is about what matters to her.

us—as something for which we are expected to produce justification (even though there may be reasons of fit that bear on them).⁹

III. IMPOSING EXTRINSIC REASONS

The first failure of love or care that I will consider has to do with an improper imposition of extrinsic reasons, though extrinsic reasons also properly play a role in our affective lives. I have noted that reasons of fit and extrinsic reasons are also referred to as ‘reasons of the right kind’ and ‘reasons of the wrong kind’. These labels, if misunderstood, may obscure the fact that *both* are important kinds of reasons; the terminology of ‘right’ and ‘wrong’ only indicates that they are right or wrong for the purpose of determining the evaluative features of an object. Because there are *good* extrinsic reasons for having various attitudes or emotions, reasons of the so-called ‘wrong kind’ may still be good reasons that we should take into consideration when deciding, all things considered, whether an evaluative response is an appropriate one to have. While we cannot directly choose to have a particular emotion, we can indirectly work to change the sorts of emotions we tend to have, so making an all-things-considered judgment about whether a particular emotion is appropriate does have a purpose. The counterproductivity of anger is a good extrinsic reason for someone to try to remain calm; the fact that someone’s guilt over their own moral wrongdoing drives them to self-harm or suicidal ideation is a good extrinsic reason for them to try to replace the guilt with self-forgiveness; the fact that someone’s beloved is abusive—or alternatively, married to someone else—is a good extrinsic reason for them to try to stop being in love. But all of these extrinsic reasons are *pro tanto* reasons; they are not necessarily overriding considerations in an all-things-considered judgment, and furthermore, if each of the emotions is also supported by other kinds of reasons such as reasons of fit, then the all-things-considered judgment will not be without “remainder.”¹⁰ As Srinivasan points out in the case of counterproductive yet fitting anger at racism, the choice to suppress the anger signifies a real sacrifice, for there is value in having fitting emotions that express something true about the world.

9. Hieronymi does not exactly deny that there is a set of evaluative responses for which we should not be asked for justificatory reasons of fit, but she comes close to it by claiming that “the pro-attitudes involved in valuing seem capable of direct rational criticism” and offering as an illustration of this point: “I can be asked why I admire or prefer, not merely how it came about or why I have brought it about that I admire or prefer” (2005, 455).

10. Bernard Williams, in “Ethical Consistency,” remarks that “moral conflicts are neither systematically avoidable, nor all soluble without remainder” (1973, 179). He reaches this conclusion by arguing that moral conflicts are like conflicts of desires—and unlike conflicts of beliefs—in this way. The “ought” that is overridden in a decision about what to do is not thereby “eliminate[d] from the scene” (1973, 175), but rather remains and may be transformed into, for instance, regret, just like an unsatisfied desire might be. I believe that conflicts of reasons—such as a conflict between a reason of fit and an extrinsic reason—also leave remainders.

There are ways that we may fail other people in their capacity as affective beings when we urge upon them extrinsic reasons that point away from their fitting emotions, though it is also sometimes completely unproblematic to do so, such as when the extrinsic reason is in fact overriding and we acknowledge and sympathize with the sacrifice of the fitting emotions. These failures might be failures of justice or failures of care. As Srinivasan has argued, the failure of justice has to do with the way that victims of oppression disproportionately face conflicts between reasons of fit and extrinsic reasons. In part this is a structural injustice, insofar as it is located in the systems or institutions that make oppression pervasive and so make anger at oppression so frequently fitting, while at the same time give rise to stereotypes (of, for instance, African Americans as angry) that make the fitting response counterproductive. Besides the structural injustice, there is also a failure of justice that can be pinned on those individuals (such as the “counterproductivity critic”) who either ignore the value of freely having responses on the basis of reasons of fit or who assume that even if there are *pro tanto* reasons of fit, they are overridden, without remainder, by extrinsic reasons. All of these failures can be considered injustices because they do not accord other people, in their capacity as affective beings, the minimal respect that justice calls for: we owe it to others, even without having a particular relation of care to them, the opportunity to “affectively appreciat[e] the world as it is” (Srinivasan 2018, 127), and while everyone experiences some conflicts between reasons of fit and extrinsic reasons, it is unjust for some people to bear the disproportionate burden of facing these conflicts.

Justice (and not just care) also involves attention to reasons of fit in a way that Srinivasan does not develop.¹¹ In cases in which the object or phenomenon to which people have normative responses is a socially, politically, or morally significant phenomenon—such as racism—we can ask whether a particular normative response is the response that someone would have if they had thoroughly internalized shared normative expectations. But these shared normative expectations themselves are a product of a process of social construction. Our attitudes and emotions—and the reasons of fit that support them—are part of the raw material that serves as input to the social process of construction through which we come to have these shared normative expectations (though the process of construction may also take extrinsic reasons such as expedience into consideration). For instance, people’s fear, disgust, and anger at being the target of unwelcome sexual advances is part of what has helped change what was previously considered to be acceptable behavior into what we now call ‘sexual harassment’. This process of shaping and transforming norms involves examining people’s reasons of fit for their commitment-constituted attitudes, and collectively determining which of these should inform shared normative commitments. Because anger at racism is a commitment-constituted attitude that is accompanied by the claim that the commitment ought to be shared, it is an attitude

11. Though she hints at it by noting that “Anger is also a form of communication, a way of publicly marking moral disvalue, calling for the shared negative appreciation of others” (2018, 132).

for which people can be expected to supply their reasons of fit and to defend them as good reasons of fit. And such reasons abound: for instance, the fact that African American people's dignity is violated when they are treated as inferior on the basis of their race is a reason that someone who is angry at racism might defend as being a good reason of fit. It is in the social or political exchange and assessment of reasons like this that antiracist norms can be established. Thus, one might say that an affective *injustice* is committed when reasons of fit are overridden and ignored, because *justice* requires that we pay attention to reasons of fit in order to establish which phenomena are injustices in the first place. Whose reasons carry weight in this process and whose do not is likewise a matter of justice.

However, not every instance of ignoring reasons of fit and pressuring someone else to act on extrinsic reasons is an injustice. My friends' suggestion that my despair at RBG's death was counterproductive did not strike me in any interesting way as an injustice. I was not being disproportionately burdened with having to face a conflict between reasons of fit and extrinsic reasons nor disproportionately denied the opportunity to affectively appreciate the world or to contribute to the reshaping of its norms. There were no stereotypes generating extrinsic reasons for me not to despair. If my despair was fitting—that is, if RBG's death was despair-worthy—then my friends made a mistake in ignoring my reasons of fit in our discussion of what the evaluative features of her death were, but making a mistake is not the same as committing an injustice. Nevertheless, these friends still mildly failed me in some way that is better characterized as a lack of care, in that they did not take seriously the value, to me, of having fitting emotions; they assumed that urgent political demands took priority. All I am noting here is that the dynamic of subordinating reasons of fit to extrinsic reasons—which has already been the focus of discussions of affective injustice—might manifest a bit differently in the context of a relation of care that is not also affected by power differentials or other relevant political factors.

The starkest difference between failures of justice and failures of care in regarding people in their capacity as affective beings does not have to do with the conflict between extrinsic reasons and reasons of fit; it has to do with what happens when someone judges, rather than simply ignores or overrides, another person's reasons of fit. In relationships of love or care, fittingness judgments are complicated by the fact that attitudes or emotions reflect a *subjective experience* (even if they also contribute to the intersubjective construction of shared normative expectations), and that we might not attend to this subjective experience in the way that love or care demands, and instead attend to it only in the more limited way that justice requires.

IV. CARING ABOUT SUBJECTIVE EXPERIENCE

Recall Hieronymi's point that our evaluative attitudes or emotions don't just tell us something about the object to which they are responses; they tell us about the person who has the attitude—they tell us about what matters to that person in their

subjective experience. Whether, and in what way, the fact that something matters to them matters *to me* depends on who that person is to me—are they “just” a fellow citizen, or are they someone whom I care about personally? Put differently: are we asking what justice calls for regarding how we treat someone’s emotions, or what care calls for?

In a justice-focused framework, we might ask specifically what we *owe* others regarding our treatment of their attitudes or emotions insofar as they communicate something about their subjective experience. Perhaps we would want to say that we owe them freedom from interference in their affective lives; perhaps, more in keeping with a capabilities approach (such as Nussbaum 2000; 2011), we would want to say that we owe them supportive enough external conditions for them to have the capability to experience and express a full range of emotions. But we cannot offer to *everyone* a more particular kind of attention to their subjective evaluative or emotional experience; this is a requirement not of justice, but of care.

Eva Kittay has developed a compelling analysis of why care requires attention to the subjective experience of the one who is cared for; in fact, she puts the subjective experience of what matters—which she terms a person’s “CARES”—at the center of care ethics. Kittay’s account of care is a normative, as opposed to descriptive, account. It presents what care ought to be, namely, what successful care is; thus, it uses ‘care’ as a success term (2019, 190–97). According to Kittay, to care for someone is to promote their flourishing (while at the same time being attentive to the flourishing of other parties, such as the carer, as well as those outside of the relationship); importantly, the flourishing to be promoted is “flourishing *as endorsed (implicitly or explicitly) by the one cared for,*” and the carer promotes such flourishing by attending to the “genuine needs” and “legitimate wants” of the cared-for, where genuine needs must have “both an objective and a subjective basis” and legitimate wants are limited to those that can be satisfied without harming others (2019, 139; italics in the original). One of Kittay’s most powerful points is a simple one that ought to be obvious but is often overlooked: that we do not all have the same CARES; we differ in our subjective experience of what matters. This has implications for what it is to care for someone.

To care for someone (when ‘care’ is understood as a success term), I cannot just do what *I* think is good for them; I must do what they themselves take to be good for them; I must care about their CARES. Kittay argues that the “completion of care”—namely, its reception *as care*—is necessary (though not sufficient) for something to count as care in the normative sense. If the purported care is not something that is at least eventually welcomed or “taken up” by the intended recipient, then it becomes evident that it was not something subjectively valued and did not contribute to their flourishing.¹² The danger, in attempting to care for

12. For recipients of care that are not subjects, one must simply observe what seems to make them flourish—such as when one waters a plant and sees that this keeps it from wilting. But when the recipient of care is a subject, there must be some form of subjective endorsement of the care as care, where what counts as endorsement varies depending on what sort of agency the subject is

someone, is of a paternalism that overreaches, or of substituting one's own subjective sense of what the good life is for that of the recipient. Or one might mistakenly assume that there is only an intersubjectively determined, shared conception of flourishing, and so believe that caring for another person consists in promoting their flourishing, so understood. Kittay insists, to the contrary, that people differ in what enables them to flourish, and that while there is some objective component to what enables flourishing, no one can be said to flourish in the absence of their own subjective experience of it as such. Kittay's insight comes largely from her experience of caring for her daughter, who has severe cognitive and physical disabilities; it is clear to Kittay that she and her daughter differ from each other in their subjective experiences of flourishing or their subjective values more generally (something that might be missed more easily by people who care for others whom they perceive as more similar to themselves), and that to give care to her daughter she must attend to its reception as care—to her daughter's implicit endorsement of it. She must consult what matters *to her daughter*. I believe this is a lesson that generalizes, though perhaps in a less demanding way, to relations of care that are not dependency relations.

V. RELYING ON THE WRONG FITTINGNESS CONDITIONS

This lesson that care requires a certain kind of attention to the subjective experience of the cared-for suggests that we must focus on the reasons of fit of the people we care about, for it is these reasons, rather than extrinsic reasons, that bear on what the evaluative features of objects are for them and thus that ground their “take” on the world. However, I believe that there are multiple ways that we may go wrong—and still fail those whom we love or care about—even when we do focus on reasons of fit. The first is that we might rely on what we think of, in what I will suggest is a misleading way, as “intersubjective fittingness conditions” instead of

capable of exercising. This means that care is not always possible—such as in the case of an intended recipient who refuses to accept any care. It also means that luck plays a large role in whether one can successfully care, because there are some unavoidable epistemic limitations to intuiting or predicting what will end up counting as care. When the recipient of care is a nonverbal subject, it can be hard to know what they do and do not endorse. Furthermore, “it may be questionable whether the endorsement is something that we ought to respect when it appears to go contrary to the person's best interests. A resistance to an action intended as care may be due to a failure to comprehend the nature of the care” (Kittay 2019, 200). In clear-cut cases, one should act to promote well-being even if the recipient does not welcome the care (though they still might eventually appreciate it in retrospect); for instance, a child, or an adult with cognitive impairments, might not understand that taking medicine will promote their well-being long term. What Kittay highlights is that many cases are not clear cut and it is difficult for someone who intends to care to avoid mistakes; it is hard to know how seriously one should take the wishes of someone who is limited in what they can understand (either from immature or impaired cognition or judgment), and whether their wishes should be overridden whenever they seem to conflict with some objective list of what is necessary for flourishing.

subjective fittingness conditions, and thus wrongly judge some of their emotions to be unfitting. For the purposes of this section I will presuppose that reasons of fit should be critically scrutinized to determine whether or not the evaluative attitude or emotion in question is indeed fitting, and I will address the question of what the proper fittingness conditions are; in the next section I will throw out this presupposition and suggest that sometimes the fittingness of a loved one's attitudes or emotions is not what we should focus on.

Our evaluative attitudes or emotions reflect, as Hieronymi has put it, a person's "take" on the world; they constitute a person's answer to the question of what matters to them about something. To put this in Kittay's language, our attitudes and other emotional responses reveal our CARES. If Kittay is right that the "completion of care" requires an endorsement by the recipient, and if such endorsement is contained in or expressed through attitudes and emotions, then it is these attitudes and emotions and—it seems—the reasons of fit that support them that must be queried and that can direct us in how to care for someone. To know what *really* matters to someone—what their *real* CARES are—we need to be able to distinguish between this and what they might, mistakenly, merely experience as mattering to them. What *really* matters to someone is revealed, it would seem, by their fitting responses, rather than by whatever jumble of responses they happen to be disposed to have. We can identify what *really* matters to someone by ascertaining which of their reasons of fit are good reasons of fit. Thus we must know what kind of examination of reasons of fit will enable us to determine whether a reason of fit is a good reason, a reason that renders someone's evaluative attitude or emotion fitting.

This task is complicated by the fact that we can take a subjective perspective and we can take what I will refer to as an "intersubjective perspective" when constructing the normative basis for determining whether fittingness conditions have been met, that is, for determining which reasons of fit are good reasons, and thus which attitudes or emotions are fitting. A subjective perspective is the perspective from which we have actual experiences of objects in the world as mattering to us in a particular way, though of course, because we are highly social creatures, what we experience from a subjective perspective is always already influenced or shaped by the social. From a subjective perspective, we not only have experiences of things as mattering in a certain way, but we can also (try to) differentiate between what *really* matters to us subjectively and what only seems to matter to us subjectively. To do so is to develop the basis for determining whether what I will call *subjective fittingness conditions* have been met; someone might ask whether their evaluative or emotional response to a subjective experience is fitting in the sense that it reflects what really matters to them—what they subjectively value. In contrast, an intersubjective perspective is the perspective that we must take when we are constructing *shared* normative expectations. From an intersubjective perspective, the only question that we can ask about fittingness is the question of whether an evaluative or emotional response is the response that an agent would have if

they had thoroughly internalized a rightly established shared normative expectation. What we might call “intersubjective fittingness” is thus a merely figurative notion because it is only by personifying an imaginary, idealized agent (an agent whose emotions completely reflect shared normative expectations) that we can conceive of there being an intersubjective perspective from which anything can really matter. Without this personification, we cannot speak of anything as mattering intersubjectively, because all experience—and so all experience of anything as mattering—is subjective. There has been little to no recognition, in discussions of the fittingness of attitudes or emotions, of these dual perspectives, and thus there has been a conflation of subjective fittingness with “intersubjective fittingness,” though employing this latter term at all is misleading unless it is understood as figurative (thus the scare quotes). Our evaluative attitudes and emotions might fittingly (or not) express subjective values. Separately, they might (or might not) express values that accord with shared normative expectations. The way that my subjectively fitting evaluative attitudes or emotions construe the evaluative features of an object reflect what really matters to me subjectively; the way that my “intersubjectively fitting” evaluative attitudes or emotions construe the evaluative features of an object reflect what—speaking figuratively now—matters to (some) “us,” which can only be ascertained through a social process of determining which reasons of fit are good, shared reasons.¹³ An object might at the same time have two different—even opposed—evaluative features, with these different features coming into view as we shift perspectives. An object can have subjective evaluative features and (speaking figuratively) “intersubjective evaluative features.”

For some purposes, such as the purpose of helping a friend achieve well-being by guiding them as they figure out what they *really* subjectively value and what would contribute to their well-being, the most relevant evaluative features of an object are those that are determined subjectively by the friend (although intersubjective norms remain relevant too insofar as they still constrain what someone may permissibly do in pursuit of their own well-being). One might help a friend go through the process of settling the question of what they subjectively value and nudge them to reflect critically on whether their subjective reasons of fit are good ones, but ultimately, it is up to them. Unlike in the case of constructing shared norms, one does not need to reach any agreement; one does not need to subjectively value exactly what one’s friend subjectively values. In contrast, for other purposes, such as knowing whether someone has wronged me by not hiring

13. The “us” may be a smaller or larger group, because shared norms may have a smaller or larger scope. Norms may be shared in concrete relationships with particular others, or in a more abstract moral relationship with others *qua* persons. For the purpose of contrasting the intersubjective perspective with the subjective perspective, I am speaking of the intersubjective perspective as if it were only one perspective, but it actually comprises a plurality, and there are interesting differences—that I won’t comment on here—between different kinds of intersubjective perspectives. Cullin Brown’s (in process) work develops an account of the differences between kinds of intersubjective perspectives.

me for a position open in their company, we will want to know whether or not my anger is “intersubjectively fitting” (figurative though that may be), which depends on whether someone who has internalized social norms about fair hiring practices would feel such anger.

There are, then, different fittingness conditions that we might apply in our judgments about someone’s attitudes or emotions. Which conditions to apply depends upon the context and our relationship to them. We might be trying to care for someone by helping them to flourish, in which case we can only help them determine what their own subjective fittingness conditions are, and whether they have been met. Or, we might be aiming to treat someone justly in their capacity as an affective being, and thus be concerned with determining what the “intersubjective fittingness conditions” are, and whether they have been met, for this is what allows us to judge whether their attitudes and emotions properly reflect, or ought to contribute to reshaping, socially constructed normative expectations.

Justice requires that we take an intersubjective perspective to consider which reasons of fit are good reasons that are or ought to be shared reasons, because we are obligated to take “intersubjectively fitting” attitudes and emotions seriously.¹⁴ However, we are not obligated, as a matter of justice, to give the same kind of weight to attitudes or emotions that are either not supported by good reasons of fit, or that express values that are solely subjective because there is no shared reason for others to adopt them (though we may owe others some kind of freedom from interference in their solely subjective values). When subjective values do not remain *solely* subjective, it is precisely because we do have reason to want or expect others to adopt them and for them to become shared values. Thus one way that some of an individual’s subjective reasons of fit must matter in the public or political realm is that they may serve as input into the collective process of constructing and reconstructing normative expectations, and as such they help determine the “intersubjective evaluative features” of certain phenomena. Some subjective reasons of fit, then, should be treated as candidates for becoming shared reasons of fit. In the case of the development of norms around sexual harassment, for instance, people’s subjective experiences of unwelcome sexual advances matter politically as part of an intersubjective evaluative process (think here of the phrase, “the personal is political”); but, importantly, not all subjective experiences function this way (not *everything* personal is political¹⁵). In a justice-focused framework, what we owe to others regarding their subjective experiences as affective beings is to treat these experiences as on a par with others’ subjective experiences in how they contribute to our common understandings and expectations—in other words, in how they might generate a basis for judging whether “intersubjective fittingness conditions” have been met. And what the shared nor-

14. As Scanlon (1998) has characterized it in his contractualist theory, we owe each other *reasons* (or, equivalently, we owe each other justification).

15. Such heresy! (My younger self is appalled that my present self would say such a thing.)

mative expectations are that allow one to make such a judgment about “inter-subjective fittingness” is *not* up to an individual to determine.¹⁶

In contrast to the way that justice requires only a certain limited attention to others’ subjective experiences, caring about someone, Kittay has argued, entails caring even about their *solely* subjective values. And—this is the lesson that Kittay has learned from her daughter—people really are different from each other in their subjective experiences of valuing. This does not mean that there are no fittingness conditions at all to be applied to attitudes or emotions that express someone’s subjective experience of an object or an action, but rather that distinguishing between someone’s subjectively fitting and unfitting attitudes or emotions requires somehow separating what *really* matters to them from what might merely seem to matter to them. This distinction needs some explication, so in the remainder of this section I will make as much sense as I can of the notion of subjective fittingness, though in the following section I will push in the opposite direction: I will partly dismantle the notion of subjective fittingness by suggesting that we need not always be engaged in the project of sorting the subjectively fitting from the unfitting, or the larger project of which this seems to be a part, namely, that of striving to be more ideal versions of ourselves or of making those we love into more ideal versions of themselves.

Valerie Tiberius has characterized care as centrally a matter of helping the cared-for, such as a friend, determine what they really do subjectively value, and she recognizes that we can be mistaken about what our own subjective values are.¹⁷ Subjective theories, she argues, “need to explain how a person’s own point of view can be open to criticism even though it is ultimately the anchor for well-being” (2018, 103). Tiberius suggests that to help a friend critically scrutinize their subjective values, one should inquire about which of their values are appropriate, and urge them toward making choices in light of their appropriate values:

... because values have ... [affective, conative, and cognitive] dimensions, our values themselves can be more or less appropriate for us; that is, they can be more or less suited to our emotions and desires, and more or less aligned with our judgments about what’s good. Appropriate values are the objects of relatively sustainable and integrated emotions, desires, and judgments. (2018, 35)

16. The fittingness conditions in the public or political realm are to be applied in what becomes an ongoing process of revision: evaluative attitudes or emotions are judged to be fitting (or not) by checking on whether they are the attitudes or emotions that an imaginary, idealized agent, namely, an agent who has thoroughly internalized already-established intersubjective normative expectations would have, but these same normative expectations are also always open to revision when new attitudes or emotions reveal them to be inadequate. I have discussed the closely related “Neurathian” process of construction of morality at length in Tessman (2015).

17. Tiberius offers as a definition of valuing and of values: “... to value something in the fullest sense is to have a relatively stable pattern of emotions and desires with respect to it and to take these attitudes to give you reasons for action and (for the most important values) standards for evaluating how your life is going ... Valuing ... has an affective, a conative, and a cognitive dimension ... and values are the objects of these valuing attitudes” (2018, 35).

Although Tiberius seems to take the judgment that a value is appropriate to be an all-things-considered judgment that weighs both reasons of fit and extrinsic reasons,¹⁸ the reasons of fit that do apply are not reasons that must be endorsed by anyone other than the person whose reasons they are, but that does not mean that someone cannot mistakenly take a bad reason to be a good reason; we can make what count as mistakes (about subjective values) by our own lights. To say this is to insist that there are fittingness conditions for subjective values.

For an illustration of how an actual evaluative response could be subjectively unfitting, let's turn to an uncomplicated case of subjective experience: the experience of taste. We commonly accept that people have different subjective evaluative responses in the realm of taste—think of cilantro lovers and cilantro haters, chocolate lovers and those who just don't care for chocolate—and we don't expect or aim for agreement. Within a certain range of tastes, when people differ in their taste responses we also commonly accept that one person can fittingly love, say, cilantro while another may fittingly hate it.¹⁹ But to say that it is fitting for me but not for you to respond positively to cilantro, or chocolate, requires that there be subjective fittingness conditions, with the possibility of some responses being subjectively unfitting. To determine what is subjectively fitting we must sort through our actual responses, rejecting some as not reflecting what we *really* value or what *really* matters to us. If I ask, "Is it fitting for me to find chocolate to be delicious?" I do not need to know about anything other than my own subjective experience of chocolate, but I do need to know more than just what the actual experience that I am having in any given instance is. I *could* still have an unfitting response, because I could get it wrong about chocolate in some instance by diverging from my own more settled, or more ideal, subjective experience of it. If I have a stuffy nose that has dulled my taste and made even the best chocolate not taste like much at all today, then we might

18. Tiberius claims that "appropriate values are (1) suited to our desires and emotions, (2) reflectively endorsed, and (3) capable of being fulfilled together over time" (2018, 41). She does not differentiate between reasons of fit and extrinsic reasons for valuing when she proposes critical questions to ask. Her list of questions is as follows:

- Is this value appropriate to the person? Does it integrate emotion, desire, and judgment?
 - Can the value in question really be fulfilled over time at all? Does the person have even an implicit standard for what would count as succeeding? . . .
 - Is the value in question (perfection, money, power) really a stand-in for something else (say, friendship, achievement, or acceptance)? And if it is, would the person be better off in terms of value fulfillment if they could learn to construe the latter values in a different way?
 - Are there values that the person does not have at the moment but that might be very important for a value-fulfilled life (such as the value of integrity or self-acceptance) that will be frustrated by the attempt to fulfill the value in question? (Tiberius 2018, 57–58)
19. As Cullin Brown points out, there are limits. We *do* expect people not to find things outside of these limits (feces, mud . . .) to be tasty, and subjective responses that fall outside the limits are not "affirmable" by others in the way that subjective responses within the limits are, though one can certainly affirm someone else's subjective response without having the same response oneself. (Brown, conversation).

want to say that my “meh” response to the dark chocolate lava cake that you have just served me is subjectively unfitting. We can imagine that if I recognize my own response as subjectively unfitting, then instead of telling you that the cake is mediocre, I might say, “I’m sure that cake is truly delicious, but unfortunately I can’t appreciate it today.” In contrast, if you were to serve the cake to someone who has never liked dark chocolate, it would fittingly reflect their subjective values if they were to respond with distaste. Beyond taste, it is more generally true that evaluative attitudes or emotions can be “off” in any given instance: perhaps my rage at not immediately finding a parking spot is outsized (and subjectively unfitting) because I am hungry, or perhaps the garbage piled on the street is stunningly beautiful to me (but this response is subjectively unfitting) because I am newly in love. I might also misinterpret what I am feeling: I might find some random person to be sexually attractive because I have misinterpreted my increased heart rate—which was actually in this instance caused by adrenaline and indicates the danger of falling off of the high and precarious bridge that I just crossed—as sexual excitement.²⁰ The first kind of mistake that can make an attitude or emotion subjectively unfitting, then, is due to a quirk in what causes me to respond in a certain way or to interpret my response as I do. It would be wrong to conclude that chocolate cake is not tasty, that garbage is beautiful, or that the random person is sexually attractive—even subjectively—on the basis of responses that turn out to be deviant rather than normal *for me*. These responses are subjectively unfitting.

Someone might also make a factual mistake about the object to which they are responding, and this, too, can render their response subjectively unfitting. Let’s suppose I am helping a young adult friend or family member figure out what kind of career would be most satisfying for them. If their emotional response to, say, the thought of becoming an artist rather than an attorney is excitement and joy, then whether or not this is a fitting response will depend on whether they are making a mistake about what a career as an artist would entail and thus what their response would be to the “real” thing; for instance, they might not be envisioning how lonely they would feel during the long hours isolated in a studio or how frustrating and boring the tasks associated with marketing their artwork would be, and how this might detract from their well-being or their sense of the meaningfulness of their work, as they would actually experience it. They would be making a mistake about what the subjective evaluative features of a career as an artist would be for them, a mistake that undermines the reasons of fit that apparently supported their emotions of excitement and joy. Thus the second kind

20. This last example is taken from a study conducted by Donald Dutton and Arthur Aron; in this study: “Male passersby were contacted either on a fear-arousing suspension bridge or a non-fear-arousing bridge by an attractive female interviewer who asked them to fill out questionnaires containing Thematic Apperception Test pictures. Sexual content of stories written by subjects on the fear-arousing bridge and tendency of these subjects to attempt postexperimental contact with the interviewer were both significantly greater” (1974, 510).

of mistake that can render an attitude or emotion subjectively unfitting is a mistake about the object itself and a corresponding misconstrual of the subjective evaluative features of the object.²¹

I have elaborated a bit on the notion of subjective fittingness just in order to establish that while subjective fittingness conditions differ from what may be the more familiar—though, as I have suggested, merely figurative—“intersubjective fittingness conditions,” we can still distinguish meaningfully between what is subjectively fitting and unfitting. Having done this, I can now identify a failure of care that is related to subjective fittingness: one may fail to care for someone in their capacity as an affective being by either assuming that their subjective evaluative responses ought to match the emotions and attitudes that someone would have if they had thoroughly internalized shared normative expectations, or by not recognizing that subjective evaluative responses have their own fittingness conditions and that one can care for someone by helping them navigate the process of looking critically at whether their responses are subjectively fitting. Attending to the subjective experiences of those whom one cares about requires applying the correct (subjective) fittingness conditions, and not presuming that someone else’s subjective values are just like one’s own. And—Tiberius seems to imply—if one simply omits helping a friend look critically at their own subjective values, then one is also failing to care.

However, I believe that even if we *do* apply the right fittingness conditions and help someone assess their subjective reasons of fit, we may fall short of what at least some kinds of love—and with it some kinds of care—demand, at least some of the time. There are many forms of love and care, and a single loving and caring relationship may involve multiple modes of loving and caring. Contrary to Tiberius, I don’t think of loving someone or even caring about them as primarily a matter of helping or improving them. The particular mode of love that I am interested in, as one mode of loving among others, has more to do with understanding and accepting the beloved as they are—including as they are in their capacity as affective beings—than with helping them become better or even happier people.²² Loving someone might give one a reason to care for them in the sense of helping them, but it is embracing them as they are that *constitutes* loving them in a particular way, namely, unconditionally. Tiberius disregards this, as she is focused on how to determine what a friend would subjectively value if they were a more idealized version of themselves; I believe, however, that a friend may very well wish (also, or instead) to be accepted and valued as the nonideal self that they are.

21. Thanks to Cullin Brown for collaborative thinking about the two kinds of mistakes that can render a response subjectively unfitting.

22. This put me at odds with Barrett Emerick’s position. For Emerick, “love . . . does not call for us . . . to accept our loved ones’ failings. Instead, part of what loving another requires is believing in their potential to grow, holding them to account when they fail, and expecting them to be better” (2016, 2).

VI. UNCONDITIONAL LOVE: WHEN FITTINGNESS CONCERNS ARE UNFITTING

It is both possible and fruitful to apply fittingness conditions to many evaluative attitudes or other emotional responses, including, as I described in the previous section, in cases in which the evaluative features of the object to which someone is responding are subjectively determined. However, I want to turn now to times, in relationships of unconditional love, when questions of fit must move off center stage. Not all love is unconditional, and even in relationships of unconditional love, I suspect that it is not really possible (or even desirable) to remain in an unconditionally loving state all of the time. But when we do move into an unconditionally loving mode, we thereby forbear from asking for or even being interested in justification for our beloved's attitudes or emotions, or more precisely, for those of their attitudes and emotions that are significant for who they are, or that are based on (good or bad) reasons of fit that are significant to who they are. Thus, we should not ask for significant reasons of fit to be given for purposes of justification; when a reason is given for the purpose of justification, I will call it a *justificatory reason of fit*, by which I mean a reason of fit along with at least implied support for taking it to be a *good* reason of fit. The attitudes and emotions of those whom we love unconditionally reveal what subjectively matters to them in whatever state they are in, regardless of how far from an ideal state that may be, and we have no need to distinguish between what matters subjectively to them and what *really* matters subjectively to them, because the acceptance that we offer them is not conditional upon any kind of discriminating evaluation of their reasons. We have reasons of love to focus on the *unevaluated* subjective experience of our beloved. If we make judgments about their reasons of fit at all times, we might miss the opportunity to simply witness—and lovingly accept—what is revealed about them by their full range of attitudes or emotions.

I take unconditional love itself to be an attitude for which there can be no significant reasons of fit.²³ That is to say, unconditional love is love that is not conditional upon its being supported by reasons of fit that are significant for who the beloved is. Unconditional love consists in understanding, fully accepting, and valuing the beloved—and construing the beloved as lovable—without the need for

23. Some contributors to the philosophical debate between the “reasons” and “no-reasons” view of love mistakenly presuppose that all love is the same: either there are no “reasons for love” (of any kind) or there are “reasons for love” (of all kinds). The no-reasons view, I believe, is the correct view of what I am calling unconditional love. The reasons view (including the quality view, the relationship view, and so on) may apply to other kinds of love. For a quick introduction to this debate, see Kroeker (2019). David Wong argues for a plurality of kinds of love, allowing that there are reasons for some kinds of love and not for other kinds: “the three forms or faces of love—the kind that answers to no reasons, the kind that answers to reasons grounded in personal qualities of the beloved, and the kind that answers to reasons grounded in relationship, must all be kept in play. Accounts that make one of these faces the only or primary kind of love sooner or later display strains that reveal their partiality as accounts” (2014, 106).

any such reasons. In keeping with what Harry Frankfurt and others have insisted, I am saying that there are no reasons *for* unconditional love, only reasons *of* love. In Frankfurt's words, "love is itself, for the lover, a source of reasons" (2004, 37). The value of the beloved or of any of their qualities is not a reason *for* love because this value comes into being through the love itself.²⁴ While love is sometimes described as a kind of concern for the beloved or a desire for them to flourish, I don't conceive of unconditional love as *constituted* by such concern. Rather, I believe that one can have a reason *of* love to have such care or concern for one's beloved, or to desire for them to flourish. But love gives rise to a plurality of reasons, which may conflict with each other, and the fact that there are different kinds of love only increases this plurality and potential for conflict. Tiberius's focus on helping a friend for their own sake may be grounded in a reason of love. But unconditional love calls for one to accept, rather than to change, the beloved, even if the change would be for their own sake and could be characterized as a form of helping them. One way to change someone—which is at odds with acceptance—is to help them determine the fittingness of their attitudes and emotions so that they can try to rid themselves of those that are unfitting (including those that are subjectively unfitting). While there may be reasons of love that support trying to change one's beloved, I don't think that these can be reasons of *unconditional* love (of course, this does not imply that, even in a relationship in which one can sometimes attain a state of unconditional love, one should always take the reasons of unconditional love to override reasons of other kinds of love).

How, then, should one respond to those of one's beloved's evaluative attitudes and emotions that are significant for who they are, when one enters a mode of unconditional love? What is it to love someone unconditionally, in their capacity as an affective being? I believe that fully accepting the beloved as they are means that one should not require justificatory reasons of fit in support of the attitudes or emotions that one's beloved experiences, because acceptance entails refraining from making discriminating evaluations of reasons (except perhaps those that are not related in any significant way to who the beloved is). One must shift one's attention from the project of improving or perfecting them by measuring them against a more idealized version of themselves (even when this would constitute helping them) to accepting them as they are. The notion of meeting subjective fittingness conditions—as discussed in the previous section—requires distinguishing between what one experiences as mattering when the experience is affected by "mistakes" (in what one's response is or how one interprets it, or about the object to which one is responding) and what one would experience under more ideal conditions in which these mistakes would be eliminated. I now want to suggest

24. Rejecting the view of love as "a response to the perceived worth of the beloved," Frankfurt argues that "the truly essential relationship between love and the value of the beloved goes in the opposite direction. It is not necessarily as a *result* of recognizing their value and of being captivated by it that we love things. Rather, what we love necessarily *acquires* value for us *because* we love it" (2004, 38–39).

that the “mistakes” may be more interesting than they appeared to be, and that some of them are so deeply a part of who we are that when we idealize away from them our real self—the self we would want someone who unconditionally loves us to accept—disappears. To unconditionally love someone is to accept *rather than evaluate* their attitudes or emotions for which there are no significant reasons of fit (such as their own attitude of unconditional love) and their significant attitudes or emotions that, were one to evaluate them, would be revealed to be subjectively or “intersubjectively” unfitting.

First, consider one’s beloved’s own attitude of unconditional love—perhaps one’s unconditionally beloved (adult) child’s unconditional love for their romantic partner. To unconditionally love one’s child is to unconditionally accept them, and a deep part of who they are is revealed by whom they unconditionally love; however, their own attitude of unconditional love *cannot* be subjected to fittingness judgments because there *are* no “reasons for love” (of this kind), that is, no considerations that bear constitutively on the question, which they must settle, of whether to love someone.²⁵ Whether the object of their love has the evaluative feature of being *lovable* is determined subjectively, by them, so if any fittingness conditions were relevant they would be those that help them figure out whom they really do love; but even such fittingness conditions are for the most part out of place in the case of the sort of love for which there are no constitutive reasons.²⁶ Fittingness is simply not a meaningful concept in relation to the attitude of the sort of love for which there are no significant reasons. Whom one’s beloved loves can reveal what subjectively matters to them, regardless of fit.²⁷ In fact whom or what

25. Though note that there *can* still be extrinsic reasons for (or against) unconditionally loving someone.

26. I say “for the most part” because there could still be ways one might be mistaken about what or whom one loves, and thus that love could be called unfitting were one to assess it in terms of fittingness. As Cullin Brown points out, it is possible for love, even when understood as a form of subjective valuing that is “caused” rather than based on (justificatory) reasons, might be unfitting. He argues that while one cannot ask for constitutive reasons (reasons of fit) for certain attitudes such as love, and so it might seem that love is, simply by virtue of existing, fitting love, nevertheless “we are open to adjacent challenges that query whether those attitudes rest on misrepresentations of their targets or misinterpretations of our subjective experiences (citing Sobel 2016)” (Brown, n.d.1, 16). For instance, I could misrepresent the target if I think I love the person that is walking toward me—without my glasses on, I mistakenly think that person is my lover; or I could misinterpret my subjective experience if I interpret my excitement at seeing a certain person as love for them, when it is in fact lust. However, helping someone whom one unconditionally loves to eliminate these kinds of mistakes would *not* be in tension with fully accepting them, as these kinds of mistakes would not be a deep part of who they really are. Saying “I think you need to put your glasses on and look again” is very different from deeper rejections of someone’s attitude of unconditional love for someone else. We might thus amend the “no-reasons” view of love and call it a “no-significant-reasons” view.

27. Even if we say that there are no reasons (of fit) for love—and so it is not clear that Hieronymi would consider love to be a commitment-constituted attitude—nevertheless love is like a commitment-constituted attitude in that whom or what we love is not under our direct control. This is a point that is central to Frankfurt’s account of love: “it is a necessary feature of love that it is not under our direct and immediate voluntary control” (Frankfurt 2004, 44); rather, our love is constrained by a “volitional necessity,” which is “a limitation of the will” (Frankfurt 2004, 46). As

a person loves may be the most important part of their subjective experience of what matters. To adopt a critical attitude of making them answerable for their love would be to present their love, inaccurately, as love-for-which-there-are-reasons-of-fit; thus this kind of critical attitude—an attitude that focuses on justificatory reasons of fit—is itself unfitting.

In other cases in which unconditional love calls for us to suspend fittingness judgments, this is not because there are no reasons of fit but rather because although there are reasons of fit, such reasons should not be requested for the critical project of changing or improving someone, of distinguishing the way someone actually is from a more idealized version of them, in order to help them aim for the ideal. I am *not* suggesting that helping someone change is not valuable, but rather that it is not something that one does under the name of unconditional love, which calls instead for indiscriminate acceptance of the nonideal. Distinguishing good from bad reasons of fit consists in distinguishing that which is to be accepted from that which is to be rejected, so if these reasons are significant ones for who someone is, then assessing their reasons for the purpose of rejecting some of them is the very thing that unconditional love rules out.²⁸

Consider some of the “mistakes”—the “bad” reasons of fit—that might be taken to render an attitude or emotion unfitting. Evaluative or emotional responses to an (apparent) object are often psychologically injured or traumatized responses, in which someone’s perception or experience is of something that is essentially a different object than the object as it is perceived by others, or as it would be perceived by a more idealized or healthy version of themselves. These “mistakes” thus include cases in which an injury from a person’s past reasserts itself, producing, for instance, a threat disguised in the form of a present object (loosely what are referred to as “triggers”), or making a present and perhaps hurtful object appear alluring because it seems to offer the opportunity to repeat and rewrite a past trauma. As Hannah Pickard notes, “many of our deepest, most important emotions are utterly irrational and recalcitrant, and *known* by us as such. They persist despite the fact that we believe them to lack any and all rational grounds. Obvious examples include phobias, aversions, and emotions which carry the residue of

Frankfurt puts it, “the necessity that is characteristic of love does not constrain the movements of the will through an imperious surge of passion or compulsion by which the will is defeated and subdued. On the contrary, the constraint operates from within our own will itself. It is by our own will, and not by any external or alien force, that we are constrained” (2004, 46). Because it is a limit of the will and not *on* the will, it is *our own*, and so it represents our “take” on the object in just the same way that Hieronymi thinks (other) evaluative attitudes do.

28. One might still request reasons of fit from someone whom one unconditionally loves, simply in order to understand them better, rather than in order to evaluate them. For instance, I might ask someone whom I love, “Why did you get embarrassed when you were asked to speak at the reception?” because I want to understand better whether they are someone who finds it embarrassing to, for instance, speak in front of a crowd no matter what, or speak in front of a crowd when they are not dressed properly, or speak inarticulately in front of a crowd, etc. Knowing their reasons of fit for embarrassment helps me know better what they are like. What unconditional love rules out is *evaluating* their reasons of fit, not merely being interested in their reasons of fit.

past experience and, especially, trauma” (2019, 10). Importantly, our emotions often “reveal more about the self and its history than about their actual worldly objects” (2019, 11).²⁹ In cases like this what is revealed is not best thought of as a self who has made a mistake, but rather, a self to whom objects in the world are truly ambiguous.

To unconditionally love a self to whom objects in the world are truly ambiguous—that is, ambiguous in a way that is significant to who they are rather than in trivial ways such as when one is fooled by a mirage—is to forbear from assessing the fittingness of their significant evaluative attitudes and emotions. That you feel abandoned or rejected when I have not abandoned or rejected you may make your emotions seem unfitting as a response to my actions, but they fit the evaluative features of the subjective experience of me that you are actually having, perhaps as a result of transference. The ambiguity arises because I am in a sense two objects: I am both myself (to me, to others, and to an idealized version of you) and the embodiment of someone from your past (to the actual you in this moment). If I unconditionally love you, it is not enough for me to switch from an intersubjective perspective to your subjective perspective; I must also refrain from evaluating the subjective fittingness of your response by measuring your actual response against the response of an idealized you. Similarly, anger may be a fitting response to the peers who bullied you in adolescence, but if I maintain an intersubjective perspective or if I enter your subjective perspective only to engage in an evaluation of the subjective fittingness of your response, I will determine that your anger is not a fitting response to my gentle teasing, which in the present moment seems to be its object. The teasing inadvertently triggers the angry response, and in this sense the anger could be said to fit the object if the object is understood to be teasing-*as*-triggerger, which is what it is to your actual self in this moment.³⁰ For one more example: shame may be a fitting response to your own self-image, though it does not fit the evaluative features of my image of you or the image you would have of yourself if you had gone through more healing. Perhaps you construe your body as shameful, and I do not take there to be anything shameful about your body; your shame appears unfitting to me as I measure it against the response of an imaginary, idealized agent who has internalized intersubjectively developed norms—such as feminist “body-positive” norms—that I endorse. Even if I care about you and recognize that to care successfully, I must apply your subjective fittingness conditions, this will not solve the problem. If I empathically take up your subjective perspective to ascertain whether your shame is subjectively fitting for you, I still might measure the actual shame that you feel against what you would

29. Pickard is making this point in the context of an argument that it is wrong to judge emotions on the basis of a moral reason—an extrinsic reason—but I believe that the same point suggests that we should at least sometimes not make judgments of fit.

30. Of course, that does not mean that I should accept responsibility for triggering the anger or that I should necessarily change anything about my own behavior; only reactive attitudes that are “*intersubjectively fitting*” can serve to *fairly* hold others responsible.

feel under more idealized conditions, and thus determine your actual shame to be subjectively unfitting.

In all of these cases, taking up the normative or evaluative stance from which idealizing can take place falls short of what unconditional love requires, which is that I step out of an evaluative stance altogether and into a stance of indiscriminate acceptance.³¹ Only then do I accept your *actual* experience of hurtful rejection, of anger-worthy bullying, or of your own shameful self-image without any evaluation of it as either fitting or unfitting. Without the normative or evaluative move of idealizing, the notion of subjective fittingness simply dissolves; it becomes meaningless, because all of our actual evaluative attitudes and emotions, or at least those that are important enough to be part of what someone who unconditionally loves us must witness and accept about us, will count as subjectively fitting.³² In unconditionally loving someone, we must largely refrain from measuring that person's actual self against an idealized version of themselves—though the small caveat is that we may still be able to idealize in trivial ways to correct for deviations that do not affect who the beloved is in any deep way (so we can still call someone's "meh" response to chocolate subjectively unfitting when it results from their having a cold).

Of course, at some moment, it might be useful to point out to someone whom one loves that their response reveals transference, or comes out of trauma, or is a response to a distorted self-image. While it may be helpful and caring to point these things out, and while there is a reason *of* love to offer caring help, what is constitutive of unconditional love is the understanding, acceptance, and valuing of the person with all of what they actually *do* feel, not just what they ought (fittingly) to feel. What they do feel—perhaps especially when it diverges from what they ought (for reasons of fit) to feel—reveals some of the deepest and otherwise hidden aspects of them, and it is precisely these aspects of them that might call for loving attention. We can express understanding—as we do when we say something like “I’m sorry you are in such pain”—and convey our acceptance simply by holding back from asking for justificatory reasons of fit, and by not proposing (shared or subjective) reasons of fit to feel a different emotion. One might say to someone whom one loves and who is ashamed of what they take to be their shameful body, “I am sorry you are suffering from such shame,” rather than, “you shouldn’t be ashamed of your body, because there is nothing shameful about your body,” as the latter comment can be made only from an evaluative stance, and not from a stance of indiscriminate acceptance. The critical, evaluative attitude is itself unfitting, because it does not construe the beloved as unconditionally lovable. The

31. Note that a stance of acceptance differs both from Strawson's (1962) participant stance (which is an evaluative stance from which one's reactive attitudes are grounded in constitutive reasons/reasons of fit) and from his objective stance (which is a stance from which one takes only extrinsic reasons into consideration).

32. Another way to put this would be to say that when one occupies a stance of acceptance, a dispositional response-dependent theory rather than a normative response-dependent theory best captures how one should take the subjective evaluative features of an object to be determined.

only attitude that construes a person as unconditionally lovable is the attitude of unconditional love, and with it acceptance of all that is significant to who the beloved is.

In unconditionally loving someone, one must stop treating one's beloved's evaluative attitudes and emotions as what Hieronymi counts as "commitment-constituted," given how Hieronymi defines this term. Hieronymi equates attitudes that reveal our commitments, or our "takes" on the world, with attitudes for which we are answerable in the sense that we can be asked for our reasons, on the assumption (that I would reject) that all commitments are the sort of thing that at least *could* be made for reasons of fit.³³ I would suggest that sometimes attitudes and emotions *do* reveal a person's take on the world (and in that sense their commitments) despite the fact that they are not attitudes for which the person—if one unconditionally loves and thus fully accepts them—could or should be asked for justificatory reasons of fit.³⁴ For Hieronymi, commitment-constituted attitudes are nonvoluntary precisely because, *given* the reasons that we recognize and that matter to us as bearing on a question, we cannot settle the question in any way that we choose; insofar as we are rational, we can only do so in accordance with reasons. If we lack good reasons of fit then our attitudes will be unfitting. However, in unconditionally loving someone, one treats the question of fittingness as beside the point in these cases, even while maintaining that the attitudes are commitment-constituted in that they reveal what matters to the beloved. Hieronymi has emphasized that commitment-constituted attitudes should be taken as telling us about what rightly matters to their bearer rather than about what the object of the attitude merits or deserves; while I agree with her shift of focus from the object to the person who has the evaluative or emotional response to the object, I am suggesting that in some cases we must accept that something matters to someone regardless of whether it is what *rightly*—or rationally—matters to them. Fully accepting a person for who they are—rather than accepting only a more idealized (and counterfactually rational, or reasons-responsive) version of them—means appreciating all of their significant attitudes and emotions for being part of who they are. In these

33. Hieronymi draws on Anscombe in developing this position. She does point out that an attitude for which one has no reason could still be commitment-constituted, as long as one could be *asked* for one's reasons, that is, as long as the question about one's reasons "has application." Hieronymi quotes Anscombe: "the question ['Why did you ϕ ?'] is not refused application because the answer to it says that there is *no* reason, any more than the question how much money I have in my pocket is refused application by the answer 'None'" (Hieronymi 2008, 360, quoting Anscombe 1957, 25). However (I would argue), the question (for instance, "why do you love them?") does *not* have application when there is something for which there not only *are* no reasons, but for which there *cannot* be reasons, i.e. it is not the sort of thing that is done for a reason. I would argue that unconditional love is a commitment even though it is not one for which one is answerable. As I interpret Hieronymi, she would not count such love as "commitment-constituted."

34. Cullin Brown (n.d.1) suggests—and I agree—that commitments for which there are no reasons of fit are still attributable to someone even when they are not answerable for them. One might still evaluate someone for having the commitments that are attributable to them, but this would be an aretaic judgment, not a demand for justificatory reasons.

cases, if we always respond to the person whom we love with a critical attitude of questioning whether they have good reasons of fit, this critical attitude will itself be unfitting, because it will not accurately present its object—the person whom we love unconditionally—as having the evaluative feature of being unconditionally lovable.

VII. CODA

While the problem of affective *injustice* is in part a matter of denying victims of this kind of injustice the opportunity to affectively appreciate the world, to get the world “right” through their affective responses without having to constantly navigate the conflict between reasons of fit and extrinsic reasons, I have been arguing that we can also fail some people in their capacity as affective beings by making *too much* of the value of getting it right through their affective responses. We also need to be accepted and valued as people who have attitudinal and emotional responses that, were they to be evaluated in light of fittingness conditions that depend on idealization, would be judged to get it wrong.

When an evaluative attitude or emotion *is* fitting—when it gets something right about the object to which it is a response—then it warrants attention in part because of how the *object* of the response matters; to know how an object matters we have to know what its evaluative features are, which is what fitting responses tell us. Black people’s fitting anger at racism matters in part because racism (the object of the response) is an injustice that matters; the fitting, angry responses serve to both intersubjectively construct the phenomenon as an injustice and to inform others of the injustice. Hieronymi has made the wise point that reactive attitudes and emotions don’t just tell us about the features of the object to which they are responses; they also, or especially, tell us something about their bearer—for instance, the fact that they have been wronged. Affective injustice takes place when some people are disproportionately barred from affectively appreciating and expressing a fact like this, and it is fitting anger that tells us that the angry people (or those on whose behalf they are angry) have been wronged. But when we shift from thinking about justice to thinking about love and care, even unfitting responses call for our attention.

Our fitting responses do communicate something about us. My point is that our responses that are not fitting do too. When a response is fitting, it only reveals a subset of what matters to someone; it reveals only that which can be supported by good reasons of fit. But only one layer of a complex, affective being comprises the attitudes and emotions that can be supported by reasons of fit that are judged to be good reasons according to (subjective or “intersubjective”) fittingness conditions that depend on some idealization. There are many more layers made up of attitudes and emotions that are not supported by this sort of justificatory reasons. There are attitudes and emotions that should not be subject to fittingness judgments

because their importance does not lie in their being justified by good reasons of fit. Their importance lies simply in what they reveal about someone whom one unconditionally loves.

To briefly revisit, then, the despair that I felt in response to RBG's death: if my despair was indeed either subjectively or "intersubjectively" unfitting as seen from an evaluative stance, then what it revealed was (some of) my brokenness. What I have been arguing for is the importance of stepping out of an evaluative stance, and into a stance of indiscriminate acceptance, from which one can unconditionally love what is broken, rather than trying to fix it. In that spirit, here at the end of this paper I will leave behind the evaluative stance from which I have been reflecting on my spouse's critical attitude toward my despair, namely, the stance from which I (given my unconditional love for her) *unfittingly* determined that her attitude (given her unconditional love for me) was unfitting. Instead, I offer—too late—acceptance of something that was a bit broken about her: her need to fix what was broken in those whom she loved.

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