

# There Are No Reasons for Affective Attitudes

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A dogma of contemporary ethical theory maintains that the nature of normative support for affective attitudes is the very same as the nature of normative support for actions. The prevailing view is that normative reasons provide the support across the board. I argue that the nature of normative support for affective attitudes is importantly different from the nature of normative support for actions. Actions are indeed supported by reasons. Reasons are gradable and contributory. The support relations for affective attitudes are neither. So-called reasons of the right kind for affective attitudes are facts that make those very attitudes fitting. Unlike reasons, fit-making facts for affective attitudes do not conflict with each other or combine in the explanation of further normative facts. More fit-making facts just make a more complex set of reactions fitting. This result undermines various analyses and unity theses in the philosophy of normativity.

## 1.1 Introduction

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There are no reasons for affective attitudes. There are no reasons for admiration, delight, fear, envy, gratitude, disgruntlement, contempt, Schadenfreude, relief, pity, shame, or amusement. There is no reason to want to listen to the Köln concert, or to want to avoid a grisly death. No reason to hope for a brighter day. There is no reason for your incredulous reaction to this announcement, but it might be *fitting* all the same. I do not deny that there are normative standards that apply to these attitudes. Rather, I claim that these two relations of normative support—being favoured by a reason or various reasons, and being made fitting—are importantly different in various ways. Contrary to a common assumption, affective attitudes are not supported by reasons but by facts that make them fitting. That is the central thesis of this paper.

I start out by clarifying the target notion of a normative reason, and distinguishing two classes of would-be reasons for affective attitudes:

the right kind and the wrong kind. I restrict my argument to the so-called *right kind* of reasons for affective attitudes.<sup>1</sup> The heart of my argument is this: so-called reasons of the right kind for affective attitudes have a different nature from reasons for action. Reasons for action are *gradable*—they have weights—and they are *contributory*—they are incomplete parts of a specific kind of explanation of overall normative facts, such as facts about what you ought to do. But so-called reasons of the right kind for affective attitudes are neither gradable nor contributory. They do not have weights and they do not explain ought facts. They are themselves, if you like, a kind of ought fact. So-called reasons of the right kind for affective attitudes are facts each of which makes a different attitude fitting.

Here's a case from my own life that got me thinking about these issues. My grandmother passed away recently. She was an amazing lady, the only woman driving a Jaguar in Glasgow in the 1950s. She had been suffering terribly with Alzheimer's for the last several years of her life, with no hope of improvement. She believed she would rejoin her beloved first husband in the afterlife. But she was our family matriarch, and she had great chat right up until the end. She used her last words to make fun of my dad's bald spot.

What is the fitting response to a death such as this? Here's one thought: the facts about her disease and her religious beliefs weigh against the facts about her being a matriarch and a good laugh. They cancel each other out. One should feel utterly unmoved. Clearly this is not right. Rather, in response to my grandmother's passing, both sadness and a certain kind of relief were fitting. The facts that made the sadness fitting didn't make the relief unfitting, nor did the facts that made the relief fitting make the sadness unfitting. These facts don't participate in any kind of 'weighing explanation'. Each of them directly makes a specific response fitting.

So, at least, I'll argue. I hope that this discussion will be of as much interest to the theory of reasons as to the theory of the normativity of affective attitudes. The terminological question of what we should *call* a reason and what we shouldn't doesn't matter much, except that calling two different things by the same name invites confusion when the difference matters. The terminology I offer seems best, but it's the distinct natures of the relations of normative support that is important.

<sup>1</sup> I am agnostic about whether there are reasons of the wrong kind for affective attitudes.

### 1.2 What is at stake?

I hope that, like me, you'll find the business of trying to get clear about the nature of different normative properties and relations interesting for its own sake. In our ordinary normative practice, we use the term 'reason' profligately, and it seems reasonable to expect that this usage will occasionally conceal interesting differences. Indeed, it seems clear that even in the case of reasons for action, the uniformity in our reasons talk conceals differences between, for example, motivating reasons and normative reasons, and, more subtly, between considerations that metaphysically explain ought facts and considerations from which one ought to reason (Wedgwood 2015). We should be open to the possibility that our talk about 'this or that reason for this or that attitude', while perfectly felicitous, might be best understood as picking out some different support relation from our talk about reasons for actions.

It is common nowadays for philosophers to assume various strong 'unity of reasons' theses: it's not just that moral, prudential, and epistemic reasons are reasons in the very same sense, but that there are reasons for affective attitudes in this very same sense. Such theses have been used as premises in objections to the Value-based Theory of Reasons and Desire-based Theory of Reasons (Joseph Raz 2011, Jonathan Way 2013). Such unity theses are also implicit in defences of 'Global Consequentialism', which maintains that actions and affective attitudes are normatively assessed in exactly the same way, namely by evaluating their consequences (Derek Parfit 1984, Toby Ord 2009). But such unity theses are a working hypothesis, not a datum. They have not been subjected to scrutiny, especially not within the 'reasons' literature. To assess these theses on their merits we need to attend carefully to putative *disunities*, attempting to give as clear an account of them as possible.

A number of prominent views aim to account for some class of normative facts in terms of facts about reasons for affective attitudes. Some views explain the *fittingness* of an affective attitude in terms of the balance of the right kind of reasons for and against the attitude. (See Schroeder, 2010.) This view is a central target of the arguments to come. Other views explain *value* in terms of reasons for desires (Scanlon 1998) or some other privileged positive attitudes (Suikkanen 2009, Way 2013). These are variations of the so-called 'buck-passing' theory of value. Relatedly, some views define the *aesthetic*, or aesthetic value, in terms of the kinds of things we have reason

to appreciate (Walton 1993). If my argument is successful, such views will need to be reconsidered.

The search for an account of the distinction between reasons of the ‘right’ and ‘wrong’ kind presumes not just that right and wrong reasons are right and wrong *reasons*, but also that right and wrong reasons are right and wrong instances of the same category of thing. (This assumption is universal in the literature; for salient discussions see Schroeder *op. cit.*, Howard *forthcoming*, and Suikkanen *op. cit.*) But if my argument succeeds, this is a mistake. So-called reasons of the wrong kind for attitudes may well be bona fide reasons, either for the attitude itself, or perhaps for bringing it about that one has some attitude. (I’m officially agnostic about this.) But so-called reasons of the right kind are not reasons, they are fit-making facts.

### 1.3 Terminology

We have two relations: the *reason* relation, and the *fit-making* relation.<sup>2</sup> A *reason* is a fact that stands in the *reason* relation to an option. A *fit-making fact* is a fact that stands in the *fit-making* relation to an attitude or something else. In each case we can distinguish the fact that is the reason or the fit-making fact from the fact that this fact is a reason or a fit-making fact. I will use the word ‘supporting’ when I want to remain non-committal about the kind of normative or even non-normative support, whether favoured by a reason, made fitting, partially grounded, or something else. I assume the things doing the supporting are facts.<sup>3</sup>

I restrict my conclusion to so-called reasons for affective attitudes.<sup>4</sup> I talk mostly about emotions; I do occasionally discuss desires (in the sense of passions or wants rather than motives). I take no stand on whether my arguments can be generalized to conative attitudes (the action-oriented attitudes such as preference and intention) or epistemic attitudes.<sup>5</sup> I will be focusing on occurrent mental states rather than dispositions or traits of character (on episodes of anger rather

<sup>2</sup> I assume that the *being a reason for* relation and the *being a reason against* relation are distinguished just by their valence.

<sup>3</sup> I don’t deny that justified false beliefs about outcomes can provide normative support. But issues about evidence-sensitivity are largely orthogonal to the central points here (apart from briefly in §4.1). I stick with facts for simplicity.

<sup>4</sup> For a seminal overview of the affective/conative/epistemic trichotomy of mind in empirical psychology, see Hilgard (1980).

<sup>5</sup> Elsewhere, Jack Woods and I (ms.) defend a related account of normative support for epistemic states.

than being ornery) and rather than enduring states (such as loving Charlie or caring about poverty). I also restrict my focus to object-directed attitudes rather than moods or feelings (being angry about your low wages rather than just ‘having got out of bed on the wrong side’). The goal of this essay is to draw the advertised contrast as clearly as possible, so I will focus on paradigmatic cases. I leave for another occasion the task of characterizing more precisely which things stand on the ends of these two relations, the reason relation and the fit-making relation.<sup>6</sup>

## 2. Reasons and the right/wrong distinction

### 2.1 The relevant features of reasons

Let’s start by characterising reasons, by which I will always mean *normative* reasons. I will work with a precise and restrictive characterisation. This suits my dialectical goal of making the contrast between the reason relation and the fit-making relation as clear as possible. I extend the argument to an alternative characterization in §4.2.

For an illustration of reasons for action, we can start with Peter Singer’s famous example:

If you are walking past a shallow pond and see a child drowning in it, you ought to wade in and pull the child out. This will mean getting your clothes muddy, but this is insignificant, while the death of the child would presumably be a very bad thing. (Singer 1971, p. 231)

The fact that by wading into the pond you can save the life of a child is a reason to do so. The fact that by doing so you’ll get your clothes muddy is a reason not to wade into the pond. Each of these reasons has some *gradable* property that is usually called its weight. These weights can be compared with each other, by and large.<sup>7</sup> In this example, the ‘saving the child’ reason has more weight than the ‘getting your clothes muddy’ reason.

These weights can interact in different ways. Sometimes reasons compete with each other, as do the reason to save the child and the reason to protect your clothes. Sometimes reasons combine, as both

<sup>6</sup> I don’t rule out the possibility that some actions are fitting (for example, expressive actions in symbolic contexts).

<sup>7</sup> It will not be necessary to address questions about, for example, whether and how moral and prudential reasons can be compared. For important recent discussions see Harman (2016) and Schafer (2016).

the satirical punch and historical interest in Gogol's novels combine to favour reading them. In most cases, there will be lots of reasons for and against any given option.

The mere fact that some fact is a reason to do something, even a weighty reason, doesn't yet make it the case that you overall ought (henceforth simply 'ought') to do that thing, or that you would be criticisable for not doing it. It is a mistake—albeit a common one—to say that individual reasons ever justify or require anything on their own. On their own, reasons are normatively impotent. The fact that *this* is a reason for *that*, even a weighty reason, is simply silent about what other reasons there might be. Even a weighty reason, if significantly outweighed, would fail to justify the action it favours. The fact that the child will drown, for instance, would fail to justify wading into the pond if the alternative were defusing a bomb on dry land, set to destroy Chicago.<sup>8</sup>

Together, however, the facts about the weights of all the reasons for and against any given option, together with the fact that these are all the reasons bearing on the given option, explain some fact about the net weight of reason supporting that option. These facts about the net weight of reason supporting each option (together with some fact about what options there are) in turn explain the fact that there is *most* reason in support of some option. Assuming that you ought to do what you have most reason to do, this fact explains the fact that you ought to take that option.<sup>9</sup> This last fact, the fact that you ought to take this option, is an overall normative fact. It obtains in virtue of all the contributory normative facts together with a 'normative totality fact' to the effect that these are all the relevant normative facts.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> It is implicit in Singer's example that you don't have any reasons that are weightier than your reason to save the child. For discussion of the relations between contributory reasons and 'sufficient reasons', 'decisive reasons', and 'conclusive reasons', see Lord & Maguire (2016).

<sup>9</sup> The thesis that you ought to do what you have most reason to do is controversial but not for reasons relevant to our discussion.

<sup>10</sup> Compare the discussion of 'weighing explanations' in Broome (2013), the reply in Kearns and Star (2015), and the reply to both in Maguire (2016a). We can distinguish normative facts that are necessarily explained in part by some normative totality fact, such as facts about what you ought to do, from normative facts that are not so explained, such as facts about reasons (and, for example, facts about particular values, such as the beauty of a smile, or the pleasure in a glass of whisky). The former types of normative facts are *overall* facts; the latter are *local* facts. Notice there are various totality facts in the explanation of ought facts—that these are all the options, and that these are all the reasons for any given option (and there will be one of those for each option). For a related distinction in epistemology, see Selim Berker (2013).

Let me explicitly draw your attention to the three most important properties that emerge from this characterization. Firstly, reasons are individually impotent, or equivalently, they are *non-strict*.<sup>11</sup> Strict facts are directives; facts about what you overall ought to do are the paradigmatic strict facts. Secondly, reasons are essentially<sup>12</sup> *contributory*. Contributoriness is the property of playing a specific role in a ‘weighing explanation’ of an overall normative fact. Characteristically, reasons play this role either by combining or by competing with each other. Thirdly, reasons are essentially *gradable*. They stand in ‘weightier than’ relations to each other. (For simplicity, we can talk as though these weights come in degrees. I show in §4.2 that my central contrast relies on a weaker assumption than this.)

I will argue that fit-making facts are not gradable and they are not contributory; fit-making facts are not impotent: they are strict facts, but they are local, rather than overall, strict facts. They are like reasons in being local facts but like the overall ought in being strict.

It is important to distinguish reasons in the metaphysical sense just characterized from a broader functional role that considerations can play as *representatives* in reasons-giving conversational and deliberative contexts.<sup>13</sup> It is well-known in the theory of explanation that the provision of salient considerations can play different pragmatic roles in virtue of variations in our shared background knowledge and specific interests in reasons-giving contexts. Quite generally, the considerations we actually offer as reasons are those that are saliently needed, in some specific conversational context, to pick out a larger explanatory structure. (Compare Grice (1975), Raz (1975), and Schroeder (2007).) It is permissible to *say* of considerations that they are reasons even if they are not reasons in my sense. For instance, it is permissible to say that the reason for you to  $\phi$  was that ‘there was no reason not to

<sup>11</sup> I use ‘impotent’ and ‘non-strict’ synonymously. I leave open the question whether it is essentially true that reasons are non-strict. For instance, it may be that obligations are contributory (that they play the relevant role in a weighing explanation of the overall ought) but also strict (a mark of this being that you are criticisable for failing to fulfil an obligation even if the balance of reasons tells against doing so).

<sup>12</sup> By ‘ $x$  is essentially  $F$ ’ I mean that it lies in the nature of  $xs$  to be  $F$ , as it lies in the nature of water to be  $H_2O$ . This entails that it is necessarily true that all  $xs$  are  $F$ . For further discussion, see Rosen (2015). This is stronger than the argument requires.

<sup>13</sup> On this distinction see Raz (1975, p. 22), Broome (2013, p. 49), Wedgwood (2015), Maguire (2016b), and especially Daniel Fogal (2016, p. 86), from whom I borrow the term ‘representatives’. This is an instance of a more general distinction between metaphysical or causal explanations and considerations that one can give as an answer to a ‘why’ question in a specific context. (See David Lewis (1986, p. 215).)

5  $\phi$ ' or that 'a reliable informant advised  $\phi$ -ing' or that 'there was most reason to  $\phi$ ' or that 'Mildred didn't mind', and so on. But none of these are reasons in the sense of considerations that play the metaphysical role I have in mind. This is a crucial point, because it is often permissible to say that some consideration or other is the reason for you to have some attitude. It doesn't follow that these considerations play the same metaphysical role as reasons as I understand them.

## 2.2 Distinguishing right from wrong

10 I need to briefly distinguish the 'right' from the 'wrong' kind of supporting considerations in order to focus attention on the so-called reasons of the right kind for affective attitudes. This distinction is widely accepted but difficult to analyse. (See Rabinowicz & Rønnow-Rasmussen (2004) and especially D'Arms and Jacobson (2000).)

15 First exclude *incentive* cases. The fact that the gunman will shoot unless you hope that the Socialist candidate wins the election seems to be a reason to hope that she wins, but the wrong kind of reason. Intuitively the right kind of reason to hope that the Socialist candidate wins is that she favours universal health care, or free child care, or
 20 hefty anti-discrimination provisions. Intuitively the gunman's threat provides the wrong kind of reason to have this attitude in this context.<sup>14</sup>

25 We can draw a further distinction between reasons of the right kind and moral or prudential considerations. Sometimes a joke can be funny even though it wouldn't be appropriate to laugh—a plane-crash joke at a funeral, for example. Often emotions can be fitting but unpleasant, or unwise: too much anxiety about whether you will fall off the rickety bridge and you just might. When Joseph Raz says 'A murderous rage ... appears never to be appropriate' (2011, p. 49),

<sup>14</sup> Some incentive cases are subtler. The fact that some affective attitude will be pleasant/unpleasant is usually the wrong kind of reason to have/not have the attitude. Even the fact that manifesting an attitude in a situation will help you to develop the disposition to manifest that attitude in similar situations—'fake it 'til you make it' reasons—are reasons of the wrong kind. Only in unusual cases would this incentive affect whether some attitude is fitting. Suppose I tell you I will shoot you unless you are scared of me, or that I'll give you a million dollars if you are excited about an offer I make you. Are these reasons of the right kind for these attitudes? To answer this, I suspect we need to distinguish different objects: the fact that someone is threatening you with being shot, and the fact that you will be shot unless you are scared of the person making the threat. The first is definitely the right kind of reason to be scared (if there are any). I'm not sure about the second. What is important is that these are fringe cases. This shows we are cottoning on to the relevant distinction.

this is true, if ‘appropriate’ is understood broadly, but false, if understood to mean that there is no such thing as the (so-called) right kind of reason to fly into a murderous rage. Consider the circumstances of The Bride in Tarantino’s *Kill Bill* after the massacre of her friends and unborn baby on her wedding day, for example. Following D’Arms and Jacobson (2000), let us classify considerations such as these—incentive cases, as well as moral and prudential considerations bearing on attitudes in these ways—as of the wrong kind.

### 3. Fit-making facts are not contributory

I will now begin the argument. Reasons are non-strict, contributory, and gradable. In this section I will argue that fit-making facts are strict and not contributory. In the following section I will argue that fit-making facts are not gradable. It follows that fit-making facts are not reasons. In the final section I consider and reject an objection, namely, that some fit-making facts play a contributory role in explaining over-all strict facts about attitudes to complex states of affairs.

Here is the strategy for this section. Start with some very specific affective attitude, distinguished by kind, degree, and content, for instance, being very pleased at your friend’s promotion. Then try to find considerations that bear on the fittingness of this attitude that either compete, or combine, with each other—these being the two ways that reasons characteristically contribute to the explanation of an ought fact. I argue that in the case of affective attitudes we do not find either kind of interaction.

The simplest way for considerations to compete is for one to make an attitude fitting and for another to make that very attitude unfitting.<sup>15</sup> Suppose you didn’t get some promotion, but your good friend Andrew did. You know that you would have deserved the promotion, but it is really good that Andrew got it. The fact that you didn’t get the promotion makes it fitting to feel disappointed. The fact that your friend got the promotion makes it fitting to feel pleased. But the considerations supporting these attitudes do not compete. The fact

<sup>15</sup> There is a subtlety here. Distinguish the suggestion that F1 makes A1 fitting and F2 makes A1 unfitting from the suggestion that F1 makes A1 fitting and F2 makes A2 fitting (A2 might be some distinct attitude, or the negation of A1), where A1 and A2 are *incompatible* in some sense. As will become clear, I am doubtful about both. Here’s a nice example from *The West Wing*: President Bartlett, upon discovering that one of his senior staff has given state secrets to a journalist asks, rhetorically: ‘Is it possible to be astonished, and, at the same time, not surprised?’

that you didn't get the promotion doesn't make it unfitting to feel pleased, and the fact that your friend got it doesn't make it unfitting to feel disappointed. It is fitting to feel pleased *and* disappointed in these different respects in this case.

5 Suppose that Andrew didn't really deserve the promotion (there were some shenanigans) but that it will enable him to avoid getting kicked out of his apartment. The fact that your friend will be able to stay in his apartment makes it fitting for you to be pleased about the promotion, but the fact that the promotion wasn't really deserved  
10 *as such*. This is all plausible, but notice that we have again distinguished two attitudes both of which are fitting and that are perfectly compatible with each other: being pleased that he can stay in his apartment and not being pleased as such about the promotion. Just  
15 as in the case of my grandmother's death, one feels a certain amount of ambivalence, which is best explained by giving this more detailed interpretation of one's response. There is still no competition here.

Could it be fitting to be pleased that your friend Andrew can stay in his apartment and also fitting to be displeased that Andrew can stay in  
20 his apartment? We can make sense of this, but only by offering a particular interpretation of the attitudes in question. Suppose that moving would be inconvenient for Andrew but he has a chance of finding somewhere better. Another friend, Margaret, would move into the apartment; it would be a dream move for her. It is perfectly fitting  
25 to be sad for one friend's misfortunes while pleased for another friend's good fortune. The considerations supporting these attitudes each, one by one, make a different attitude fitting. But to say that two affective attitudes are both fitting is not to say that a single attitude is supported by one 'right kind of reason' and opposed by another 'right  
30 kind of reason'. More fit-making facts just make a more complex set of reactions fitting.

These considerations suggest two contrasts between reasons and the support for these affective attitudes. Firstly, the facts supporting these attitudes are strict. Unlike reasons, they are not normatively impotent  
35 in isolation. Each of these considerations—that Andrew can stay in his apartment, that Margaret can't move in, that Andrew got a promotion—individually provides strict normative support for a distinct response. (These are local, rather than overall, strict facts.) Secondly, these fit-making facts are not contributory. They don't compete with  
40 each other.

In addition to competing with each other, reasons also combine with each other, lending their total weight to some option. Let's see if we can find an analogue of this relationship in the case of support for affective attitudes.

5 In the above example, suppose that the fact that Andrew can stay in his apartment means that his daughter, Rebecca, won't need to change schools. Would that be 'another reason' to feel pleased that Andrew got his promotion? I don't think so. As before, this further fact supports a distinct attitude alongside being pleased that he won't have to  
10 move apartments, namely, being relieved that Rebecca won't have to change schools. Similarly, if your impoverished friend James had bet money on Andrew getting the promotion, that would support the more specific attitude of being pleased for James that he won his bet.

15 So far, these are cases in which considerations do constitute distinct sources of support, but for distinct attitudes (for example, being glad that James won his bet and relieved that Rebecca won't have to change schools). There are also cases in which distinct considerations do provide some support for one affective attitude, but not normatively distinct sources of support. Here is an example. You are a knight,  
20 about to face the terrible dragon. The dragon has sharp claws. She has the ability to swipe at you with the claws. She also has a look in her eye that suggests she might quite like to. Do these distinct facts about the dragon constitute distinct 'reasons' to fear the dragon? They are distinct considerations, to be sure. But intuitively they work together  
25 to constitute one source of normative support for fear at the prospect of being cut open by a swipe from the dragon. Plausibly, you have a different 'reason' to be concerned about the fact that the dragon might burn all your crops. Or as I would say: it is also fitting to be concerned about the destruction of your crops. This is a distinct affective attitude.  
30 Both are, in this unfortunate circumstance, fitting. What I deny is that there are distinct sources of normative support for any one attitude.<sup>16</sup> By contrast, you might have lots of distinct reasons for and against some specific action, say, running away from the dragon.

35 One final challenge. Suppose you don't know how many claws the dragon has. Your scout is peering through a telescope, and reporting as follows: 'Three! No, four! No, five! Oh God, six!', and so on. It is natural to say that each pronouncement is a reason to be even more fearful of the dragon. Surely with each pronouncement it becomes fitting to be more fearful of the dragon than before. So isn't each

<sup>16</sup> I provide further theoretical support for this argument in §5.4.

pronouncement a reason that makes a different attitude (or the same attitude to a different degree) fitting? No. The timing here is the important thing. The fact that your scout reports five sharp claws on the dragon at one time makes it fitting to be fearful to some degree at that time. The fact that your scout reports six sharp claws  
 5 on the dragon at a later time makes it fitting at that later time to be fearful to some higher degree. These considerations are not parts of the same explanation, and *a fortiori* they do not compete or combine in the same explanation, as reasons do.

## 10 4. Gradability and normative explanations

### 4.1 *Fit-making facts are not gradable*

Normative reasons are gradable. But fit-making facts are not gradable. Fit-making facts do not support the affective attitudes they make fitting more or less than other fit-making facts.

15 Strictly speaking, it is a mistake to talk about some affective attitude's being more fitting or less fitting. This is unobvious, I suggest, partly because of the important distinction between a gradable normative fact about an attitude and a normative fact about a gradable attitude.

20 Suppose you learn that two individuals have died. One is a peaceful octogenarian, her most important projects behind her. The other is a talented, educated, motivated, and popular twenty-one-year-old. Generally speaking, it is worse for someone to die in their twenties than their eighties. So let's just assume that the death of the youngster  
 25 is more tragic than the death of the octogenarian. Now consider the following two claims:

(a) The fact that the death of the youngster is very tragic makes it *fitting* to feel *more sad* about her death.

30 (b) The fact that the death of the youngster is very tragic makes it *more fitting* to feel *sad* about her death.

It is very plausible that claim (a) is true. It is plausible that the fact that the death of the youngster is more tragic makes it fitting to feel more sad about her death. The greater the tragedy, the greater the amount of sadness that is fitting. This seems to apply to many other affective attitudes that are fittingness-apt. The more shameful some event, the  
 35 greater the shame that is fitting. The more stunning some victory, the

greater the degree of pride that is fitting. The worse the thing you did, the more guilty it is fitting to feel—perhaps you should buy your friend dinner rather than merely a drink. The more claws the dragon has, the more afraid it is fitting to be.

5 What about (b)? Does the fact that the death of the youngster is more tragic make it *more* fitting to feel sad about her death, or more *unfitting* to feel unmoved by her death?

I don't think so. Consider an analogy. Suppose you asked two children for the product of 7 and 5. One says 42. The other says 33.  
10 Which answer is more correct? I think there is an error in the question. Any answer other than 35 is incorrect. The two children's answers are both incorrect. But there is more we can say. We can say that the first child probably gave the product of 7 and 6, so she was one multiple off, as it were. She probably used a better method. We can  
15 say the other was numerically closer to the correct answer. In different contexts we might implicitly invoke these alternative standards of assessment, to substantiate the claim that one is more or less incorrect. These are ways of generating some *alternative* standard by which to assess their degree of failure. This alternative standard is gradable; this  
20 is the property we are tracking with our 'how incorrect' talk.

So it is with fittingness. An attitude is either fitting or unfitting; there are no degrees, no comparisons, and there is no maximization. We can talk about degrees of fittingness, to be sure. But when we are doing so we are subtly shifting to assessment by some other pertinent  
25 standard, usually a gradable notion.<sup>17</sup> This is a debunking explanation for our practice. Consider a case in which someone ran a fractionally faster time in the 100 metre sprint than had been predicted. Distinguish the claim that it is *more* fitting to be impressed by the slightly faster time, from the claim that it is fitting to be *more*  
30 impressed by the slightly faster time. I'm inclined to think that the former is a slightly sloppy way of saying the latter. But if one wanted to insist upon comparing the two attitudes we could say: it is *more* fitting to be moderately impressed by this performance than to be mildly impressed. That claim may well be felicitous, even if it is not

<sup>17</sup> Julia Staffel (2015) attempts to work out just such an alternative standard for Bayesians. She writes: 'The standard framework of subjective Bayesianism only allows us to distinguish between two kinds of credence functions—coherent ones that obey the probability axioms perfectly, and incoherent ones that don't. An attractive response to this problem is to extend the framework of subjective Bayesianism in such a way that we can measure differences between incoherent credence functions. This lets us explain how the Bayesian ideals can be approximated by humans'.

*literally* true. The felicity conditions are explained by the fact that it would be fitting to be impressed, together with the fact that being moderately impressed is closer (along the relevant dimension) to being impressed than is being mildly impressed.

5 Sometimes what is fitting is a range of attitudes or strengths of an attitude. For example, the fact that rush-hour traffic in Los Angeles is light today makes it fitting to feel more than mildly pleased but less than ecstatic.<sup>18</sup> The boundaries will be vague, to be sure. That will yield another property that seems to come in degrees, namely, *clearly falling*  
10 *within the fitting range of attitudes*. Then we can say that one attitude is more fitting if it more clearly falls within the fitting range. But it doesn't follow from the fact that a property is vague that it is gradable. It might be vague whether it is impermissible to use a particular curse word in your lecture. It doesn't follow that impermissibility itself  
15 comes in degrees.

Consider an objection. Many fittingness adjectives are gradable, for example, 'admirable', 'enviable', 'delectable', 'exhilarating', 'hilarious', 'estimable', and 'deplorable'. Does this suggest that fittingness itself is gradable? My reply is in two parts. Firstly, 'more hilarious' and 'more  
20 exhilarating' just mean 'more hilarity is fitting' and 'more exhilaration is fitting', just like 'more fearsome' and 'less beautiful' mean 'fitting to be feared more' and 'fitting to appreciate less'. Secondly, I accept that 'fitting' is a gradable adjective. It is perfectly felicitous to *talk* about this or that being more or less fitting, a better or worse fit, completely  
25 fitting, and even completely unfitting. However, I deny that the *property* of fittingness is gradable. In giving a semantics for fittingness language, we need both the property of fittingness and some other gradable property; this other gradable property sets the relevant scale. It may help to think about the truth predicate here. We often indulge  
30 in talk about claims being more or less true, closer to the truth, or completely true. But many theorists want to insist that the property of being true is not gradable all the same. We can do so without revisionism by giving a semantics for these comparative and superlative forms in terms of truth and some other gradable property, for exam-  
35 ple, accuracy or truthlikeness. (Compare Oddie (2014).)

Consider another objection.<sup>19</sup> Suppose that you receive some evidence that a wonderful, or tragic, event has occurred. Perhaps it is evidence that your daughter has been in an accident, or perhaps

<sup>18</sup> For another nice example see the discussion of gratitude in Roberts (2004, p. 64).

<sup>19</sup> For which, thanks to Daniel Star.

evidence that she has been accepted to her top choice of university. However, the evidence is weak. More evidence keeps coming in slowly, piece by piece. Each piece of evidence raises the probability that the terrible thing, or the wonderful thing, has happened. Here is the  
 5 objection: doesn't this evidence increasingly make it *more* fitting to be delighted, or more fitting to be devastated?

I don't think so. At each moment, the available evidence makes some specific response fitting. It is uncontroversial that different attitudes are fitting towards, respectively, a tiny chance of something bad  
 10 having happened, and towards certainty that the bad thing happened. Hope that the bad thing didn't happen is fitting in the one case and not the other. Grief does not become more fitting as you get more evidence about a tragedy, though it becomes more understandable. Grief is always unfitting absent sufficient evidence that the bad thing  
 15 happened. This is part of the tragedy of missing person cases, for instance. Quite generally, different affective attitudes are fitting given different evidence about some outcome. A similar point applies to our attitudes to nearby possible worlds. Different attitudes are fitting towards chopping your finger off and towards *nearly* chopping  
 20 your finger off. But these attitudes are very different: in the one case the fitting attitude is intense anxiety, in the other it is relief. Different attitudes are fitting for past events (disappointment, anger, envy) and future events (hope, excitement, anxiety), and for different degrees of likelihood. (Right now you know that it is possible, but unlikely, that  
 25 something will fall out of the sky and crush the building you are in.)

Consider a final objection, based on the hypothesis that there are 'modifiers' for fittingness. Modifiers of reasons are considerations that intensify or attenuate the weight of those reasons (for example, discounting or prioritizing outcomes). Since modifiers operate on  
 30 weights, examples of modifiers for fit-making facts would be problematic for my denial that fit-making facts have weights. The examples I have in mind are easy to come by. Take some case in which some tragedy would have been greater, some event more shameful, or some victory more stunning, but for some consideration *p*. It would be  
 35 natural in such a context to say that *p* is a reason to feel less pride, shame, or sadness than we would otherwise have expected. In some cases, this wouldn't be right: as above, this additional consideration doesn't attenuate the degree of an attitude that would be fitting; rather, it makes a separate attitude fitting. Contrast the fact that some-  
 40 one ran a fractionally slower time in the 100 metre sprint with the fact that she gave an arrogant acceptance speech. The speech doesn't make

the victory less impressive; it makes the victor less admirable. But this leaves our question on the table. What about the fact that she ran a slightly poorer time? Is that fact a reason to admire her race less? Well, less than what? For sure, it would have been fitting to admire a slightly faster time a little more. But she didn't get a faster time. It is fitting to  
 5 admire this time this much. The putative modifier is really a consideration that distinguishes the state of affairs that one is responding to from some salient alternative situation. Some different attitude would have been fitting in this different situation, for example, slightly more  
 10 admiration or pride.

#### 4.2 Two theories of the weight of reasons

To what extent does the contrast I have been drawing between reasons and fit-making facts depend upon optional assumptions about reasons? The argument from gradability just discussed relies on the idea that  
 15 reasons have weights, but not necessarily on the stronger thesis that the weights of reasons *come in degrees*. At least, that argument does not presuppose that facts about the weights of reasons are explanatorily prior to the facts about which reasons are weightier than others.

Contrast two accounts of weight (Lord & Maguire 2016). On a  
 20 'weight-first' theory of the kind implicit in the discussion so far, facts about the weights of reasons explain facts about which reasons are weightier than others. For instance, according to a simple value-based or desire-based theory of reasons, the weight of a reason is explained by the value of an outcome or the strength of a desire.  
 25 For example, the fact that you'll muddy your clothes in Singer's pond case has some amount of disvalue; the fact a life will be saved has some amount of value. The relevant reasons have weights proportionate to these amounts of value. These weights in turn explain the fact that the clothes reason is significantly less weighty than the saved  
 30 life reason.

On another view, facts about which reasons are weightier than others are explanatorily prior to facts about the individual weights of reasons. For instance, W.D. Ross (1930)—widely held to have introduced contributory notions to contemporary ethical theory—plausibly held a view of this latter kind. One interpretation of Ross's account  
 35 of *conditional* or *prima facie* duties goes as follows. You have some small number of distinct duties—fidelity, reparation, gratitude, benevolence, and so on. You have a *prima facie* duty to perform any action falling under these descriptions. If there is one such action in a situation  
 40 and no other action of one of these kinds (a normative totality

fact), then, in virtue of those facts, your *prima facie* duty to perform that action becomes your duty *sans phrase*. If more than one of these kinds of actions are available in a situation, then which of these becomes your duty *sans phrase* is determined by some ranking of these duties.<sup>20</sup> For instance, the duty of non-maleficence is more important than the duty of beneficence (*op. cit.* p. 21). The duties of fidelity, reparation, and gratitude in general trump the duty of beneficence (for example, *op. cit.* pp. 19, 30, 41-2; see also fn. 1 on p. 42).

On this view as so characterized, *prima facie* duties have the following properties. They are contributory: they play a specific role in explaining distinct overall strict facts (facts about your duty *sans phrase* are overall facts since they essentially obtain partly in virtue of normative totality facts). *Prima facie* duties are not themselves strict facts.<sup>21</sup> And they are gradable: they stand in weightier-than relations. *Prima facie* duties do not have weights ‘on their own’ on this view and they may not have weights that come in degrees. But the ranking explains which duties come out on top in cases in which many different *prima facie* duties compete in a single situation. These reasons are non-strict, they are contributory, and they are gradable. In short, all the hallmarks of the contrast between reasons and fittingness are also present in this alternative theory of reasons.<sup>22</sup>

## 5. Overall affective attitudes?

In this section I consider the objection that some fit-making facts play a contributory role in explaining overall strict facts about overall attitudes to complex states of affairs. Let me give a quick road-map

<sup>20</sup> It doesn’t matter for current purposes how this ranking is determined, whether particularistically or generally, whether by ‘moral perception’ or some higher-order rule. Also, notice the implicit appeal to a normative totality fact in this explanation: this plays the role of determining that some *prima facie* duties are the only relevant ones.

<sup>21</sup> For even if there are no other *prima facie* duties, the fact that  $\phi$ -ing is your *prima facie* duty does not fully ground the fact that  $\phi$ -ing is your duty *sans phrase*. You also need some fact about whether you have any other *prima facie* duties in that situation. You still need a normative totality fact: this *prima facie* duty is the only one in the situation.

<sup>22</sup> Similar reasoning extends to the ‘higher-order reasons’ theory of Mark Schroeder (2007), and the ‘sufficiency-first’ theory of T.M. Scanlon (2014) (if we restrict our attention to his ‘pro tanto’ reasons). The same reasoning does not apply to the more neutral *contrastive* theory of reasons defended by Justin Snedegar (2014), according to which reasons are relative to sets of alternatives. This view about the existence of reasons leaves open these questions about the weight of reasons, apart from imposing the constraint that the weight of a reason is relative to the alternatives. Thanks to Justin Snedegar for discussion.

for this discussion. In §5.1 I introduce the objection and present a preliminary response. In §5.2 I develop this response by addressing a puzzle about disagreement over emotional responses. In §5.3 I consider the hypothesis that there are no overall attitudes at all, and hence  
 5 no overall strict facts about overall attitudes. This hypothesis is interesting but too strong for my purposes. In §5.4 I consider a weaker hypothesis, that there are overall attitudes without fittingness conditions. I sketch an account that supports this hypothesis of which affective attitudes do, and which do not, have fittingness conditions.  
 10 In §5.5 I point out two features that distinguish reasons and fit-making facts even if the central objection of this section is conceded. But we needn't concede the objection. In §5.6 I offer an explanation for our temptation to think that there must be overall normative facts about attitudes.

15 *5.1 The objection from overall affective attitudes*

What should we think about affective responses to complex states of affairs, or what we can call, for short, 'overall affective attitudes'? It is common to ask questions, either of oneself or others, like the following. What do you *really* want? Are you upset overall? Is he or she  
 20 enviable, desirable, or admirable overall? Here we seem to be asking for an account of an affective attitude towards something that takes into account all (or some pertinent subset) of its normatively significant features. We can ask whether you want your grandmother to pass away peacefully in her sleep, whether you like the summer in New  
 25 York City, or whether you are pleased overall that Andrew got the promotion. In many such cases there appear to be considerations supporting both sides. Don't these considerations stand to the fittingness of the overall affective attitude as reasons stand to the fact that you 'overall ought' to take some particular option? And wouldn't this  
 30 provide support for the claim that there are reasons for affective attitudes, namely, the very considerations that provide normative support for or against such overall attitudes?<sup>23</sup>

I don't think so. Suppose someone asks whether you want your grandmother to pass away peacefully in her sleep. Here we are deliberately asking for an overall verdict about your emotional state. To  
 35 answer this question, it may seem as though your more specific attitudes have a contributory character, as though you weigh your desire for her to stop suffering against your desire not to lose her, or perhaps

<sup>23</sup> Compare Schroeder (2010) and the brief reply in Way & McHugh (2015, p. 35).

the discomfort she would experience, or its disvalue, against your own loss without her. But if the conversation continued much longer, you would go into further detail. You would say that you really do not want her to pass away because you would miss her greatly, but ....

5 This suggests that really your attitude (which we assume is fitting) is complex.

Take another example. Someone asks you whether you like the summer in New York City. You explain that you dislike the heat and the humidity, but the wind blowing off the water helps, and it is easy to spend the heat of the day indoors. And the city comes alive in the heat: people are more boisterous and enthusiastic and the streets are full of bustling life. There are concerts in the park, although tickets are increasingly restricted to the wealthy.... In short, it is complicated. What is the answer to the original question? Yes. You do like the summer. But you also like grapefruit juice and violent Korean films. The question is not probative. Insofar as your attitudes towards the summer in New York are fitting, you are sensitive to these many evaluatively significant features of the experience.

It is worth reemphasizing here that our ways of talking about our attitudes are often misleading. A stranger asks you how you feel about spending the summer in New York. You might not feel inclined to say more than 'rather pleased', even though your attitude is more complex. Often your interlocutor won't have much patience for a longer answer anyway. On the other hand, it may be that your actual attitude is quite simple, but only because you failed to respond fittingly to the complexity of the situation. You may be simply delighted at the passing of the bill, even though it involved the rolling back of funding for important social services—because you never read the fine print.

### 5.2 *An argument from disagreement*

It might be helpful to develop this thought a little further. Consider the following dialogue upon seeing a photograph in a newspaper of a supporter of a presidential candidate earnestly giving a Nazi salute. First person: 'Ugh, that's awful'. Second person: 'No, this is great. The more photographs like this come out, the poorer the candidate's chances'. Importantly, they seem to be *disagreeing* about something—this is signified by 'No ...'. This disagreement seems to be about what constitutes a fitting response. Presumably the second person agrees with some kind of 'Ugh', that is, that it is disturbing and disappointing to see an earnest Nazi salute at a presidential primary. But still, they seem to be disagreeing, and it is natural to assume

that they are disagreeing about an *overall* fact about the fitting response to this picture, and that this overall fact is explained by some weighing of the expected instrumental value that this picture will have in galvanizing support against the white supremacist candidate, against the intrinsic awfulness of it.

Let me start by saying that it is not clear that there are any competing attitudes here. It is fitting to be disgusted at the salute while also being pleased at the reduction in the candidate's chances for the presidency. (Really, even this latter claim is itself too coarse. What is fitting is a set of attitudes towards the probabilities of this photograph becoming well-known, towards the candidate's losing because people rejected his fascistic tendencies, and so on.) I don't think the two speakers would disagree, in the end, about the relative significance of the intrinsic horror and the instrumental value.

More likely, this disagreement concerns the conjecture that *expressing* just the attitude of disgust is evidence that the first speaker may have overlooked the upside. 'No ...' indicates that the original 'Ugh' leaves something out of the full fitting response. Furthermore, 'No ...' might be intended to signify that *if one were to express just one response* to the photo, it might as well be rueful satisfaction as disgust. This further thought might indeed be based on some comparison of the values at stake. The thought might be this: 'Well, sure, this is disgusting, but the disvalue of the disgust is significantly less than the expected value of this sort of publicity'. (Assume this is true.) There may well be a disagreement here, but this is not a disagreement about which overall response to this complex state of affairs would be fitting.

### 5.3 Scepticism about overall affective attitudes?

The hard-line position to take at this point is scepticism about whether we have any overall attitudes to such complex states of affairs, rather than just the more specific attitudes to the parts of the complex. It may be that talk about overall affective attitudes is an abstraction or an oversimplification, just as contour lines on a map are an abstraction or an oversimplification of the slope on a hill. Insofar as you are sensitive to the various specifics, you do not have any overall attitude towards staying in New York for the summer, or towards your grandmother dying peacefully tomorrow, or towards the promotion of one friend, or towards the loss of his apartment. You just have the many more specific attitudes. If there are no overall affective attitudes, there are no standards pertaining to them. Hence there could be no

contributory considerations bearing on any standards for overall affective attitudes.

But I don't want my argument for a metaphysical thesis about two normative relations to lean on a speculative thesis in the philosophy of mind. I am inclined to think that affective attitudes are cheap. People seem to get upset and excited about all kinds of things, often rather coarsely grained things. It is surely possible to be rather pleased about the passing of the bill, generally excited about the camping trip, or impressed by the free jazz concert—even though the various significant features in these events make fitting a range of more specific responses.

#### 5.4 The fitting-value link

I suggest instead that not all affective attitudes have fittingness conditions. Plausibly, fitting responses are precisely as finely grained as the states of affairs to which they are responsive. The distinctions that fitting affective attitudes are responsive to are, by and large, evaluative distinctions of one kind or another. The question is whether there are fit-making facts for overall affective attitudes, that is, attitudes in response to complex or overall states of affairs, and if so, whether these fit-making facts are explained by the fit-making facts for attitudes towards parts of the overall states of affairs.

Sometimes complex states of affairs do have distinctive evaluative significance, for instance, when they instantiate organic value. Such cases pose no trouble for my argument. Organic values are values instantiated by some complex state of affairs as such, and not just a function of the values of the parts of the complex (cf. Moore (1903) and Hurka (1998)). The cello part for Pachelbel's Canon in D is pretty uninspiring on its own, but the result when your friend joins on the violin is quite wonderful. This complex state of affairs might well directly make appreciation fitting. A distinctive value emerges at the level of this whole, and plausibly a distinctive kind of appreciation is fitting in response. This explanation is local in the relevant sense, since it responds directly to the organic value. Take another example: perhaps a particular kind of admiration is fitting when someone is both extraordinarily gifted and genuinely humble.<sup>24</sup> Sometimes complex

<sup>24</sup> The fitting attitude to this complex would not *displace* the fitting attitudes to that person's talent and to her humility. In such organic cases, we don't have competition between considerations for fitting attitudes. There is no 'weighing explanation' here and no tension with my thesis. On the contrary, we have even more complexity. The fitting attitude towards the organic value is added alongside the fitting attitudes towards the various parts. All these fit-making facts are strict.

states of affairs are *instrumentally* evaluatively significant, as when the election of one candidate for U.S. President will have implications for foreign policy, judicial nominees, trade policy, and so on.

5 But sometimes complex states of affairs are *not* evaluatively significant. Sometimes no response is made fitting by a particular complex, for instance, by the fact that the President started speaking at 3.47p.m. precisely, or that she doesn't like green beans, or by the fact that you are wearing a red jumper today and you wore a blue jumper on this day five years ago. Except in extraordinary circumstances, *that* complex  
10 makes no response fitting at all—even if both jumpers are lovely.

This suggests a more general theoretical hypothesis. Consider the *fitting-value link*: the individuation of fitting attitudes correlates with the individuation of evaluatively distinctive states of affairs. This biconditional thesis is fairly uncontroversial. It enjoys wide bipartisan  
15 support. Far from being inconsistent with 'fitting attitudes' accounts of value, the *fitting-value link* (or something similar) is entailed by such accounts (for example, Anderson (1993), Scanlon (1998), Schroeder (2010), Way (2013), Howard (forthcoming)).<sup>25</sup> Given the *fitting-value link*, once we have an account of what individuates evaluatively significant states of affairs we will also have an account of  
20 what individuates fitting attitudes. I hypothesize that facts about overall value (as opposed to facts about organic value, symbolic value, and so on) are often not evaluatively significant in the relevant sense. For an example, think about totally unrelated evaluatively significant (or  
25 evaluatively insignificant) states of affairs: the complex consisting of both need not be evaluatively significant.

### 5.5 All fit-making facts are strict; some are not contributory

The worst-case scenario here for my argument is not that bad. Suppose we were to grant that (1) there are overall affective attitudes,  
30 (2) that some such attitudes are fitting, and (3) that the fact that some such overall affective attitude is fitting admits of a 'weighing explanation' in which the local fit-making facts play the 'reasons role', providing support for or against the overall attitude in virtue of the fact that they are fit-making facts—not in virtue of their value, or other

<sup>25</sup> It bears emphasizing that the *fitting-value link* is silent about whether attitudes are fitting partly in virtue of being responses to valuable states of affairs, or whether these states of affairs are valuable in virtue of the fact that these attitudes are fitting.

properties.<sup>26</sup> It would follow that *some* fit-making facts are contributory. But even if I were to concede these three strong premises, at least the following two differences between fit-making facts and reasons would remain.

5 Firstly, the various fit-making facts would still be strict.<sup>27</sup> Even if there were some fitting overall attitude in a situation, this would not *displace* the fitting local attitudes (neither the ‘positive’ ones nor the ‘negative’ ones). All these more specific attitudes would remain fitting. For instance, even if it were fitting to be relieved overall that your  
10 grandmother passed, it would remain fitting to be sad that you won’t be able to talk with her. Even if it were fitting in the earlier example to be disappointed overall that you didn’t get the promotion, it would remain fitting to be pleased for Andrew. I do not maintain that reasons are essentially non-strict. (See fn. 11.) But fit-making facts are  
15 essentially strict.

Secondly, the fit-making facts for overall affective attitudes would not be contributory; since reasons are essentially contributory it would follow that these ones are not reasons. To be a reason, in part, just is to play a certain kind of role in a ‘weighing explanation’ of a distinct  
20 strict normative fact, such as a fact about the overall ought. But the overall normative fact here, if there is one, is a fit-making fact. So even if fit-making facts are sometimes contributory, they are not essentially contributory, so they are not reasons.

Given these two considerations, it is simpler to assume—against  
25 claim (3) above—that any fit-making facts for overall affective attitudes are direct responses to evaluatively significant states of affairs, just like all the rest of the fit-making facts we have considered. The nature of such a fitting overall response—being generally impressed, being relieved overall, and so on—would be qualitatively explained by  
30 the fact that it is a response to the overall value in question. There is no need for this explanation to advert to the more specific fit-making facts as such, and hence no real support for the hypothesis that even these fit-making facts are contributory.

<sup>26</sup> There are lots of other properties around that could do this explanatory work: the intensities of the localized attitudes, the value-making properties (that is, the facts that are the fit-making facts), and the values themselves. In order to argue that these local fit-making facts are reasons, one needs additionally to argue that the facts about fittingness are doing explanatory work, rather than some of these other candidates.

<sup>27</sup> At this point, the distinction between strictness and contributoriness is significant.

### 5.6 The practical importance of overall judgements

Let me end with a diagnosis for our inclination to assume that there is something important about overall affective attitudes to complex states of affairs.

5 Sometimes we *need* to make an all-or-nothing judgement about some relatively coarse-grained question, such as whether a particular judge is admirable. Perhaps you are Chair of the Town Admiration Committee and the judge is one of the favourites for the Annual Prize. Then you do the best you can. But this is a question about reasons for  
10 action. The question is not whether it is fitting to admire the judge. The question is whether you ought to give her the prize. Lots of reasons will bear on this question: how people would react either way, whatever precedents there might be, what the Town Admiration Committee rule-book says, and so on.

15 It is the same with *wants*, for example. Suppose you want to spend some time in the mountains, and you want to spend some time on the beach, and you'd also like to spend some time on your book. What do you want overall? Well, all those things. We can introduce a specific choice situation, and ask what you want to do most. For instance, we  
20 say that the mountains are awfully far away and you need a break from your book and what do you want to do this weekend *overall*? But this is clearly a practical matter. What we do here is precisely to move from considerations that are fitting, to reasons for and against different actions.

25 Perhaps the main point is that there is no real *need* for facts about the fittingness of overall affective attitudes. Perhaps we can persist in asking questions about which overall attitude is fitting, and even give felicitous answers. But it would be a mistake to infer that these facts play a central role in the normativity of attitudes, in the way that facts about which options are supported by the overall weight of reason is  
30 central in the normativity of actions.

Here is the punchline for this discussion of overall affective attitudes: when it comes to actions, the overall normative property is all important. It is what really matters. Indeed, this is one of the reasons why 'reasons theory' is so late on the scene: consequentialists and  
35 Kantians have been working away with overall properties this whole time. By contrast, in the case of attitudes, overall normative facts hardly matter at all. It is contentious whether there are any overall affective attitudes, and if so whether they have fittingness conditions, and if so which facts explain them. But whatever you think about this,  
40 we have a clear contrast. With action, the overall normative property is all important. With affective attitudes, it hardly matters at all.

## Conclusion

Let me summarise the argument. My central thesis is that affective attitudes are not supported by normative reasons but by fit-making facts. Reasons paradigmatically support actions. They participate together in weighing explanations of which actions you ought to perform. They participate in such explanations in virtue of facts about their weights. This is true whether facts about the weights of reasons explain or are explained by facts about which reasons are weightier than others. On their own, reasons are impotent. They are team players, democrats, always and only working together to issue in strict normative facts. By contrast, fit-making facts are amenable anarchists, happy in each other's company but each one working alone. Each fit-making fact for an affective attitude makes that attitude fitting. More fit-making facts just make a more complex set of attitudes fitting. Fit-making facts plausibly support responses that are as finely grained as the evaluatively significant features of the world that call for these responses. Complex states of affairs with a range of evaluatively significant features will (distributively) make fitting a complex set of finely grained responses. Organic values aside, the complex state of affairs as such may not make anything fitting, just as the complex consisting in your reading this paper and the last novel you read may not make any particular response fitting over and above the fitting responses to this paper and that novel.<sup>28</sup>

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