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defined in terms of C-relatedness. Suppose that there are two streams of experience A and B, separated by a temporal interval, and that A is earlier than B. Then on Foster's definition it is sufficient for A and B to be C-related that they are directly joinable in the sense that there is something which ensures (whether logically or nomologically) that, with B held constant, a hypothetical continuation of A to the time when (or just after) B begins would join up with B. So far as I can see, Foster does not show why a hypothetical continuation of A could not join up with B, even though A and B belong to different people. I doubt too whether the consubjectivity of experiences is sufficient for C-relatedness. Experiences are C-related iff either serially or potentially co-conscious. They are serially co-conscious iff either strictly co-conscious or connected by a series of links of strict co-consciousness, and potentially co-conscious iff either directly joinable, or connected by a series of streams whose successive members are directly joinable. Finally, they are strictly co-conscious iff parts of a single experience, in the way that the experience of note C can be part of a total auditory experience of C followed by D followed by E. Suppose that there are two consubjective experiences one of which is unconscious in the sense of being inaccessible to introspective awareness. Could they be C-related? (There is a fuller treatment of the C-relation theory in B. F. Dainton's 1989 Oxford DPhil thesis *The Nature and Identity of the Self*.)

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Weakness of Will, by Justin Gosling. London and New York: Routledge, 1990. Pp. ix + 221. £30.00

Justin Gosling's book *Weakness of Will* belongs to the series published by Routledge entitled "The Problems of Philosophy. Their Past and Present", whose General Editor is Professor Ted Honderich. Like the others in the series, it is divided into an historical section which outlines the discussion of the problem of Weakness of Will from the ancient Greek philosophers to the present day, and a non-historical philosophical discussion of the problem during the course of which the author puts forward his favoured solution to the problem. The discussion that Gosling offers is rarely less than sophisticated and sensitive to the issues at hand, although, at times, these very features seem to obscure, for the reader, the line of argument. In apparent recognition of this problem, Gosling provides helpful summaries at the beginning and end of each chapter to indicate the course of discussion thus far and the important points that have emerged.

Before devoting the remainder of the review to some of the matters that Gosling raises, it is reasonable to consider whether the book succeeds in the aims of the series, namely, to introduce undergraduates in philosophy to a perennial

philosophical problem as well to make a contribution of its own to please the more practised eye. In this respect, the book has both merits and failings. The discussion of the contribution of other philosophers often seems to rely upon the reader having read the philosophers in question, or even having the relevant page open, to understand quite what is going on. Equally, and this is an understandable problem for a series of this format, the relationship between the historical and non-historical sections is not always brought out. Instead of feeling that there is a continuous development of the debate during the course of the book, we almost start again when we reach the second non-historical part of the discussion with the odd backwards glance. Having noted these failings it is important to recognize two substantial merits. First, the discussion of the historical figures is always illuminating and helpful. Secondly, and this may be the strongest feature of the book, Gosling presents a number of nicely chosen examples to illustrate various features of weakness of will and related phenomena. The examples serve two purposes. They are good didactic tools, but not only this, they are also, in some ways, the motor for a discussion that benefits enormously in range and insight by their existence. The book must therefore be judged a qualified success.

Turning now to the philosophical discussion itself, there are a wealth of issues worth examining, but pressures of space unfortunately limit what can be said. Gosling quite correctly characterizes the problem of weakness of will as the question of how one may choose a course of action which one does not judge to be the best in the circumstances. The problem only arises if one holds that there is an intimate connection between what one chooses to do and what one judges best to do such that any divergence between these two mental acts is considered puzzling. But, if these two mental acts are genuinely distinct, then there should be no puzzlement as to why they may concern different actions, in the way characteristic of weakness of will, unless something is thought to lock these two acts together. The constraint of rationality has seemed the most plausible candidate.

It is here that Gosling makes a distinctive contribution. He suggests that there are cases of weakness of will in which we would say the agent was not acting irrationally. An example of his (p. 111-12), concerns a man who has chosen to be an academic rather than a stockbroker. Faced with a bet that he cannot make money as quickly on investments as a stockbroking friend, he takes it up, nevertheless reproaching himself for his weakness of will in so doing. Gosling claims there is no obvious sense in which it is more rational to be an academic rather than a stockbroker, nor is it irrational to depart from one's life plan momentarily. Yet, we may still allow that weakness of will has taken place.

The example is instructive. One way in which one might be tempted to claim that the agent is irrational is by noting that he acted in a way other than that which he judged better "all things considered". I use the phrase deliberately to recall Davidson's famous theory of weakness of will. The claim would be that the agent must have acted contrary to this judgement for otherwise he would not have reproached himself. Gosling perceives flaws in Davidson's theory that make such an approach unavailable. But it is not easy to share his misgivings.

One point that he makes against Davidson's approach is that it lacks psychological reality (p. 106-7). Sometimes an agent judges one action to be better all things considered, yet this will not be the consequence of a piece of practical reasoning in terms of beliefs and desires. Moral judgements, as well as the example Gosling gives, may be instances of this type of case. Davidson's characterisation of all things considered judgements is that they have two components, a comparative component "*a* is better than *b*" (*a* and *b* being courses of action), which is conditionalized upon the second component, a set of reasons. Since these reasons are thought by Davidson to have been obtained from a number of practical deliberations, it is easy to see why one should be convinced, by the reflection concerning psychological reality, that Davidson's account should be abandoned. But surely this would be overly severe. The account of the nature of all things considered judgements is detachable from the question of the origin of the reasons, and consequently one can grant Gosling all that he wishes in this area, except the conclusion that Davidson's theory of weakness of will is inadequate.

A second point that Gosling makes against Davidson in this connection is more telling. The utility of the notion of all things considered judgements requires that there is some rational relationship between the reasons one has, and a judgement that *a* is better than *b*. Gosling, in his discussion of the example mentioned, questions whether there is such a relationship. He is inclined to suppose that the agent is susceptible to various preferences and obligations for which there is no overall means of rational selection between them. It seems to me that the jury is out on this question and that its resolution will depend upon how much of a role moral, and other evaluative, assessments have within a theory of rationality. Gosling does not, at this crucial point, weigh in with something to tilt the balance of argument.

However, he does come up with a number of accounts of what is irrational about the agent who displays weakness of will to compensate for his rejection of Davidson's account of their irrationality. One which is of interest is that it is part of our notion of a rational agent that "they know what they are about" (p. 122). This seems an unhappy formulation. It suggests that the fault of the agent in weakness of will is that he or she does not know his or her own intentions. But, sadly perhaps, this is not true. Agents know only too well their intention to do the weak thing. What does seem right is that we expect rational agents to aim at that which they indicate they believe they should aim, so that if they continually fail to do this, we begin to doubt whether they are agents at all. Gosling has confirmed to the reviews editor that this is what he had in mind. My thanks to him for this and other useful comments on a previous draft of this review. However, at the risk of appearing ungrateful, it still seems to me hard to relate this thought to the claim, which he seems to take as equivalent to it, that agents should be reliable in their assessment of their own intentions.

Towards the end of the book Gosling inveighs against the thesis that desires are causes (e.g., see p. 180). He makes a number of interesting points concerning the inadequacy of putative evidence for this thesis, and draws one's attention to

the far from univocal use of the term “desire”. This naturally enables him to point to types of desire in which desires are not causes. Nevertheless, in my eyes, he fails to deal with what has always appeared the fundamental argument for some version of this thesis, namely, that the only account of what makes a particular desire operative, in the agent who acts, is a causal one. To deny that any desire is operative in this way is to be unable to distinguish the desires which actually gave rise to the action from ones which the agent possesses, but which did not give rise to the action in question. One then wonders what the justification for offering an explanation of an action in terms of particular beliefs and desires might be if it is admitted that the beliefs and desires cited did nothing distinctive to make the action occur.

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Utilitarianism and Distributive Justice, by P. J. Kelly. Oxford University Press, 1990. Pp. x + 240. £27.50

Bentham studies have recently been enjoying a revival, with several attempts to extricate Bentham from the simple and mad utility maximizing machine of the popular text books. Since there are over eight million published words of Bentham as well as 70,000 sheets of manuscript, there is plenty of scope for reinterpretations. Bentham may still emerge from these as slightly mad, but the madness is worn with a difference. Kelly's book is such a reinterpretation. It specifically declares itself to be a revisionist work, giving a new view of Bentham, and based on unpublished manuscripts. The view is certainly new, less certainly defensible, and I shall raise a question about the connection with the manuscripts.

Kelly has a negative and a positive thesis. The negative thesis, occupying chapters 2 and 3, criticizes the limitations of standard views of Bentham's psychology and ethics. On Kelly's account, Bentham used pleasure and pain in causal explanations of action; but it does not feature as an explicit motive or intention. He brings out how Bentham allowed individual diversity; agreed that people acted from sympathetic motives; and was not particularly concerned with calculating utilities. As regards morals, he exculpates Bentham from committing the naturalistic fallacy. This is all plausible, although none of it is completely new. Much more radical is his claim that anyone trying to extract Bentham's ethical theory from the standard first six chapters of the *Introduction* will produce something seriously mistaken. For Kelly “Bentham did not intend to supply a direct utilitarian theory of moral obligation” (p. 43).

This takes us to the positive thesis, which occupies chapters 4 to 7 and is the main point of the book. This is the part which is based on new manuscripts as well