

25. WARNER ON ENJOYMENT: A REJOINDER

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ABSTRACT. In 'Davis on Enjoyment: A Reply', Richard Warner replies to three objections against his 'Enjoyment' that I raised in my 'A Causal Theory of Enjoyment', and concludes that one of my examples in fact demonstrates a serious deficiency of my own account. I argue that Warner's replies to my objections are unsatisfactory, and that his objection to my account had a ready solution.

In 'Davis on Enjoyment: A Reply' (*Mind* 1983), Richard Warner replies to three objections against his 'Enjoyment' (*Philosophical Review* 1980) that I raised in my 'A Causal Theory of Enjoyment' (*Mind* 1982). He also argued that one of my examples in fact demonstrated a serious deficiency of my own account.

My first objection concerned a cancer patient in excruciating pain who was kissed by his daughter. The kiss may have caused the man to desire (intrinsically) an experience of that sort, and may have simultaneously caused the man to believe that he was having an experience of that sort. This would guarantee on Warner's theory that the man enjoyed the kiss. I grant that the patient may have enjoyed the kiss (it may have been that good). But I think it is also possible that he did not. The man's physical pain may have been so great that even though the daughter's kiss made him want just that sort of kiss, the kiss was not enough to overcome his suffering and make him happy. When I imagined that the man was 'too miserable to enjoy anything', I imagined that the physical pain was *overwhelming*, so that while the kiss might make him *happier* (make him feel a little better, lift his spirits somewhat), it would not be enough to make him *happy* (make him feel good, put him in good spirits). But if the man was unhappy, miserable, and suffering, then he was not enjoying himself, and so could not have enjoyed the kiss.

Warner claimed that my own account fails to explain why the patient did not enjoy the kiss. 'Davis' explanation is that satisfying his desire to kiss his daughter may not "add significantly to his pleasure" (Davis, 252). This indeed could not be a good explanation. For no matter how much the kiss added to the patient's happiness, the physical pain could have subtracted more, making the man miserable. Fortunately, the explanation Warner attributed to me is not the only one available to me, and was not the one I intended. 'To enjoy E', I said on 252, 'A must experience pleasure or happiness; his desires concerning that experience

must add significantly to his pleasure; and all of his desires concerning the experience must be taken into account'. In writing this, I thought it would be obvious that it was the first condition listed that failed in the cancer patient case, not the second. The cancer patient was miserable, and so was not experiencing pleasure or happiness.

In any event, Warner correctly points out that I provide no criterion of significance, and that 'it is not easy to think of a noncircular criterion that avoids vagueness while retaining plausibility' (Warner, 1983, 570). I agree, but do not see this as a defect of my analysis. Consider the sort of case I described on 247. I just tapped my index finger on the table. I wanted to tap my finger, and believed that I did so. Nevertheless, it seems incorrect to say that I enjoyed tapping my finger. Why not? My hypothesis is that while I desired to perform the action, the desire was not strong enough for me to be described as enjoying the action. This implies, plausibly, that *there is* a degree of desire above which I would have enjoyed the action. There are two reasons, however, why that degree of desire can only be specified vaguely, as a "significant" or "sufficiently strong" desire. First, we have no procedure for measuring degrees of desire. Second, "enjoy" itself is vague: as the desire to perform the action gets stronger, it will at some point be hard to say whether we enjoyed the action or not. Of course, my theory is more complex than this: we must take into account all desires "concerning" an experience, and we must also consider degrees of belief. But the principle is the same.

My second objection to Warner's account was that it could not account for cases in which we do not enjoy doing our duty. The problem, I said, is that the desire to do one's duty is typically an intrinsic desire. Of course, Warner rejected the claim that satisfying an intrinsic desire is *sufficient* for enjoyment. 'The appropriate belief and the relevant causal relations must be present if enjoyment is to occur' (Warner, 1983, 570). So let them be present in the duty case. Let us suppose that John is having the experience of doing his duty; that experience causes the belief that he is having an experience of that sort, and causes an intrinsic desire to have such an experience. Would it *follow* that John is enjoying doing his duty? I do not see that it would. Warner might claim that the experience of doing his duty simply could not cause John to have an intrinsic desire for such an experience. But I do not see any basis for such a claim. And if Warner takes this line, he will have additional troubles with the case of Joe, who is winning at the slot machines. To account for Joe's enjoyment, Warner will have to claim that the experience of winning causes Joe to have an intrinsic desire for that sort of experience. But if Warner denies the causal connection in the duty case, I do not see how he will be able to affirm it in the winning case. There does not seem to be any relevant difference.

My third objection to Warner's account was that desiring E for its own sake is not a necessary condition of enjoying E. I presented the case of Joe enjoying success at the slots. His desire to win is not intrinsic, I said. He desires to win not for the *sake* of winning but for the money or for the *pleasure* of winning. Warner correctly observed in his reply (570) that something may be desired intrinsically--for its own sake--even though it is desired *in part* for the sake of something else. Consequently Joe *may* desire to win for its own sake even though he also desires to win for the sake of pleasure. This does not, however, eliminate the problem I presented. For Joe just as well *may not* desire to

win for its own sake. He may desire to win *just* for the sake of the money and the pleasure. Indeed, this was the case I had in mind. I never claimed that desiring winning for its own sake is *incompatible* with desiring winning for the sake of pleasure, as Warner alleges (1983, 570). I simply stipulated that in Joe's case (which I assumed was typical), he desired to win not for its own sake, but for the sake of pleasure or other things. My claim was that Joe could still enjoy winning.

Warner's replies to my objections are unsatisfactory, I conclude, and the problem he saw for my account had a ready solution.

REFERENCES

- W. Davis, 'A Causal Theory of Enjoyment', *Mind*, 91 (1982), 240-56.
R. Warner, 'Enjoyment', *Philosophical Review*, 89 (1980), 506-26.
R. Warner, 'Davis on Enjoyment: A Reply', *Mind*, 92 (1983), 568-72.