

Epistemology and the Value Correlation

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The standard taxonomy of philosophy distinguishes three core areas of inquiry: metaphysics (including the philosophy of mind), epistemology, and value theory. I think that a reevaluation of this way of looking at things is long overdue. While some philosophers have noticed a connection between knowledge and value, my claim is that epistemology *just is* a species of value theory, and that it always has been, although this fact is only now beginning to be appreciated.¹ I will justify this claim by drawing a precise correlation between epistemology, ethics, and aesthetics, which will allow for a cross-comparison of the various arguments, problems, and positions in those fields. Although I have no direct argument, this alone should provide sufficient evidence for the correctness of my claim.

1. Making the Value Correlation

Some of the objects that concern us most in life are events, things, and thoughts. Events can be good or bad, things can be beautiful or ugly, and thoughts can be true or false. It is true, however, that there are cases where such judgements do not apply. Events and things, for example, can be neutral with respect to goodness or beauty, and thoughts that take the form of questions or commands are neutral with respect to truth. There are also thoughts that, while having the grammatical form of propositions, do not express anything that is true or false, such as “The king of France is bald”, or “That cloud is happy”. The point is that *significant* events have good or bad consequences, significant things are either beautiful or ugly, and significant thoughts have propositional content, such that they are either true or false. In other words, these sorts of things are appropriate subjects for judgement when they have a certain sort of significance for us. Likewise,

¹ Zagzebski (1996, 2000, 2003), for example, makes numerous comparisons between epistemology and ethics.

a significant judgement from one domain can become the subject of judgement in another. We could say, for example, “It is *true* that sunsets are *beautiful*”, or “It is an *ugly* fact of life that *bad* things happen”. So when I speak here of events, things, and thoughts, I mean those things that have the special sort of significance that makes them the appropriate subjects of judgements.

The same goes for their intentional (in the sense of purposeful) correlates: actions, artifacts, and beliefs. When one intentionally brings about an event, we call it an action, and judge that it is right or wrong; when one intentionally makes something, we call it an artifact, and judge that it is art or not; and when one forms a thought with propositional content, we call it a belief, and judge that it is either knowledge or not. All of these involve intentional activity, which provides us with the following correlation of generative states: the doing of right actions (or good deeds), the creating (or performing) of artworks, and the forming of what I will here call *knowles* (for lack of a better term). A knowle is something that one knows, i.e. a true belief that counts as knowledge. Novel terms are always somewhat awkward, but I will use this term here because the word ‘knowledge’ lends itself to too many uses, and thus can only serve to confuse. Knowledge can mean an individual knowle (i.e. his belief that *p* is knowledge), or it can refer to a collection of knowles (i.e. one’s scientific knowledge), or it can be used in a more abstract way as the state of having knowles, or that which underlies one’s knowles. The word ‘art’ suffers from the same ambiguity, referring to a single work of art (e.g. that is art), some or all of them (e.g. I enjoy art), or some abstract entity “art”. Here I will use the terms ‘art’ and ‘knowledge’ as value-judgements akin to ‘right’ (as opposed to ‘wrong’), and will use ‘artworks’ and ‘knowles’ as akin to ‘good deeds’. Finally, there is a correlation between habitually doing, creating, and forming: here we speak of moral character, artistic skill, and intelligence.

This correlation is quite complicated, and I hope that I have made it sufficiently clear. The following chart will provide a convenient point of reference:

The Value Correlation

| | | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| | Ethics | Aesthetics | Epistemology |
| Objects of Concern | Events | Things | Thoughts |
| Value Judgements | Good/Bad | Beautiful/Ugly ² | True/False |
| Objects of Judgement | Actions | Artifacts | Beliefs |
| Value Judgements | Right/Wrong | Art/Not-Art | Knowledge/Not |
| Objects of Value | Good Deeds | Artworks | Knowles |
| Generative State | Doing | Creating | Forming |
| Trait of Value | Moral Character | Artistic Skill | Intelligence |

2. Sources of Disanalogy

Given the nature of the correlation I have made, there are bound to be numerous disanalogies, or cases that seem to disprove my hypothesis. Nevertheless, I believe that any disanalogy between epistemology and ethics/aesthetics is merely apparent, and derives from one of three sources: an impoverished terminology, differences in the objects of judgement (but not in the way those judgements are made), or inconsistencies in the way we think about those objects. In the first case, an impoverished terminology results in terminological confusion, which in turn results in a failure to make certain distinctions that can and should be made. Having largely dealt with terminology in the previous section, I will simply move on to the second source of apparent disanalogy: the *real* differences between the objects of judgement.

Actions and artifacts are readily observable, tangible entities; I can watch someone perform an action and bear witness to its consequences, just as I can view an artifact and judge its beauty. But I cannot observe a “belief” – we don’t even have a good idea of what beliefs *are*. What I do

² I don’t mean to imply that beauty is the standard in art, although some take it to be. One could insert any number of different attributes here; I’ll stick with beauty because it simplifies the discussion.

observe is behavior, and a belief is something of a theoretical posit; an *abstract* entity meant to provide a unified account of the cause of certain behaviors, including speech acts. We tend to *think* of a belief as something like a proposition that has gotten stuck in one's head, and we say that, under certain as-yet-unknown circumstances, it counts as "knowledge", but it is an open question whether or not a "belief" corresponds to anything tangible. Nevertheless, I think we have very good reasons for thinking that they do. I won't bother to go over them here; my point is that if we *treat* beliefs as something tangible (as we do in our everyday lives), then we can theorize about them in much the same way as other objects like actions and artworks. Thus beliefs can be evaluated for truth in the same way that actions can be evaluated for their consequences and artifacts can be evaluated for beauty, and that is what an analysis of knowledge purports to do. All we really need is the supposition that there is *something* inside the believer's head that is roughly isomorphic to a proposition to see that there is no substantive disanalogy between the objects of judgement themselves, be they beliefs, actions, or artifacts. This is precisely the reason for my coining the term 'knowle' – to avoid any temptation to treat beliefs in an abstract manner. An impoverished terminology is the direct result of abstract thinking about knowledge, which in turn perpetuates confusion about what knowledge is. Nonetheless, there is one real difference between them: beliefs are *internal* entities whereas actions and artifacts are *external* entities. I do not believe this difference will have any consequences for value judgements, however.

As for the third source of apparent disanalogy, if knowledge really is a value judgement, then one should work toward consistency among their views of epistemology, ethics, and aesthetics. In many cases this would not be a big problem; it would be difficult to imagine, for example, a virtue epistemologist who takes a consequentialist stance toward ethics, but there are

many subtleties involved, and the terrain is far from clear. It could also be the case that one doesn't have anything more than a pre-theoretical view of, say, aesthetics. There has been little work done in the area of virtue aesthetics, for example, which is quite surprising given all the work that has been done in virtue epistemology and virtue ethics.³ Perhaps this imbalance is indicative of something about Western civilization, something we should look into, but I will leave that topic for someone else. What I will focus on here are the subtle differences in our ways of thinking about knowledge versus morality and art. If I am right that epistemology is a species of value theory, then any apparent disanalogy should reveal an abstract way of thinking about beliefs (which, as I have urged, is something that we need not and should not do), an inconsistency in our thinking (which we don't want), or a difference brought about by the fact that beliefs are internal, whereas actions and artifacts are external (which, as I have claimed, will not affect value judgements). Thus the burden is on me to show how one could develop a consistent theory of value that will generalize to epistemology, ethics, and aesthetics – I will attempt to do just this.

3. Unified Utilitarian Theories of Value

I will begin by presenting two examples of unified theories of value, and will use utilitarianism because it is a simple yet plausible view. To the utilitarian, the ultimate aim is happiness, but utilitarianism can be divided into two types: act-utilitarianism, where value judgements are based on an individual action's effect on happiness, and rule-utilitarianism, where value judgements are based on the propensity for certain types of actions to increase happiness. But since a unified value theory treats not only of actions, but artifacts and beliefs, I will refer to these two versions respectively as token-utilitarianism and type-utilitarianism. It is quite simple to provide a unified view of token-utilitarianism:

³ For a rare exception, see Woodruff.

Value Correlation of Token-Utilitarianism

Ethics: A *good deed* is an action that has a positive effect on happiness.

Aesthetics: An *artwork* is an artifact that has a positive effect on happiness.

Epistemology: A *knowle* is a belief that has a positive effect on happiness.

Obviously, value judgements such as “that is a good deed” will depend on the degree to which happiness is increased. And one might want to add a condition to the definition of an artwork, such that the positive effect on happiness is brought about through perception alone, in order to exclude such mundane artifacts as automobiles and farm machinery (although perhaps certain European sports cars would thereby count as works of art). But for the most part, the correlation is straight-forward.

One *might* be tempted to object that this correlation leads to ludicrous definitions of art and knowledge; nevertheless, such views have been proposed in various forms. Consider, for example, Leo Tolstoy’s moral evaluation of art, or William James’ pragmatic theory of truth. Since the utilitarian places all value in utility, all three object-types (i.e. actions, artifacts, and beliefs) have the same aim: a positive effect on happiness. Tolstoy (rightly) recognized that art not only has an immediate impact on audiences, it has widespread consequences for the happiness of society as a whole; thus art has a strong relationship with ethics. And since “truth” is a pre-theoretical condition of knowledge, on the token-utilitarian view “truth” becomes nearly synonymous with having a positive effect on happiness. The objection is not a strike against my thesis; rather, it is a strike against token-utilitarianism. Displayed so baldly, a unified token-utilitarian theory of value violates a great number of our intuitions.

A minor change in the token-utilitarian correlation provides the corresponding type-utilitarian view:

Value Correlation of Type-Utilitarianism

- Ethics:** A *good deed* is a type of action that typically has a positive effect on happiness.
- Aesthetics:** An *artwork* is a type of artifact that typically has a positive effect on happiness.
- Epistemology:** A *knowle* is a type of belief that typically has a positive effect on happiness.

Here again we have a familiar ethical theory that is subject to well-discussed objections, so I will focus on the workings of the aesthetic and epistemic correlates. In the case of aesthetics, consider the modern trend of “manufactured” art. One example is the pop music industry, which does extensive research into what sorts of songs people like, and what composition a band should have in order to appeal to a certain target audience (e.g. the “boy bands” that are so popular with teenyboppers). Another example can be found in the filmmaking industry, where the use of certain cookie-cutter plot structures ensures a blockbuster movie; just fill-in the details, and hire the right actors. As for epistemology, again we have a pragmatic view of knowledge, where what you *ought* to believe is decided by what typically has a positive effect on happiness. Again, such views violate many of our sensibilities, and the value correlation makes this all the more obvious. Of course, there is much a utilitarian can say about such cases, and one *could* develop a sophisticated unified utilitarian theory of value, but I will leave that task to the utilitarians. For now, I will move on to consider a unified justificatory theory of value.

4. Unified Justificatory Theories of Value

Prior to Gettier, the predominant theory of knowledge held that knowles are justified true beliefs. A slight rewording of this definition will be necessary to provide the following correlation:

Value Correlation of Justification

- Ethics:** A *good deed* is a good action, where the perpetrator was justified in thinking that it would be good.
- Aesthetics:** An *artwork* is a beautiful artifact, where the creator was justified in thinking that it would be beautiful.
- Epistemology:** A *knowle* is a true belief, where the believer was justified in thinking that it would be true.

Here I have worded all three definitions such that justification must be had *before* one performs an action, creates an artifact, or forms a belief. One might object, however, that we can gain justification for beliefs that we *already* hold, whereas actions and artifacts cannot be justified after the fact, thus calling my thesis into doubt. Such after-the-fact justification could occur in two ways: the believer may come to believe that *q*, where *q* confirms their belief that *p*; or some external condition may obtain that justifies their belief that *p*. In the first case, a Bayesian might say that our beliefs are subject to *confirmation*, and that a previously unjustified but true belief can *become* justified, and would thereby count as knowledge. But it could plausibly be maintained that confirming a belief counts as a re-tokening of that belief, because the new evidence is *ex hypothesi* strong enough to justify *p* on its own. Thus the new evidence would be sufficient for one to *form* a belief that *p*. Here one is, metaphorically speaking, laying down new pavement over old. In an abstract sense it is the *same* road (proposition), but in a concrete sense it is *new* pavement (belief). I have urged that we treat beliefs as concrete entities, but this objection rests on an

abstract conception of belief. In the second case, suppose that Jones comes to believe, unjustifiably, that his neighbor is a spy. Later, however, his neighbor is caught stealing top-secret documents, and the story is reported in the news. This would provide justification for Jones' belief that his neighbor is a spy, but only if Jones sees or reads the news. If he neither read nor heard about it, we wouldn't want to say that Jones *knows* that his neighbor is a spy. And if Jones did read about it, then this case would be like the first, where Jones' belief is confirmed.

Treating beliefs as concrete entities allows for a consistent unified justificatory theory of value, but there are well-known counterexamples to such theories: Gettier cases. Linda Zagzebski (1994, p. 69) has given a general rule for generating Gettier counterexamples to justified true belief (JTB) accounts of knowledge, where an accident of bad luck is cancelled out by an accident of good luck. She concludes that, since there is a gap between justification and truth, JTB is not sufficient for knowledge. Using the value correlation, we can also generate Gettier-type counterexamples to justified good action (JGA) accounts of morality and justified beautiful artifact (JBA) accounts of art. Suppose, for example, that Smith wants to make an anonymous donation to charity *x*. In order to maintain complete anonymity, he writes the address of the charity on an envelope, but leaves off his return address. He then places a large sum of cash in the envelope (since a check would give away his identity), and drops it in the outgoing mail slot. Unfortunately, however, Smith has developed a temporary case of dyslexia. Instead of writing AL (for Alabama), he wrote LA (for Louisiana). Likewise, he wrote 1234 Lake dr. instead of 2143 Alek rd., and made a similar error for the city name. We wouldn't say that Smith has done a good deed, although he tried to. Nevertheless, the address he wrote is (unbeknownst to him) the address of another branch office of charity *x*. So although Smith was justified in believing that his action was good, and his action was in fact good, he didn't do a good deed.

We can do the same thing for the JBA account of art. Suppose that Stevens is a talented artist who is painting what he thinks will be his masterpiece. Unbeknownst to Stevens, however, the paint he is using is defective. He finishes his painting, and leaves it to dry. Upon returning, he finds that the paint has bled excessively, and that his masterpiece is ruined. On closer inspection, however, he finds that the painting is in fact the most beautiful he has ever seen. Here Stevens was justified in thinking that his painting would be beautiful, and it is in fact beautiful, but I don't think we would call it a work of art.

The point of these examples is not to disprove the JGA and JBA accounts of good deeds and works of art (I don't even know if anyone holds such a view, but they certainly could). The point is how the value correlation allows one to apply counterexamples from one area (e.g. epistemology) to others (e.g. ethics and aesthetics). There are many ways one might go about trying to avoid Gettier problems, and some of the more promising start by analyzing the role played by luck. I shall now turn to consider the role played by luck in unified theories of value.

5. The Problem of Luck

There are, I believe, three types of luck that are relevant to value judgements: dispositional, situational, and intentional. Dispositional luck consists in having the ability or disposition to do something. The bare fact that one has moral dispositions, artistic abilities, or cognitive skill can be a matter of luck in two ways: either in one's nature (e.g. genetic composition) or nurture (e.g. parental encouragement). One can overcome bad dispositional luck by developing the abilities/virtues that they have, and developing new ones where they are lacking completely.⁴ Situational luck consists in being in the appropriate situation to exercise one's dispositions. Again this can occur in two ways: it could be a matter of being in the right place at the right time, or

⁴ There are cases, however, where one is completely devoid of a particular ability altogether, and even lacks the motivation to develop it; such cases are hopeless.

having the resources to enact one's dispositions. One can overcome bad situational luck by actively seeking the opportunity and resources to enact their dispositions. There are innumerable cases illustrating the importance of dispositional and situational luck. For example, one may have the disposition to donate to charity but lack the funds. Or one might be inspired to express their emotions through some medium yet lack the artistic skill to do so. And one might see a previously unknown comet through a telescope but not realize what they are seeing.

But perhaps the most interesting type of luck is *intentional*. Even if one has the right dispositions, abilities, or skills, and even if one is in an appropriate situation to exercise those dispositions, it is still a further matter that *what* one intended to do is brought about in the *way* one intended. Not surprisingly, intentional luck can occur in two ways, both of which are identified by Wayne Riggs (*forthcoming a*): either “the outcome was not intended by the agent”, or “the outcome was not causally due to the agent’s abilities”. In the first case we can imagine someone attempting some feat that is beyond their ability to accomplish, and nevertheless succeeding due to luck. For example, a chess novice might play a grand master and win. In such a case the beginner had the intention to win, but lacked the ability to win; here we would chalk his win up to “beginner’s luck”. In the second case we can imagine someone attempting to do something, but things not turning out the way they intended them to.⁵ This would be just like the first case, only from the standpoint of the grand master; he had the intention to win, and the skill to win, but he didn’t win; that’s just plain bad luck. But the best illustrations of intentional luck seem to be Gettier cases, where one forms the *intention* to bring about some desired end, and that end is brought

⁵ Riggs doesn’t think that one needs to have the intention to do something in order to receive “credit” for it. This seems to be a half-truth, because there are positive cases (where the agent deserves credit or praise) and negative cases (where the agent deserves blame). In the positive case, it seems to me that one must have the intention to *do* something; otherwise it is just something that “happens” to them. In the negative case, one should have the intention *not* to do something; otherwise they are guilty of negligence. As my children often say, “I didn’t mean to do that!” My response is always, “You didn’t mean *not* to either!”

about through their *abilities*, but it didn't happen in "*the right way*". I take it to be the central problem in value theory (including epistemology) to specify what "the right way" is.

The traditional approach to knowledge consists in attempting to provide a set of necessary and sufficient (N&S) conditions for something to count as knowledge. This is like trying to specify N&S conditions for something to count as art, or a good deed. But so long as one is focused on the *object* (i.e. action, artifact, or belief), one is doomed to failure. And focusing on the *mechanism* for producing that product fares no better. Zagzebski (1994, p. 66) has pointed out, for example, that reliabilism remains open to Gettier counterexamples. One new approach is to focus on the *value* we place on knowledge. Greco (2004) and Riggs (*forthcoming b*) say that knowledge is something that one deserves *credit* for. They could also say that a good deed is a good action that one gets credit for, and that a work of art is a beautiful artifact that one gets credit for. But such accounts rely wholly on our *intuitions* about morality, art, and knowledge, because we use our intuitions in order to decide *who* gets credit for *what*. What is missing is an informative account of *how* we go about deciding such things. They are right in saying that one gets credit for something that wasn't due wholly to luck, but that amounts to saying that one gets credit for something if it happened "in the right way". But wait – Gettier counterexamples use our intuitions about knowledge in order to exclude certain cases of belief, and credit theories assign credit using these *same* intuitions. Thus credit theories exclude Gettier counterexamples, but only by fiat – they fail to solve the problem of intentional luck.

Zagzebski (2000), on the other hand, focuses on one's *motivations* for believing, and could easily hold the same for morality and art. She attempts to avoid the problem of intentional luck by stating that, in order to have knowledge, one must be "successful in reaching the truth *because of* the motive and the reliable processes to which the motive gave rise" (p. 121; *emphasis*

in original). As noted earlier, however, Zagzebski herself points out that process reliabilism cannot escape Gettier counterexamples. Thus, if she is to avoid the problem of intentional luck, it must be sufficient that one is “successful in reaching the truth *because of* the motive”. But how would one cash out the “because of” condition? Isn’t that a lot like saying one reaches the truth in “the right way”? In all fairness to Greco, Riggs, and Zagzebski, I don’t claim to have a conclusive solution to this problem either. It may be that there is no solution; perhaps the best we can do is rely on our intuitions. That is why I have referred to this problem as the *central* problem in value theory. The main point of all this is that this is not *just* a problem for epistemology, but for every branch of value theory, including ethics and aesthetics.

6. The Value Problem

The next correlation I will make involves the value problem.⁶ According to Zagzebski (2003), the problem is: “what makes knowledge better than true belief?” (p. 12) It is a simple matter to correlate the value problem:

The Value Problem Correlation

Ethics: What makes a good deed better than a good action?

Aesthetics: What makes an artwork better than a beautiful artifact?

Epistemology: What makes a knowle better than a true belief?

In the case of knowledge, Zagzebski (2003) again resorts to one’s motive to seek the truth; that motive is valuable because it derives from the motive to live a good life (p. 24). This is an interesting move, and it seems to be, at the very least, on the right track. More to the point of this discussion, however, is that morality and art are every bit as much components of a good life as truth. Thus she is in a position to provide a plausible and unified virtue theory of value. Never-

⁶ I won’t go into the details of this problem here. See Zagzebski (2000 & 2003) for a full discussion.

theless, there is one point on which she claims a disanalogy between epistemology and ethics. This, if true, would be a death knell for my thesis.

Zagzebski (1996) gives the following definition of knowledge: “Knowledge is a state of cognitive contact with reality arising out of acts of intellectual virtue.” (p. 270) But while she recognizes that many epistemological concepts have ethical correlates, she goes on to claim that “no concept in ethics is exactly comparable to the concept of knowledge.” (p. 272) If there were, she says, “it would satisfy the following schema: x is a state of y arising out of acts of moral virtue.” (p. 272) She considers *eudaimonia* as a state arising from acts of moral virtue, and quickly rejects it. Having no other concepts to compare, she concludes that “the structural similarity between normative epistemology and ethics breaks down at the concept of knowledge.” (p. 273) This warrants further consideration, however. It should be clear, first off, that Zagzebski is not using the word ‘knowledge’ to refer to knowles, and so we shouldn’t attempt to correlate it with actions or artifacts. What she has done is use a piece of *old* terminology to refer to a *new* concept: a “state of cognitive contact with reality”. What makes this use of that term possible is our tendency to think abstractly about “knowledge”, but there is no term from ethics or aesthetics that readily lends itself to such use, because their terms have more tangible referents. As I have urged, however, we should treat beliefs as concrete entities. So let us accept her definition of the word ‘knowledge’, and continue to use the word ‘knowle’ as correlative to good deeds and works of art. It seems, then, that she is using the word ‘knowledge’ in such a way that we could correlate it with ‘morality’, but I cannot think of an aesthetic term that would be suitable here. Nevertheless, we shouldn’t be constrained by an impoverished terminology. For the time being, I will use the term ‘artisanality’ as the aesthetic correlate of Zagzebski’s ‘knowledge’. This provides us with the first half of the schema.

The first half of the schema is nothing more than a terminological difficulty; the second half is the hard part. Here we must find ethical and aesthetic states that correlate with “cognitive contact with reality”. Toward this end, we should seek to clarify just what this “state” could be. I don’t think it could be the mere *possession* of a belief, because the word “contact” implies a more intimate relationship between agent and world. I also don’t think it could be a state that results from the mere *formation* of a belief, like the state that results from drinking a beer, because that wouldn’t be very valuable (aside from a possible feeling of giddiness). No, the resultant state is a state of *contact* with reality. This must mean that the object (be it an action, artifact, or belief) serves as a *link* between the agent and the world. In the case of true belief, one is put in “cognitive contact with reality”. Using the value correlation, we can say that a good action puts one in “moral contact with reality”, and that a beautiful artifact puts one in “artistic contact with reality”. Thus we have the following correlation:

The Value Correlation of Virtue

- Ethics:** Morality is a state of moral contact with reality arising out of acts of moral virtue
- Aesthetics:** Artisanality is a state of artistic contact with reality arising out of acts of artistic virtue
- Epistemology:** Knowledge is a state of cognitive contact with reality arising out of acts of intellectual virtue

As to the nature of these “links” with reality, in the case of knowledge, it is easily understood; in fact, it is *understanding*. In the case of morality, it is one of *respect* for others. And in the case of aesthetics, it is one of *expressing* oneself to others. But Zagzebski (1996) also says that “knowledge is an enduring state” (p. 272), and this is something else that needs to be accounted for.

When one forms a belief, it is retained until such a time as it is forgotten or the believer dies. This doesn't appear to be the case with actions – they seem to be ephemeral objects. Nevertheless, there is a very real sense in which actions continue to persist so long as they continue to have consequences that are in line with the original intentions of their progenitor.⁷ Sometimes these consequences can even persist long after one's death. Consider, for example, the actions of Martin Luther King; many of them persist to this day. The same goes for art: so long as the artifact persists, and continues to serve its intended purpose, it functions as a link between the artist and the world.

Concluding Remarks

There is a deep connection between purpose and value. Such a connection remains mysterious, but an account of it could provide a solution to the problem of intentional luck that would coalesce with a unified virtue theory of value. I think this connection is intentionality, which is even more mysterious. Perhaps we will find a solution, perhaps not. In any event, at least we can have a unified theory of value.

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⁷ I suppose that any action, according to the second law of thermodynamics, will persist unto the end of the universe. But there will come a time when the consequences are no longer in line with their progenitor's intentions. We might describe this as the "entropic decay of intentional action".

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