

IS LOVE BASED ON REASONS?

Abstract

The relation of love to reason is complex; this paper investigates an aspect of this relation rejecting one assumption that favors the claim that love is based on reasons. Love, like many other attitudes can be evaluated in various ways: it can be appropriate, deserved, enriching, perverse, destructive etc. The assumption rejected in this paper is that every attitude that can be evaluated is necessarily based on reasons. Moreover the paper presents a test that an attitude that can be evaluated has to satisfy if it is to count as based on reasons. This test will be used to support Frankfurt's position in showing that love is not based on reasons.

1-Introduction

The aim of the paper is not to offer an account of love, but to understand what is involved in the claim that an attitude in general and love in particular, is based on reason. It is widely agreed that attitudes such as beliefs and intentions are based on reasons or have reasons. It seems plausible, although I am not going to assume it here, to extend the group of attitudes that have reasons to anger pride and fear. However, no one will want to extend the group of attitudes that are based on reasons to hunger or tiredness.¹ There is disagreement about other attitudes, and the controversy of interest here is

¹ The term attitude will be used in a very broad sense, to be explained in the next section.

whether the category of attitudes that are based on reasons can be extended to include love. Frankfurt (1999) claims that love has no reasons; others object and find reasons for love in the qualities of the beloved, or in her humanity (Velleman 1999) or in the relation between the lover and the beloved (Kolodny 2003). But what is really behind this classification of attitudes? How does one decide whether an attitude such as love is based on reasons? The aim of this paper is to suggest a test that will help to decide whether an attitude is based on reasons. This test will be used to support Frankfurt's position in showing that love is not based on reasons.

2-Evaluation of Attitudes

The term attitude will be used in the widest sense, including propositional attitudes, perceptions, sensations, emotions, intentions and actions, and my discussion will apply to all of these cases. In a familiar terminology what I mean by an attitude can be described as a personal state in contrast to a sub-personal state. In another familiar terminology, an attitude is a state about which we can ask: "What is it like to have this attitude?". Similarly, an attitude is a state which has a first person perspective that is different from the third person perspective. A belief, for example, is a state of the person and not of a part of him. Although it seems a bit strange to ask: What it is like to believe that the sky is blue?; there is no doubt that the believer has a first person perspective on this belief. He has a privileged, though not infallible, access to the fact that he believes that the sky is blue. These features of beliefs are shared by the state of hunger. Hunger is a state of the whole person and not only of his digestive system. Hunger is something the agent experiences so

that the question: "What is it like to be hungry?" is in place. Moreover the agent has a first person perspective on his own hunger that another person does not have. I will use the term attitude as referring to all the states that share those features.

We tend to evaluate our attitudes, as well as those of others, in a variety of ways. Some of the normative/evaluative terms that we use are specific to a kind of attitude, for example "true" is specific to beliefs. Other terms are more general in that they apply to a variety of attitudes; for example justified, crazy, healthy, natural, destructive etc. At this stage, it is important to note that there are evaluative judgments about an attitude which do not refer explicitly to the reasons for the attitude; "justified by good or adequate reasons" is one appraisal among many. Moreover, some attitudes are praised² or criticized in ways that never relate to reasons; for example it can be said about someone that he is always hungry at the right moments and in the right amount, and hence praise specific episodes of his hunger. However those evaluations have nothing to do with reasons for hunger, since hunger is not based on reasons.³

In light of this observation the following terminology will be used, the judgments that form the wide range of appraisal and criticism will be called "Evaluative-judgments". Those evaluative judgments that relate to reasons will be called "Normative-judgments". The example of hunger showed that not

² It is important to note that praise and criticism are used as synonyms to positive and negative evaluations, ignoring the connotations of guilt. The notion of guilt is almost irrelevant to the concerns of this paper.

³ D'arm and Jakobson discuss this plurality of evaluations and warn us against moralism which is "the imperialistic tendency of moral evaluation to take over the variety of evaluative space". My point in this section is a similar warning against the imperialistic tendency of normative evaluation (i.e related to reasons) to take over the variety of evaluative space.

every attitude that can be evaluated can be evaluated by a normative judgment, here are other examples.

1) Visual experiences (that it seems to one that so and so) can be criticized for example, when they completely misrepresent the environment. But they cannot be criticized by a normative judgment since visual experiences do not have reasons.

2) Tiredness and pain can be criticized as being completely out of touch with reality (phantom pain, tiredness from oversleep), but these criticism do not use normative judgments since reasons are irrelevant to those attitudes.

3) Moods, fantasies and dreams appear and disappear for no reason (one just woke up in a good mood), but they can be evaluated in various ways. Sometimes those attitudes express the character of the person that has them, much more than his beliefs and actions.

Love, like many other attitudes can be evaluated in various ways: it can be appropriate, deserved, enriching, perverse, destructive etc. The move from this observation to the claim that love is based on reasons fails since not every attitude that can be evaluated is necessarily based on reasons. There are attitudes like hunger and pain that can be evaluated, but their evaluations never refer to reasons; while there are attitudes like beliefs and actions that can be evaluated and their evaluations (sometimes) refer to reasons. The question of this paper is ultimately the question whether love is like hunger, pain, visual experiences and moods in being evaluated without reference to reasons or more like beliefs and actions.

3- Kolodny's Argument

In this section I will present and criticize what I see as the main argument in favor of the claim that love is based on reasons. Kolodny (p 137) discusses three kinds of considerations that suggest that love is based on reasons. First, from the first person perspective the lover experiences his love as appropriate and fitting and when he does not experience his love as such, he thinks that something is wrong with him. Second, from the third-person perspective of an advisor or critic, we might find the love or the absence of love inappropriate, misplaced or even wrong. Third, love is connected to many other mental states that are arguably based on reasons, like motivations, desires or emotions. I will focus on the second kind of consideration, since I agree with Kolodny that our practice of criticism and evaluation of an attitude is highly relevant to the question whether an attitude is based on reasons. However, I will claim, that it is relevant in a less straightforward way than Kolodny assumes. The fact that an attitude can be criticized only shows that evaluative judgments can be applied to it, but as was shown in the previous section evaluative judgments can be applied to attitudes that are not based on reasons. One can criticize one's friend for being hungry every time that he is bored no matter what he ate an hour ago; but this does not imply that hunger is based on reasons. One's criticism might include various evaluative judgments like: your hunger is misplaced, confused or pathological, but will not include normative judgment like: being bored is not a reason for hunger. As it stands, Kolodny's argument is invalid; the fact that love can be criticized does not imply that love is based on reasons. However, one can try to

improve the argument by looking more carefully at *the content* of the criticisms of certain cases of love or the absence of love. One might claim that unlike the criticism against hunger, in those cases the criticism does include normative judgments.

Here are three examples suggested by Kolodny:

- 1- We criticize the abused wife for continuing to love her husband.
- 2- We criticize the indifferent parent for not loving his child.
- 3- We criticize the fickle friend for suddenly stopping loving his friend.

I have no doubt that the agents in these examples deserve criticism, but it is important to examine more carefully what is involved in those criticisms. When one tells the abused wife that her love for her husband is inappropriate, what exactly is one saying? Kolodny states clearly that one is not *blaming* the abused wife since "These attitudes are not under one's direct voluntary control" (p183). I am not sure that Kolodny is right in assuming that control is necessary for blame,⁴ but I accept his conclusion that "Whatever kind of criticism the charge of inappropriateness amounts to, it is not blame" (ibid). Kolodny does not elaborate further the question of what is involved in this charge, he only claims that the charge is similar to the one leveled against pathological fear. But this analogy does not advance the discussion at this stage since the analogy to fear is not developed enough by Kolodny, and there is nothing that Kolodny says about pathological fear that cannot be said about pathological hunger. But if the charge one raises against the abused wife is similar to the charge one raises against the pathologically hungry, then,

⁴ See Sher for an attack on this assumption.

again the conclusion that love is based on reasons is unwarranted. Kolodny has to show that although the critic does not blame the abused wife, he thinks about her love as unjustified in the sense that she does not have a strong enough reason to continue to love her husband. Of course the critic can formulate his criticism using the term reason. But the critic of the pathologically hungry friend can do the same, he can say: "I do not blame you for being hungry, but you have no reason to be hungry now, you had a good meal an hour ago." Kolodny's argument will be valid only if it can be shown that although the criticism of the abused wife does not involve blame; it involves an appeal to reasons for love. The criticism must involve the claim that to love in these circumstances is not grounded on reasons. Kolodny might try to exploit the conceptual connection that, arguably, exists between the notion of reasons and the notion of ought or should. The critical friend can say (gently) to the abused wife that she *should* stop loving her husband, but it is absurd to tell the friend that is pathologically hungry that he *should* stop being hungry. For the sake of argument, I will accept that the first criticism seems a bit more natural than the second. But this difference should not be over rated. The critic does not mean that the abused wife should stop loving her husband in the sense that reasons for loving the husband are outweighed by the reasons against loving him. It is more correct to construe the critic as saying: "It is not good for you to love him, you should do something about it" Now the analogy with the case of hunger is completely in place. The critical friend can say to his hungry friend: "this hunger is not good for you; you should do something about it". Alternatively, in both cases the critic can be construed as saying: "You should not base your actions on pathological love

or on pathological hunger". This criticism and advice are natural and reasonable; one should not base one's eating behavior on pathological hunger as one should not base one's relationships on pathological love. But this does not mean that one should not feel hunger and love; criticisms of those attitudes in terms of "should" make no sense.

In the second example we criticize the indifferent parent for the absence of love, not loving one's child is not only inappropriate, it is wrong. This example is the most challenging since (pace Kolodny) *blaming* the parent is in place. If we can blame the parent for not loving his child, it seems to imply that the parent does have a (moral) reason to love his child. I will not assume here that because love is not under voluntary control, we cannot blame the indifferent parent for his lack of love. On the contrary, I am going to take the blame of the parent seriously and examine what is involved in this moral criticism. Parents have a moral duty to take the well being of their child into consideration. Being unloved by his parent is bad for the child so the parent should love his kid. All this is correct, and indeed involves reasons, but, the reasons it involves are not reasons *for love*. The critic might be construed as blaming the parent for having kids. Alternatively the critic might be construed as advising, or even demanding that now the parent should behave as if he loves his child or that he should go to therapy or that he should give the child up for adoption. The critic is indeed pointing to reasons to pretend or to go to therapy or to give the child up for adoption, but he is not pointing to reasons to love the child. The analogy to hunger is still in place. If A arrived not hungry to a special meal that B has prepared for him, we can blame him. But what we mean is either that he should not have eaten an hour before and we are blaming him for that and

not for not being hungry. Alternatively, we are advising him to eat without being hungry or to find some other solution. In this case we are giving A reasons to behave in certain ways, but we are not giving him reasons to be hungry.

In the third example, the fickle friend is rightly criticized by us. But, again this criticism does not amount to the charge that he should (or has reasons to) start caring for his friend. Our charge is more related to a flaw that we find in his character than to reasons that he has to care for his friend. I assume that what we mean by caring is a complex of emotions and not a pattern of behavior. Of course, a friend has reasons to *behave* in a caring way; the crucial question is whether he has reasons to *feel* love and care. Such normative judgments are not part of our criticism of the fickle friend.⁵

My conclusion is that there is nothing in the content of the criticism that can distinguish between love and hunger. Hence even the more elaborated version of Kolodny's argument fails. The analogy between hunger and love that was developed in this section points in the direction of the no-reason view of love, but it is not intended as a positive argument for the no-reason view of love. My aim at this stage was only to reject the main argument for the claim that love is based on reasons. In the rest of the paper I will offer a positive argument for the no-reason view of love.

4-Presentation of the test

⁵ Aaron Smutts explains away those examples and interprets our criticisms as pointing to reasons *to act* differently in order to promote one's well being. I sympathize with the need to explain away these examples; I disagree with the idea that there is a uniform way to do it.

My aim is to suggest a test that will distinguish between hunger and other attitudes that we all agree are not based on reasons; and beliefs and actions or intentions, about which we all agree that they are based on reasons. As many have pointed out, the fact that an attitude is based on reasons (henceforward RA) does not mean that it is under our voluntary control.⁶ Belief is the most convincing example, although beliefs are based on reasons, they are not voluntary;⁷ one cannot come to have a belief just because one wants to. It is also important to note that (*pace* Moran 2001: 195-196) having a subject matter does not guarantee that the attitude is RA. Perception is, arguably, an attitude with subject matter but it is not RA. Fantasies and dreams, also, have very rich content without being based on reasons. Furthermore, as the discussion in the previous section showed, the fact that an attitude can be criticized as inappropriate does not guarantee that it is based on reasons. However this fact will play a crucial role in the test for RA. I will follow Scanlon's insight that what makes an attitude RA is not that it is voluntary, and not that it has subject matter; but that it is sensitive to certain judgments. However, the specific way in which Scanlon characterizes this sensitivity and those judgments faces some difficulties. Addressing these difficulties will motivate the characterization of RA offered in this paper. Scanlon characterizes RA "...as the class of 'judgment-sensitive attitudes'". These are attitudes that an ideally rational person would come to have whenever that person judged there to be sufficient reasons for them and that would, in an ideally rational person, 'extinguish' when that person judged them not to be supported by reasons of the appropriate kind" (Scanlon 1998:20) .

⁶ See for example Moran 2001, Scanlon 1998.

⁷

Scanlon's characterization is circular in that the judgment to which the attitude has to be sensitive is a judgment about reasons for the attitude. The circularity is due to the fact that if the attitude is not RA, the judgment: "I have sufficient reasons for A" is meaningless. This renders the characterization itself useless in that it is applicable only to RA, and cannot help in resolving the controversial cases where it is not clear if the attitude is RA.

In order to avoid Scanlon's circularity, I will start with the following small correction: the judgment to which an RA is sensitive will not be a judgment about reasons but any evaluative judgment. Hence the first approximation to the characterization of RA is the following:

An attitude is RA if an ideally rational person would come to have it whenever that person had positive evaluative judgment about the attitude, and that would, in an ideally rational person 'extinguish' when that person had negative evaluative judgment about it.

The second problem with Scanlon's characterization lies in the role it assigns to rationality. Notice that it is not part of the concept of rationality that an ideally rational person adopts every attitude that he evaluates positively. Suppose that Jack is hungry now, but evaluates his hunger negatively, he ate enough today, he is going to sleep soon, and the food available is not good. The fact that he is hungry in spite of his negative evaluative judgment has nothing to do with his rationality. It is true that if Jack were rational and he had voluntary control on his hunger, he would not be hungry in these

circumstances. Whether hunger is voluntary or not, the fact that Jack's negative evaluation of his hunger has no impact on his hunger is crucial to my understanding of the claim that hunger is not RA; the question of Jack's rationality is not. Of course, there is a conceptual connection between RA and rationality; I believe that an attitude being RA is a precondition for the question of rationality to arise. We can ask about beliefs and actions whether they are rational and we cannot ask this question about hunger. Whether we can ask this question about love is exactly the subject of this paper. But the question the notion of rationality is applicable to love brings us to an impasse: Kolodny assumes a positive answer and Frankfurt assumes a negative one. I try to bypass this impasse by suggesting a test that will not refer to rationality.

Before we bypass the rationality question, the following objection has to be raised: perhaps to infer from this example that hunger is not RA is premature. Maybe Jack's *rationality* has to be blamed in this case. If Jack judges his hunger as inappropriate he should do something about it, for example if he has a pill against hunger in his pocket he should take it. If Jack doesn't take the pill or other available means against his hunger, he is being irrational. My answer to this objection is that hunger is not RA exactly because even an ideally rational person needs a pill to form/abandon the appropriate/inappropriate attitude. By contrast, the forming of a reason-based (RA) attitude can happen directly, a pill is not needed. Of course, 'pill' is used as a code for every manipulation that one has to do on oneself in order to

form or abandon an attitude.⁸ Scanlon's understanding of the idea of sensitivity to judgments needs the following refinement: an attitude is sensitive to a judgment if the **mere** judgment can cause the formation or abandonment of the attitude.⁹ This sensitivity is not about whether an attitude is formed as a result of the judgment, but about *how* it is formed; it will be called '*direct sensitivity*' or non-manipulative sensitivity. Two ideas are involved in the claim that the mere judgment causes the attitude. First, from first person perspective it seems that one didn't do anything except evaluate the attitude for the attitude to appear/disappear, no 'pill' was needed. Second, from a third person perspective, the explanation of a subject's formation of the attitude focuses on his judgments and not on his doing anything.

This notion of direct sensitivity will play a crucial role in the characterization of attitudes that are RA; by contrast, the notion of rationality will play no role at all in my characterization of the attitudes that are based on reason.

THE TEST

An attitude is RA if and only if it is directly sensitive to some evaluative judgment about it.

The test reflects the idea that if an attitude is RA it is sensitive to reflection.

What one thinks about his attitude matters and can have a direct impact on

⁸ This distinction is similar to Moran's distinction between internal responsibility and external responsibility (Moran 2001: 198-202), and to Hieronymi's distinction between evaluative control and manipulative control (Hieronymi 2006:153). Hieronymi uses this distinction in arguing why one cannot believe at will. Using her terms the conclusion of this paper can be formulated as follows: an attitude over which we have only manipulative control is not an RA.

⁹No specific conception of mental causation is assumed here. Questions about the relation between laws of nature and causation or between mental causation and physical causation are irrelevant to the thesis of this paper.

whether one has the attitude or not. The attitude is sensitive to reflective judgments, i.e judgments about the attitude itself.

Before I argue for the adequacy of the, a few points need clarification:

1-The qualification to some judgment and not all judgments is due to the fact that even beliefs – the paradigmatic RA – are not directly sensitive to all evaluative judgments. For example one can judge that a certain belief will be good to have because one was offered a prize for believing it. But as a matter of empirical (or conceptual) fact one cannot do it without a pill.¹⁰

2-The judgment to which the attitude is sensitive to, is a second order judgment; it is a judgment about the attitude itself. It is not enough that an attitude is sensitive to first order judgments about the world, it should also be sensitive to judgments about itself: judgments regarding its appropriateness.

3-Judgment is not necessarily, a belief. I want to remain neutral on the issue of which kinds of mental state are involved in one's evaluation of an attitude as appropriate. (Beliefs, commitments, decisions, acceptance of rules whatever)

4- Although my test is formulated in causal terms it does not offer a reduction of normativity to causality. The superficial reason for this is that the normative notion of evaluative judgments plays an essential role in the test. But my test is not even a reduction of normativity to causality and evaluation. This is connected to the deeper reason why my test is not a reduction of normativity.

Although my test refers us to the psychological mechanisms responsible for the appearance of attitudes, we are not interested in *every* mechanism. Think

¹⁰ It might turn out that the judgments to which an RA is directly sensitive are those that relate to reasons of the right kind, but the test does not presuppose an understanding of the distinction between the right kind of reasons and the wrong kind of reasons (for a presentation of this distinction see: Olson 2004: 295-300).

of a slight variation on Davidson's famous climber, he judges that it will be in many ways good if he let go of his friend. This thought causes him to let go but this thought (or its content) was not his reason. The causal process here is deviant; I believe that the distinction between deviant and non-deviant causal chains is normative: in the non-deviant causal chain the climber is *normatively guided* by the evaluative judgment. Of course, if the idea of normative guidance can be defined in non-normative terms, then my test is a reduction of the normative. Since I do not believe it can be done, I do not offer my test as a reduction.

This does not mean that my test cannot be used to decide about controversial cases, it only means that the decision whether an attitude that passes my test is RA will sometimes involve normative thinking. In particular, it will involve our capacity to recognize deviant causal chains.

6-Justification of the test

First, it will be shown that the paradigmatic examples of RA pass the test; these paradigmatic examples are beliefs, intentions and actions.¹¹ There are many kinds of evaluative judgments about beliefs, and belief is directly sensitive only to some of them. It is an advantage of the test that it does not matter to which kinds of evaluative judgments belief is directly sensitive. As long as there are some judgments to which the attitude is sensitive in this direct way, the attitude is RA.

Here is an example of such evaluative judgment: John evaluates positively the

¹¹It will be assumed that actions and intentions have reasons, avoiding the question of whether practical reasons are primarily reasons for action and only derivatively reasons for intentions or the other way around.

belief that p because p is a logical conclusion of q and $q \rightarrow p$ which (he believes) are true. More generally p is an immediate logical conclusion of true beliefs. This is a judgment to which beliefs are directly sensitive. It is important to note that sometimes this evaluative judgment is causally idle, in other words John does not need to judge it explicitly in order to move from the belief that q and $q \rightarrow p$ to the belief that p .¹² The important point is that whether John makes the explicit evaluative judgment or not; he moves directly to the belief that p . He does not have to do any manipulation on himself in order to believe in the conclusion. The sensitivity of belief to those evaluative judgments is manifested in two ways. First there are cases in which John believes that q and that $q \rightarrow p$ and because he is not concentrated enough or not interested enough he does not believe that p . In cases like these John's realization that his belief that p is appropriate as an immediate logical consequence of q and $q \rightarrow p$ generally leads to the belief that p with no need for a pill or other manipulation. This is a positive manifestation of direct sensitivity. The negative manifestation is more common. As mentioned earlier, sometimes John's evaluative judgment is causally idle: his belief that p , was formed and is sustained, unreflectively. In cases like this the sensitivity of the belief to the evaluative judgment has a negative manifestation. In the counterfactual situation where John denies this specific evaluative judgment (for example he thinks that *modus ponens* is a fallacy, or that it is not applicable in this specific context), he will not believe that p . Note that the claim is not the normative claim that in a case like this one should not believe

¹² If this kind of explicit judgment was needed at every stage, one would be in the situation of Lewis Carol's tortoise.

that p; but the empirical claim about the truth of a specific counterfactual.¹³ In such counterfactual cases the sensitivity of belief to evaluative judgments has a negative manifestation. This sensitivity is also direct since in these counterfactual situations John doesn't need any pill in order to reject the belief that p. What I showed is that John's belief is not only sensitive to his belief that q and to his belief that $q \rightarrow p$; but also to John's evaluation of this belief as appropriate in those circumstances; so beliefs are sensitive to second order judgments.

Not only beliefs that are formed through reasoning exhibit sensitivity to evaluative judgments; perceptual beliefs, the paradigmatic non-inferential beliefs, are also directly sensitive to evaluative judgments. Again, one does not always need an evaluative judgment in order to move from perception to belief. But sometimes one does, for example, Sarah looks at a broken stick in a glass cup and suspends judgment because she suspects that she is having an optical illusion (She suspects that there is water in the glass). If Sarah understands that she is not under an optical illusion and judges that it is appropriate to base her belief on her perceptual experience, then she will believe that the stick is broken. This is a positive manifestation of the sensitivity of belief to an evaluative judgment. Moreover, this sensitivity is direct; it is the mere judgment that caused the belief, not anything that Sarah did. The negative manifestation of the sensitivity of perceptual beliefs is more common. Generally, when one has a perceptual belief, the following counterfactual is true: if one had judged that in these specific circumstances

¹³The empirical claim and the normative one might be conceptually linked through the charity principle.

the perception (or alleged perception), does not make the belief appropriate, he would not believe that p. Realizing that one is under an optical illusion is one example, but there are others: one might discover some problem with one's eyesight or with the lighting conditions, and as a result evaluate one's belief negatively. In all these cases one will stop believing, the belief simply disappears as a result of the denial of the evaluative judgment. It is not that one realizes that the belief is inappropriate and then looks for means or pills to extinguish it, the sensitivity is direct.

To conclude, belief is RA according to the test and it will be shown now that intentions and actions also pass the test in that they are directly sensitive to some evaluative judgments. For example the EJ that swimming will be fun often causes one to swim and/or intend to swim. The action, or intention, does not appear as a result of manipulation on oneself, they are caused directly by the judgment.¹⁴ It was assumed in this example that the judgment that swimming will be fun is evaluative; if this assumption is rejected and the judgment is treated as merely descriptive then the sensitivity of the intention to swim is manifested mainly negatively. The intention disappears if one is, for example, mourning and evaluates having fun as inappropriate. Again, the intention (or action) disappears directly without any pill or manipulation. This sensitivity shows that intentions and actions also pass the test. Notice that even actions are not directly sensitive to every type of evaluative judgment; for example the evaluative judgment that an action is courageous will not cause

¹⁴Notice that no version of internalism is assumed here. Even if extreme externalism is correct and judgments without desire do not cause action; when an EJ with the corresponding desires cause action, it generally happens without manipulation. In marginal cases one is weak-willed and uses, more or less successfully, manipulation to cause oneself to swim.

me to do it if I am a coward. And I believe that, if you are courageous, the judgment that the action is courageous will not play any role in the causal explanation of your action.

We have seen that the paradigmatic RA pass my test, now we will see that the paradigmatic cases of attitudes that are not RA do not pass the test since they are not directly sensitive to evaluative judgments. I will start with the case of perception; even if one knows that one is under an optical illusion and evaluates one's perception as inadequate, one's perception is completely insensitive to this evaluation. This of course is not enough in order to show that perception does not pass my test; it has to be shown that perception is not directly sensitive to *every* evaluative judgment. Notice that the fact that perception is not under our voluntary control will not help us here, since as already mentioned, voluntary control is not a necessary condition for RA. In the case of perception the thesis of belief independence might help to convince us that there is no sensitivity at all. But this is too quick; we have to elaborate a bit more on the thesis of belief independence. In cases of optical illusions, perception is completely isolated from one's beliefs; whatever one knows about the situation, one's perception will not change. However, in normal cases perception is not completely independent, and here is a simple example: I look at my armchair and I see (or have a visual impression of) my black cat sleeping there. When I realize that I've just opened the door and the cat left, and I remember that I left my black coat on the armchair last night, my perception alters. I see (or have a visual impression of) my coat thrown on the armchair. Of course there are different accounts of perception and some

theorists of perception will conceptualize the familiar phenomena that I described differently. For the discussion that follows it suffices that my conceptualization is plausible. Assuming my description of the case is adequate, it is crucial to explain why this example does not threaten the adequacy of my test. The beliefs that caused my attitude of perceiving the cat to disappear and my attitude of perceiving the coat to appear are not evaluative beliefs. They are factual beliefs: the cat went out and I left the coat on the armchair. No evaluative judgment was involved in the process; it is not that I thought something like: it is crazy to perceive a cat on the armchair when there is a coat there, and then as a result of *this thought* my perception altered. Even if I hold such a judgment, it played no role, not even implicit or counterfactual, in the change in my perception. My perception is not sensitive to this evaluative judgment; whether I hold this judgment or not, my perception changed as a result of my factual beliefs about the cat and the coat, my evaluative judgment plays no role in the explanation of the change in my perception. I believe that in some cases perception can change as a result of one's *first order evaluative* judgments; think about how your perception of a facial expression changes if you discover that the person you are looking at is not kind as you thought but manipulative and mean. But even in such cases it is a first order evaluative belief (about the person in front of you) that affects your perception and not a second order belief (about the appropriateness of your perception). In sum, contra an extreme version of the belief-independence thesis, perception can be causally influenced by beliefs; but only by first order beliefs.

The same is true about hunger, tiredness or pain. I will discuss the case of

hunger since the analogy between love and hunger plays a dialectical role in the argument of this paper. As already seen in the previous sections we can evaluate an episode of hunger in various ways. Our pathologically hungry friend is hungry whenever he is bored and we criticize him for that: his hunger is inappropriate since it is not related to his body's need for food or to the pleasure of eating. Our friend accepts this criticism, he judges his hunger as inappropriate, but this judgment is causally impotent in regard to his hunger. Of course, this does not show that ALL evaluative judgments are causally idle. Like in the case of perception we cannot rely on a general thesis that hunger is never sensitive to beliefs. I, for example, can become hungry if you tell me that there is an excellent Vietnamese restaurant around the corner. This specific belief is not causally impotent, my hunger was caused by it, but no evaluative judgment was involved in the causal chain that ended in my hunger. Here we have to be careful, no second order judgment (i.e about the hunger) was involved; only the first order evaluative judgment about the restaurant played a role in the causal explanation of my hunger.

I thought about Vietnamese food and remembered how much I love some of the dishes and... I became hungry. From an introspective point of view I can guarantee that no evaluative judgment of the sort: "It will be so good to be hungry now", appeared in my mind. In cases that it did appear, it did not play any causal role. I do not have a general argument that it never happened that a second order evaluative judgment of the sort mentioned directly caused hunger; so far, it is only an inductive generalization from my experience and the experience of my friends. I don't think it is possible to give an argument to the effect that a strange causal mechanism that disposes one to feel hunger

when a specific second order evaluative judgment does not exist. However, the following speculation might explain why the existence of such causal mechanisms is highly implausible. The function of hunger is to guide us to eat. If all works well we are hungry when eating is the right thing to do, or at least when there are good reasons to eat. In this sense hunger functions as a special data for the decision whether to eat. If hunger were sensitive to evaluative judgments like: "it will be good to be hungry now, since it is time to eat" its role as a guide would be undermined. Similarly, the function of perception is to guide one in one's beliefs about middle sized objects in one's surrounding. It cannot fulfill this role if it is too sensitive to what one believes about one's surrounding independently of this perception. Otherwise, perception will be like a movie guides that before telling me to which movie to go, checks with me to which movie I am planning to go anyway and recommends according to my answer. This is a very schematic argument, a lot more needs to be said about the notion of the function of attitudes, which plays a key role in the argument. This is not the place to develop this argument; it is enough for the purpose of the paper if this speculation encourages us to agree that the test fits the paradigmatic attitudes that are RA and the paradigmatic non RA attitudes.

The fact that my test fits the paradigmatic cases speaks in favor of it, but this fact does not guarantee that the test fits the less paradigmatic cases. Maybe my test points to a feature that distinguishes between hunger and perception on one side and beliefs and actions on the other side, but this feature is not the one we are interested at (ie being an attitude that is based on reasons).

To fill this gap, I will conclude this section, with an argument that supports the

adequacy of the test in general.

My first assumption is that if an attitude is based on reasons, it is possible to have that attitude for a reason. This assumption expresses a very moderate form of internalism; it is not claimed here that a reason must motivate, only that it can. Actually, my assumption is even weaker, I do not claim that *every reason* can motivate, I only claim that *every attitude* that is based on reasons can sometimes be motivated by some reason. The assumption is a generalization about attitudes and not about reasons. I will sum this assumption as follows: *Attitudes that are based on reasons can be normatively guided.*

In the next two assumptions I start to elaborate on the notion of *having an attitude for a reason.*

2-It is a claim about the causal explanation of the attitude: If S has the attitude A for the reason R, then S judgment that R plays some role in the causal explanation of S having A.

3-The role must be of the right kind.

Those assumptions are not uncontroversial, but still they are well motivated independently of the question of this paper. One can deny any conceptual connection between reasons for an attitude and the question why a subject has or does not have a certain attitude. Such a notion of reason does not interest me since it is irrelevant to what I see as the central theoretical role of the notion of reason, which is to account for the idea of normative guidance. Anyway, if reason is understood this way I have no objection to the claim that love, like many other attitudes, is based on reasons. This claim does not

contradict the thesis that I advance here that we are not normatively guided in love. Regarding the second assumption, one can reject the causal interpretation of normative guidance. One can agree with Anscombe that having an attitude for the reason R is connected to the fact that in answering the question "Why do you have this attitude?" you point to the reason R; but neither the question nor the answer is about causes. It is true that my discussion of reasons in this paper is in causal terms, this is so for dialectical reasons (see Kolodny) and because I am Davidsonian on this issue. However I believe that the main considerations of this paper can be formulated in non causal term and if I am right , then my conclusion can be described with sympathy to Anscombe as: The question "Why do you love x?" is importantly different from the question: "Why did you do x?" or "Why do you believe that x?" In many respects the first question is more similar to "why are you hungry now?"

As already mentioned, I do not think that a non-normative account of the right kind is possible, but I want to suggest to constraints:

1-It is non-manipulative.

2-It involves not only the judgment that R, but also the judgment that R is a reason for A.

The first assumption of the argument is that the concept of reasons must be linked to deliberation.¹⁵ Notice that the link can be quite loose, a reason must have some role in deliberation; but the deliberation may be implicit or only potential. Hence if an attitude is RA, then it can be the conclusion of a deliberation (implicit or potential). This means that when the deliberation ends, the agent has this attitude.¹⁶ The second assumption is that every step in a deliberation is directly sensitive to the previous steps and to the norms that guide our reasoning, otherwise, deliberation will never end. The norms that guide our reasoning can be expressed as EJ. Hence an attitude that is only *indirectly* sensitive to EJ cannot be the conclusion of a deliberation and hence is not RA. This establishes only one direction of the test, that if an attitude is not directly sensitive to any EJ it is not RA. This is exactly the direction that will be used in the next section to support the claim that love is not based on reasons.

7-Application of the test

In order to show that love does not pass the test, it has to be shown that love is not directly sensitive to **any** EJ. Let's go back to the examples discussed in section 3.

- 1) The love of the abused wife is usually evaluated negatively and one

¹⁵ It will not be argued for this premise here, see Schuller for an argument for this claim (Schuller 2009).

¹⁶ Theoretical deliberation ends in belief, practical deliberation ends in action, intention or decision.

might assume that the abused wife shares this evaluation and judges that it will be for the best if she stops loving her husband. Unfortunately, this judgment alone will not cause her to stop loving him.¹⁷ This judgment can give rise to various adequate responses: she can decide to leave him; she can complain to the police, she can go to therapy etc. All these actions might finally cause her to stop loving, but only indirectly. This case is analogous to the case where one judges that it will be for the best if one will not be hungry now. This thought by itself does not extinguish the hunger, but it can give rise to direct responses that in the end will extinguish the hunger, like drinking water, taking a pill or going for a walk. In support of this claim, notice that the abused wife can say: "He was cruel to me and that is why I left him, unfortunately I still love him and miss him; I hope that it will pass with time or when I meet someone new." This is a perfectly sensible response to the cruelty of the husband, if the cruelty of the husband was a **reason** to stop loving him, the only adequate response, given that this reason is stronger than the reasons she might have to continue loving him, would be to stop loving him. However, the plausibility of the above scenario is not enough in order to establish the general claim that the love of the abused wife is never sensitive to evaluative judgments. The following scenario seems to threaten this general claim: The abused wife might say: "When I realized how cruel he is, I stopped loving him". In this case the EJ that he is cruel did cause the disappearance of love. Although this scenario is

¹⁷The judgment that she should stop loving him might cause her to desire to stop loving him, but not to stop loving him; at least not directly.

unfortunately less frequent, I do not want to deny that this is a possible scenario as well. What I will argue is that this scenario is very similar to the Vietnamese restaurant case and hence does not manifest the sensitivity required in my test. In both cases a belief caused a change of attitude; the belief that her husband is cruel caused the wife to stop loving him, and in a similar way the belief that there is a good Vietnamese restaurant caused me to be hungry. In both cases the belief is evaluative, "good restaurant" and "cruel husband" are evaluative terms. The reason why the sensitivity of hunger to an evaluative belief does not show that hunger passes my test is that the evaluative belief is not about the attitude, but about the restaurant. Analogously, the evaluative belief that caused the wife to stop loving her husband was not about the attitude of love, but about the husband. The causal explanation of the fact that the abused wife stopped loving her husband does not contain a further evaluative belief about the attitude, such as: it is sick to love a cruel husband. It is easy to imagine a case where she believes that a good wife (or a good person) continues to love her husband in such circumstances. In the cases where the abused wife does believe that it is horrible to love a cruel husband, this belief does not play a role in the explanation of her stopping to love him. This, again, is similar to the restaurant case. Whether I believe that it is crazy to become hungry just because I discovered the Vietnamese restaurant, or whether I believe that it is wonderful to become hungry when I am going to a good restaurant; it is the belief about the restaurant and not the EJ about hunger that causes my

hunger. To conclude, hunger as well as love, are sometimes sensitive to evaluative judgments, but not to EJ about the attitudes themselves.

- 2) The indifferent parent might evaluate his lack of love for his children as horrible, but again this EJ will not by itself create love. There is no such psychological mechanism that moves one from the recognition that one's lack of love is horrible directly to the emergence of love. A positive evaluation of parental love plays no direct causal role in one's love for one's children.
- 3) The friend who suddenly stops caring about his best friend is probably exhibiting a negative character trait. He might recognize it and decide on various courses of action. He might pretend, confess, avoid or.... find a pill that brings love again. Caring and loving again is not one of the options that are open to him without manipulation.

All these examples show that love and absence of love can be evaluated positively or negatively in various ways; but love is not directly sensitive to any of these evaluations. Love does not pass the test, hence it is not an attitude based on reasons. The understanding that love is not based on reasons does not imply that we are impotent and that all we can do is fall in and out of love. We can control many of our emotions and attitudes by manipulation just as we sometimes control by manipulation the attitudes of our children. We are not impotent since we can give them, and ourselves, a good emotional education.

Bibliography

Frankfurt, H. 1999. "On Caring" in *Necessity, Volition and Love* Cambridge University Press.

Hieronymi, P. 2006. "Controlling Attitudes". *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly*, 87: 45-74.

Kolodny, N.2003. "Love as Valuing a Relationship". *The Philosophical Review*, 112.2: 135-189.

Moran, R. 2001. *Authority and Estrangement: an Essay on Self-Knowledge*. Princeton University Press.

Olson, Jonas. 2004."Buck passing and the wrong kind of reasons." *The Philosophical Quarterly*, 215:295-300.

Scanlon, T. 1998. *What we Owe to Each Other*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press

Schueler, G.F. 2009. "The Humean Theory of Motivation Rejected" *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 78:103-122.

Velleman, D. 1999. "Love as a Moral Emotion" *Ethics* 109 338-74.