

## 5. Persons as Ends-in-Themselves

While I believe the preceding explanation of obligation is accurate as far as it goes, I do not believe it goes far enough. In general, valuing A more highly than B is defective for an appetite, if there is nothing in what A is that makes A more of that to which the appetite is oriented than B is. And in the case of the rational appetite, that to which the appetite is oriented is what things are in themselves, since the finality of the rational appetite is to value things according to reason's knowledge. Therefore, if I do not treat another person equally, I am not giving what she is the value relative to what I am that she is due from an appetite that evaluates according to reason's knowledge of what we are. But more needs to be said about what it means for an appetite to be ordered to valuing things according to reason's knowledge.

Since reason is open to all aspects of things, there would seem to be no link between a rational appetite and any particular aspect of things. The most that reason's knowledge would seem to obligate would be a hierarchical evaluation of things. Where reason knows there is more being, there is more for a rational appetite to value. Hence we are obligated to love living things more than nonliving, humans more than animals, and God immeasurably more than creatures. And the reason we are obligated to treat other humans equally is that they are equal to us as things whose nature enables rational choice. But there is nothing about their nature that obligates an appetite oriented to what things are, other than the fact that they have features giving them equality with us with respect to the area where conflicts arise, the making of rational choices. There is nothing about those features in themselves that obligates, apart from the fact that they are equal to the features of another being; there is no feature that obligates a rational appetite just by being what it is.

As a result, there are problems this explanation leaves unsolved. Unless there is a specific feature or features of our nature that obligates by being what it is, the only obligation reason's knowledge imposes is to evaluate hierarchically according to degrees of being. But then, why am I not bound to value my collie more than my African violet, since reason knows that dogs are higher on the scale of being than flowers? Therefore, why am I not obligated to sacrifice the flower rather than the dog, if I am forced to choose between them? For the same reason, we who believe in angels would be obliged to love angels more than humans, and hence more than we love ourselves.

These problems arise because the explanation so far given does not sufficiently tie the obligation to treat others equally as pursuers of goals to what it means to be a rational pursuer of goals. There is a feature rational pursuers of goals have that obligates the rational appetite by being what it is: freedom of choice. The finality of the rational appetite is to evaluate things according to what they are. In dealing with other persons, the rational appetite cannot avoid choices that either succeed or fail in evaluating persons according to what they are as free beings. Specifically, the nature of free beings obligates the will to evaluate them as ends-in-themselves and never to evaluate them as mere means to other ends. We are obligated to respect the angelic nature as more intelligent and powerful than ours; but because we both have freedom of choice, there is no difference between angels and humans as ends-in-themselves. In fact, angels are obligated to value us as ends-in-ourselves.

Freedom of choice, however, is not a transplant that must be grafted on to the analysis of obligation in terms of the rational appetite. Section 5.1

will show that freedom of choice follows from the nature of the rational appetite. In other words, Proposition 4 (freedom of choice) is really a necessary consequence of Proposition 3 (the rational appetite). And Section 5.2 will show why the explanation of obligation already given requires the rational appetite to value free beings as ends-in-themselves. In other words, the obligation to treat persons as ends-in-themselves follows from the analysis so far given, and does not require any new premise other than that of freedom of choice.

The fact that the rational appetite must value humans as ends-in-themselves, however, does have important implications concerning the extent of our obligations. It is not the case that fairness toward others is the only domain of obligation (other than our obligations toward God). Chapter 6 will show that, because freedom makes us ends-in-ourselves, we have obligations toward ourselves and others we would not have were we not ends-in-ourselves.

Conversely, Section 5.3 will show why the fact that we are, and subrational beings are not, ends-in-ourselves allows our evaluation of subrational beings to not be hierarchical in all respects. That section will also discuss why we are obligated not to mistreat animals.

### 5.1. Freedom of Choice

How does a defective decision come about? That is, how can a decision produced by an appetite oriented to an end fail as a decision for that end? In Chapter 2, I said that the act of any appetite can be defective by the standard of the appetite's orientation to an end, but I also said that acts of the will could be defective even if the acts of other appetites could not. The reason why the act of any appetite can be defective is that there can be "many a slip 'twixt cup and lip." An appetite's successful production of an act can depend on conditions external to the appetite itself, conditions such as the proper operation of other faculties, for example, faculties of perception, imagination, and memory.

The source of moral defects in the rational appetite's acts, however, is not external to the appetite. The rational appetite is itself the cause of whether its acts are good or bad by the standard of the appetite's finality. For the concept of rational appetite not only solves traditional problems concerning the relation of being to value, knowledge to desire, and finality to deontology; it also solves the problem of free will.

The idea that rational appetite gives us free choice might seem to contradict other things I have said about rational appetite. The will's finality is to value things according to what they are in themselves, since it is an appetite for objects presented by reason, and reason knows what things are in themselves. Therefore, how can the will not value things according to the reality contained in their natures, unless through inculpable ignorance on the part of reason of what those natures are? Must not the will necessarily make things values according to the way reason has made them objects of knowledge?

Not only is freedom compatible with the nature of the will but the nature of the will requires that ethical decisions be free. For a rational appetite to fulfill its intrinsic finality of valuing the being of things as known by reason, the appetite must itself bestow on things the place in our values that corresponds to what things are in reality. And the same nature that gives the rational appetite its finality gives it the power of placing values on things freely and, hence, fallibly.

### 5.1.1. The Universality of Concepts

The basis of freedom is this. Because it values things according to reason's knowledge, the will can relate to things in the same way reason does, namely, in a manner characterized by universality. Since the universality characterizing rational is the basis of freedom, a few words about universality are required in order to explain freedom.

The issue of universality is not the issue of whether we must quantify over abstract objects. The objects of reason are not universal in that sense, but universality is a characteristic of the manner in which reason relates to its objects. Through perception, imagination, and memory we relate, for example, to individual animals. If these modes of consciousness relate us to individual animals, they relate us to features that constitute what it is to be an animal; for where an individual animal exists, features by reason of which it is an animal must exist. Through the concept of animal, however, we relate to what it is to be an animal in abstraction from individual instantiations. That is, through the concept of animal, we relate to what it is to be an animal in such a way that we can attribute this object of consciousness to more than one extracognitional individual. That manner of relating to objects is called "universality"; and cognitions which relate to objects in this manner are called "concepts." (A concept can be universal in this sense while being very fuzzy around the edges. All that universality requires is that an object of concept be attributable to more than one individual. Universality as here understood does not require decidability for all possible individuals.)

In its extracognitional existence, and in its status as object of perception, imagination, and memory, what it is to be an animal is not characterized by universality. But universality as a characteristic of our relation to objects of concept does not violate the principle that whatever exists must be individual. As compared to extracognitional animas, the object of the concept of animal is not individual, while they are. But as compared to other objects of concept, the object of the concept of animal is an individual object of concept. What it is to be an animal is one object of concept; what it is to be a star is another object of concept; what it is to be a computer is another, and so on. To recognize that universality characterizes the manner in which reason relates to its objects, one does not have to understand how one object of concept among others can be related to its extracognitional instances as attributable to more than one. But some brief words of explanation are in order, since most philosophers aren't even aware of the existence of the position that has been most commonly held by those of us who accept at least a moderate form of realism regarding universals.

Describing objects of concept as individual relative to other objects of concept does not require us to invoke a theory of types or any other theory of second-order predication. The relevant distinction is between the logical and the ontological domains, with the extracognitional causal factors necessary for the latter, not between prior and posterior orders in the logical domain. Whatever exists is individual. Therefore objects of concept and their extracognitional instances are individual. But to have the individuality necessary for their extracognitional existence, the individuals to which the objects of our concepts are attributable must require the presence of a cause that is lacking in the existence of our concepts. Because that cause is present in extracognitional animals, extracognitional animals are individuals

relative to the object of the concept of animal. Because that cause is lacking in the extracognitional existence of concepts, the object of the concept of animal is attributable to more than one animal rather than being attributable to one extracognitional animal only. To know that universality does not violate any ontological principle, we do not have to know what that cause is. We only have to know the some ontological causal factor must be present in one case and absent in the other. (In fact, the cause is Aristotle's prime matter, but we do not have to know that.)

Universality itself is logical, rather than ontological. That is, the word "universal" refers to an object of rational consciousness that has no existence outside of rational consciousness; and it is present in rational consciousness only as a cognized relation between individual objects of concept and individual extracognitional existents. Once the epistemological threshold between the ontological and logical domains has been crossed, we can form other concepts whose objects are related to their instances as universals to individuals, without any question of the presence and absence of the ontological cause of individuality. That cause concerns extracognitional existence only. When the objects of concepts are logical relations or cognition-dependent constructs, causes of extracognitional existence are irrelevant. In each case, the object of concept will be only one among many objects of concept, but it will relate to its instances in the manner we call "universality." We can form such concepts without the presence and absence of the ontological cause of the individuality of our primary objects, because universality and individuality have already become objects of rational consciousness as a result of our epistemologically prior concepts of extracognitional natures.

For example, consider the object of concept: object-of-concept. As attributable to more than one instance, object-of-concept is universal relative to such instances as the object of the concept of animal and the object of the concept of star. (I chose this example to show that the present account of the universality of objects of concept is self-referentially consistent.) Object-of-concept is related to what it is to be an animal and what it is to be a star as a universal to individuals. But to be an object-of-concept is not a characteristic of what it is to be an animal or what it is to be a star in their extracognitional existence. Object-of-concept is a being of reason (as are being an object of proposition, a genus, a species, a set, a subset, and so on.) Hence the causes necessary for extracognitional existence do not enter the question of how object-of-concept can be attributed to more than one instance. But we have a concept of object-of-concept only because we first have concepts of extracognitionally existing natures whose individuation requires a cause that is lacking in our concepts. As a result of those original concepts, universality and individuality are objects of rational consciousness. Once universality and individuality have an existence in cognition, we can form concepts whose objects are related to their instances as universals to individuals without need of the extracognitional cause of individuation; for the only existence at issue, cognition-constituted existence, has already been accounted for.

#### 5.1.2. The Universality of the Rational Appetite

We do not have to understand why the universality of concepts does not violate the need for whatever exists to be individual in order to know that the rational appetite relates to things, as reason does, in a manner characterized by universality. The evidence is as follows.

We are capable of asking questions like "What is the meaning of life?", "What does true happiness consist in?", "What should my goal in life be?", "Is there any end worth pursuing for its own sake and not for the sake of anything else?" When we ask such questions, we are relating to the objects of concepts like the meaning of life, happiness, goal, good-in-itself. But we are relating to these objects in a universal manner. That is, we are relating to them without attributing them to any individual instantiation. The answers to the questions will relate us to individual instantiations. But we ask the questions when we do not yet have answers. If we do not have answers, we do not know which of several possible individuals might embody the answer. Therefore, in asking the questions, we are relating to the objects of such concepts in abstraction from any individual instances.

Such concepts express in different ways what the rational appetite is oriented to. Since reason can relate in a manner characterized by universality to what the rational appetite is oriented to, the appetite oriented to things according to reason's knowledge must be able to relate to them in a similar manner. For reason to be so related to objects is not to be related to individual instances of them as the senses are, but to be related to objects attributable to more than one instance. (There may be only one true happiness, but insofar as grasped by a universal concept, happiness is not presented as identified with one and only one state.) Likewise, the rational appetite is not by nature oriented to choosing this or that individual end because the rational appetite is, by virtue of being oriented to ends as reason is oriented to objects, capable of relating to ends in a manner that transcends the individual alternatives that confront it. That is, just as an object of a universal concept is, when truthfully attributable, attributable to some individual instances not specified by the concept itself, the rational appetite must choose some individual good or happiness or meaning, etc., not specified by these universal concepts themselves. And just as an object of concept is not presented as identified with any individual instance, the rational appetite is not necessitated to choose this individual end as opposed to some other. If the rational appetite were so necessitated, it would not be a rational appetite, an appetite oriented to things according to reason's way of knowing things.

There is one crucial difference between the way universality characterizes reason's way of relating to objects and the will's way of relating to value, but this difference confirms rather than contradicts the will's lack of necessity with respect to individual goals. Reason can comprehend that a conceptual object is embodied in many individuals; reason does not have to choose between them. But the choices that confront the will are incompatible with each other. We cannot have everything. As an appetite, the will is oriented to valuing concrete states of affairs to be brought into existence by its decisions or, if already in existence, to be enjoyed. But as an appetite oriented to its ends according to the way reason knows things, the will relates to things in a universal manner, which means that the nature of the will forces it to choose some concrete state of affairs but not this one as opposed to that. The appetite that values according to the way reason knows things is not forced to choose this end as opposed to that, since the objects of reason's concepts of good, value, end, etc. are, as universal, not presented as instantiated in this or that individual.

Of course, reason does more than form concepts. It also knows truths such as the truth that complete happiness could only be found in experiential

awareness of the concrete entity that is infinitely perfect. Does this knowledge force the will to choose courses of action compatible with the beatific vision? On the contrary, this knowledge confirms the will's freedom. As an appetite, the will is oriented to concrete ends to be known through experiential knowledge. Only experiential, concrete awareness of God could necessitate the will. If reason presented the will with the infinite being experientially apprehended, the will would necessarily, not freely, value that being as its complete good; for by hypothesis, there would be no reality lacking in the infinite being that the appetite could prefer to it. But propositional knowledge does not give us experiential knowledge of God. The only experiential awareness available to us is awareness of finite states of affairs. Confronted with anything less than an infinite being, including an action that was necessary for the will's access to the infinite being, the will's response is free, since any experientially apprehended finite reality could exclude some other reality that also offers an attraction for the will.

Thus, the will's relation to ends is necessary in some respects and not necessary in others. As a rational appetite, the will necessarily has the end of valuing things according to reason's knowledge of what they are. But in valuing things, the will is freely selecting the concrete ends our behavior will actually be directed toward. What those concrete ends actually will be is not necessitated by the nature of the will. Therefore, in the selection of its concrete ends, the will can succeed in fulfilling or fail to fulfill the finality that is necessarily inscribed in each of its acts, the finality of valuing things according to reason's knowledge of what they are. Some of the states of affairs the will has the power to make its concrete ends achieve that intrinsic finality, so do not. In other words, the will's attainment of its true natural end requires that it freely give things the place in our evaluations that is called for by its intrinsic finality, on the one hand, and what the things it is evaluating are, on the other. But it can also fail of its natural end by freely evaluating things as if they were otherwise than what they are. (The will's twofold way of relating to ends can also be expressed in terms of its own end and the ends of other inclinations and faculties. In selecting a concrete end, the will is always selecting the end of another faculty, set of faculties, or inclination of the nature that underlies our faculties -- the intellect, sexuality, nutritional faculties, our nature's inclination to self-preservation, and so on. Each act of the will has an intrinsic finality that can fail to be achieved as it chooses ends to which other faculties and inclinations are ordered.)

When a free choice occurs, then, does a change occur without causes sufficient to bring about this change? No, the causes are the nature of the rational appetite and the attractiveness perceived in the course of action chosen. But the will's universal manner of relating to its ends allows it to refrain from responding to any perceived attractiveness, since incompatible courses of action can also be attractive. Refraining is a nonact positing nothing new in existence and, hence, requiring no causality. Responding, on the other hand, has sufficient causes in the perceived attractiveness and in the appetite's universal manner of relating to ends, since that relation to ends requires the appetite to choose some good as its concrete end. If some other cause were necessary for its acting or nonacting, the will would not be an appetite oriented to ends in a universal manner. That universality gives us the freedom to nonact or to allow an attraction to cause us to act.

Nonacting with respect to course of action A amounts to choosing as our concrete goal the state of affairs that will exist in A's absence. Of course, there is usually at least one other course of action, call it B, available to us. If we nonact with respect to A, we are still free to chose course of action B. But our choice of B is free because we can also nonact with respect to it. And we are always free to choose neither A nor B nor any other concrete state of affairs except the one that will exist if we do nothing.

Finally, freedom of choice answers a possible objection concerning one of the things that is necessarily true of all appetites but which would be true of the rational appetite even if it were not true of others. I have described the act of an appetite as an evaluating of the end desired or decided upon. To this way of describing appetitive acts, the response has been made that evaluations are cognitional rather than appetitive. For instance, the judgment that Horowitz is a better musician than the author is an intellectual act and is a different kind of act from the appetitive delight or dislike we experience on hearing a musician's playing. The general problem with this objection is that, while it is certainly true that there are cognitional acts that deserve to be called evaluations, it does not follow that appetitive acts are not evaluations in their own way. Aesthetic delight, for example, is a valuing or appreciating of an artist's work.

But even if appetitive acts should not be called evaluations, the analysis of the will's acts, though slightly more complicated, would stand. For the will's freedom means, among other things, that the will, rather than evidence, is the cause of the ultimate intellectual evaluation by which we direct ourselves toward ends. When I am deciding whether to have an ice cream cone, for example, I can let my knowledge of the pleasure I will derive determine the concrete end at which I will aim, or I can let my knowledge of the undesirable consequences fo health that the calories and cholesterol can have determine my concrete end. Insofar as I act rationally, my direction to ends must be determined by knowledge of some kind; otherwise, my orientation to ends would be unconscious. But if knowledge necessitated the choice of one end, say, health, rather than another, the choice would not be free. The choice can be both free and directed by knowledge if and only if the knowledge by which I evaluate something as my actual concrete end is the result of the will's causing the intellect to use a certain part of its knowledge as that which will direct us toward our end. That is, it is an act of the will that causes our intellectual evaluation of something as the concrete end for our pursuit. And instead of explaining obligation in terms of the will's evaluations, I could have explained it in terms of the will's causing of the intellect's ultimate evaluations of things to be our actual, concrete ends. The will can cause such evaluations in a way that either accomplishes or fails to accomplish the will's intrinsic finality of deciding according to reason's prior knowledge of what things are.

## 5.2. Valuing Free Beings as Ends-in-Themselves

Since human nature gives us freedom of choice, human beings are ends-in-themselves and should be treated as ends by the decisions of the rational appetite, while anything whose nature does not make it an end-in-itself is eligible to be treated as a means to the ends of those who are ends-in-themselves.

The nonfree being has ends, as any being does. That is, its nature is an orientation to certain forms of behavior that, ipso facto, are goals for those orientations. But the ends of a nonfree being are not its, do not belong to

it, in the sense that it does not give itself its relation to ends. The nonfree being's relation to ends come to it completely extrinsically; the universe gives it its relation to ends. There is nothing in the reality constituting its nature that gives it the power of selecting the ends of its own existence.

Let us assume you have constructed a mechanical device to perform some function. If that function is interfered with, there is an important sense in which the loss is to you and not to the device. The device has that function because you gave it a function in view of some goal of your own. The interference with the function is a loss to you because the device no longer serves to achieve your goal. Is it a loss to the device? In some respects, perhaps it is. But it is not a loss to the device in the sense of the device's being deprived of a pursuit of an end it gave itself. The device's end, that is, its function, is given it by something else in view of ends the other thing has given itself. The nonfree beings in nature are exactly like the device in this example, with one difference. The device is given ends by a being who does not get its ends from anywhere else but itself. Things in nature are given their ends by beings that do not give themselves their own ends but are themselves given their ends by other beings (\*I abstract for the sake of argument from the issue of divine creation). Endowing a natural being with ends is, in effect, nature's means of using that being to achieve nature's ends. This is not a back-door argument for design in nature. I am simply pointing out that when one thing is given its ends by another, the first thing is serving the ends of the second.

The makeup of a person, on the other hand, includes the power to determine its own ends. The external causes bringing us into existence determine our ends only in general (as long as they are in the domain of finite being). For example, it is a natural determination out of our control that we are oriented to acts evaluating things as if they existed, and as if we knew they existed, in certain ways. But our evaluations are made freely; hence, we can choose to evaluate things contrary to what we know of their being. In other words, that natural determination does not include a specification of any of the particular ends we actually direct ourselves to by our choices. We will necessarily choose some end or ends. But experience shows that humans are capable of making an indefinite variety of contradictory things the ends of their behavior. When we are talking about the concrete ends we are actually in pursuit of, the ends are our own in the sense that we are the ultimate and conscious cause of the fact that we are directed to these ends and not others. We cause our ends to be our ends; the ends we serve are not given us by another as means to its ends.

We can ask, however, how this fact about persons produces an obligation to treat them as beings whose actions are directed to their own ends, rather than using them as means to my ends regardless of how that affects their pursuit of their own ends. To argue from a person's being an end-in-herself in the sense of having freedom of choice to the conclusion that we should treat her as an end-in-herself in the sense of not using her as a means seems to be a clear case of attempting to derive ought from is.

But obligation consists in a describable fact, the fact that acts of the will have an finality whose fulfillment makes them intrinsically successful and whose lack of fulfillment makes them intrinsically defective. And everything already said about this concept of obligation both conforming to our everyday ethical concepts and solving philosophical problems like that of



deriving ought from is applies here. For to fail to treat another free being as an end-in-herself is to fail to evaluate her according to what she is.

Appetites evaluate things to be certain kinds of things, to exist in certain ways, just as belief asserts that things exist in certain ways. Things are evaluated, however, as ends or as means to ends; if something has a value for us, its value is that of an end or a means to an end. And there is such a thing as evaluating another person as an end. To will her equal opportunity in the pursuit of her ends is to make her equal opportunity one of our ends. But we cannot place a value on her pursuit of ends in abstraction from placing a value on her. The way I evaluate her relation to ends is the way I evaluate her. When we give her equal opportunity to pursue her ends, she has the place in our evaluations of someone "worthy" to pursue her ends, where "worthy" means fulfilling the finality of the appetite doing the evaluating. If so, we are evaluating her as an end, not as a means. When we give another person the status of an end in this sense, we are evaluating her to be what she in fact is. The place that she has in my evaluations is the place that she has in reality. In my evaluations, she has the status of a being oriented to her own ends, ends she sets for herself, and that is what she really is.

But if we fail to value her as someone whose ends are to have the same opportunity of accomplishment that our ends have, we evaluate her as if she was other than she is. What she is in our evaluations is a being oriented to the accomplishment of ends we set for her, rather than a being oriented to the accomplishment of ends she sets for herself. We may continue to believe she is oriented to ends she sets for herself, and that belief fulfills the intrinsic finality of belief, since it is true that she is a free being. But our evaluation is defective by the will's finality of evaluating things to be what they are. In our evaluations, she is not oriented to the accomplishment of ends she freely sets for herself. Hence, we have not given what she is the place due it in the evaluations of an appetite whose finality is to value things according to reason's knowledge of what they are.

Another way to put it. To value something is to give it the status, in our volition, of an end or a means to an end. Therefore, to value something according to our knowledge of what it is is to give it the status of an end or means to end an end, according to our knowledge of what it is. To evaluate another person is give her the value, for us, of being a means to an end we choose for ourselves or being someone whose pursuit of her own chosen ends is one of our ends. And therefore, to evaluate another person according to our knowledge of what she is is to give her the value of being directed to ends we choose or directed to her own chosen ends, according to our knowledge of what she is. But knowledge of what she is in what respect? In respect to being something whose action is directed to ends she sets for herself rather than being directed to ends given her by another. Why must the rational appetite evaluate persons according to what they are in this respect?

Like any appetite, the will evaluates things to be or not to be the kind of thing the appetite is oriented to. If the will had a concrete mode of existence, such as some kind of sensory experience, as its necessary goal, it would evaluate sensory experiences by whether or not they were the kind of thing it was oriented to. With the exception of a being whose infinite perfection would fulfill the universal idea of being in itself, the will does not have such a necessary concrete goal. Still, the will is necessarily oriented to making free choices of whatever concrete goal or goals we will

actually achieve. And in making free choices, the will cannot avoid having the goal of evaluating things according to our knowledge of what they are. The will's necessary concrete goal, infinite being, is necessary only because the will is an appetite ordered to valuing things according to reason's knowledge, so the evaluation of things according to reason's knowledge, in making choices of our concrete goals, is an integral part of the will's necessary finality. But to evaluate is to make things our ends or means to our ends. As a result, the will cannot avoid having the goal of evaluating according to reason's knowledge precisely for the sake of freely making things our ends or means to our ends.

And for that reason, the will cannot avoid having the goal of valuing things according to our rational knowledge of them concerning that which the will necessarily does, namely, freely make things ends or means to our ends. Reason knows that the actions of other persons are, in reality, directed to their own freely chosen ends. But to evaluate them is to give them the place, in our values, of being ends or means, that is, the place of things whose actions are in pursuit of ends they set for themselves or things whose actions are in pursuit of ends we set. Therefore, if the will is not oriented to evaluating persons according to what reason knows about them in this respect, it is not oriented to evaluating according to what reason knows about them with respect to that which the will is necessarily ordered to, the free evaluation of things as its ends or as means to its ends.

The will can no more avoid treating things as if they existed the way they are evaluated than belief can avoid being an assertion that things exist in certain ways. Both belief and evaluation have the finality of identity between the way things exist and the way they are believed or evaluated to exist. To evaluate the actions of another person as not existing for the ends of that person is defective just as is the belief that the person does not set the ends for her actions. And when we do not give another person the equal opportunity to pursue her ends, the place her actions, and therefore she herself, have in our evaluations is not that of existing to accomplish her ends. The evaluation we put on her actions is solely from the perspective of our ends to the exclusion of hers. Her actions are evaluated either as serving our ends, in which case they are evaluated positively, or they are evaluated as interfering with our ends, in which case they are evaluated negatively. In either case, the value we place on her as an agent is from the perspective of whether her agency serves our ends as opposed to hers. The value she has in our system of ends and means is not that of being the person who determines the ends her actions are directed toward.

To sum up. The act of any appetite evaluates something to be or not be the kind of thing the appetite is oriented to. For the rational appetite to evaluate something to be or not to be the kind of thing the appetite is oriented to is to evaluate it as directed to its own freely chosen ends or as directed to an end the will sets for it, since the will is oriented to the free evaluation of things as ends for the will or as means ordered to the will's ends.

But we do not have to comprehend the philosophical analysis of free will to know that other persons deserve to be treated as ends by the rational appetite. At some age, a child becomes aware of the fact that, in pursuing rationally chosen goals, she is setting her own ends. And for the reasons discussed in Sections 1.1 and 3.2, she is aware of others as having a nature similar to hers with respect to the ability to pursue rationally chosen

goals. Hence, she is aware that others are like her in being able to set their own goals. If she does not give another the equal opportunity to pursue his goals, what he and his actions are in her values is not identical with what they are in reality and what she knows them to be. For in her values, he does not have the status of the person who sets the ends his actions are directed toward. And she is aware of this inherent defect in her evaluations.

In arguing that my analysis of obligation conforms to the common view, I described the common view as the belief that we should be treated equally. But treated equally in what respect? Treated equally as pursuers of goals. And to treat others equally as pursuers of goals is to treat them as ends-in-themselves, since it is to treat them as equal to us in being free pursuers of goals. If I give her equal opportunity to pursue ends, I treat her as having ends that belong to her as my ends belong to me; for I am making her pursuit of ends one of my ends. But if I do not make her opportunity to pursue of ends one of my ends, I treat her as if she were not equal in having ends that belong to her as my ends belong to me; for I am evaluating her relation to ends by its relation to my ends, which are other than her ends. I evaluate myself rather than her as the being who will set the ends to be accomplished. I therefore give myself a higher place than her with respect to setting ends.

But in addition to judging ethical obligation in terms of equality of treatment, the common person often speaks of it being wrong to "use" another person. The correspondence between this way of judging unethical behavior and the present analysis of obligation should be obvious. To judge an act as wrong is to employ a standard, a goal, by reference to which we evaluate the act. To judge it wrong to use another person is to judge it wrong to treat the other as a means to your ends in a way that prevents the ends of the other person from being fulfilled or, at least, having the opportunity of fulfillment. At every moment, we rely on the contributions of other persons to achieve our own ends. But the common belief is that we should not do so in ways that deprive other persons of the opportunity to achieve their ends. In other words, the common person believes that, in our evaluations, other persons should primarily be entities whose action is directed to their own ends rather than our ends. Why?

We know from our own case what rational decisions are. Hence we know from our own case that in making decisions we are setting our own ends. And we know that other persons are like us in being able to make rational decisions. Therefore we know that they too have the ability to set the ends their behavior is directed toward. But we also know from our own case that rational decisions have the finality of treating things as they are known to be. That is, we know that decisions evaluate things as if they existed in certain ways and, therefore, that decisions are defective if things do not exist as they are evaluated to exist. Since those decisions give other persons the status either of pursuing ends we set for them or of pursuing their own ends, the decisions are defective if they do not give them the status they are known to have in real existence, the status of pursuing ends they set for themselves. Our reflective knowledge of the nature of decisions reveals that evaluating someone as ordered to our ends amounts to evaluating them as if their actions were not, in real existence, ordered to their own ends.

Another area of consistency between the analysis of obligation in terms of our being ends-in-ourselves and the earlier analysis needs to be pointed

out, namely, what was said in Section 4.4.3 concerning the justification of punishment. The discussion of punishment emphasized the restoration of equality, but only as a consequence of restoring of what is due by the standard of the will's finality of treating things according to what they are. The description of the will's finality can now be more specific: we must treat things as what they are with respect to the free choice of ends. But in human affairs, restoring what is due ends-in-themselves from the rational appetite will often require the decision to restore equality of treatment through punishment. (As for the other forms of punishment mentioned earlier, disapprobation and God's punishment, I hope the justice of disapprobation for treating another person as a means has been made clear, and God's punishment will be discussed further in Chapter 6.)

Note, however, that my arguments do not imply that freedom of choice is an end-in-itself. Neither the ability to choose ends nor the choice of ends is an end; they are means to our achievement of ends. It is beings whose nature gives them freedom of choice that we must treat as ends by allowing them to pursue their ends (as long as their choice of concrete ends does not violate the finality of the rational appetite).

For those who know that an infinitely perfect being exists, humans are ends-in-themselves in another sense that has even greater ethical significance. Just by having knowledge of God's existence, humans possess infinite perfection within themselves; for that is what knowledge is, having within us the being of the other in a way that allows us to remain other.\* That which is entitatively other than us also exists within us, by another mode of existence. The rational appetite, therefore, must esteem human beings as possessing or capable of possessing the fullness of that which it is the nature of the rational appetite to value, being. For a rational appetite, in other words, each human being has infinite value.

### 5.3. Our Treatment of Subrational Beings

Most of us do not judge it wrong to so use animals and plants for our ends that the ends of their natures, for instance, the end of self-preservation, are not fulfilled. What makes the treatment of subrational beings ethically different from that of rational beings is that rational beings have freedom of choice and therefore must be valued as ends by the rational appetite.

In any free decision, I am pursuing an end I determine for myself. If in a free decision, I consciously place the pursuit of my end ahead of another person's, I am misevaluating her precisely with respect to the point of conflict, namely, the pursuit of freely chosen ends. The reason I cannot avoid misevaluating her if I do not make her pursuit of ends one of my ends is that my pursuit of a freely chosen end has come in conflict with her pursuit of freely chosen ends. No such point of conflict occurs in my treatment of nonfree things. My collie and my African violet are unequal in many respects but they are equal in that the nature of neither of them makes them able to determine their own ends. Nor, insofar as the existence of nonfree beings results from the causality of impersonal nature, does interfering with, or at least manipulating, their functioning cause a loss of anything's chosen goals the way interfering with a device I have designed can cause a loss for me.\* Using subhuman beings as means, in other words, does not violate the finality of the rational appetite, because it does not evaluate them to be other than they are. They are not ends-in-themselves.

That is why it would not be defective to love my African violet more than my collie, even though the flower and the dog are unequal in nature. If the

finality of the will was just a matter of treating equals equally and unequals unequally, we would be obligated to prefer the dog. But both the dog and the flower must be evaluated as means to ends rather than as ends-in-themselves; evaluating them as oriented to ends they set for themselves would be defective for an appetite that evaluates things according to what they are. Either they are given their ends by impersonal nature, in which case no other end-in-itself is involved, or they are given their ends by God. But if God has created beings that are ends-in-themselves, then the rest of creation must exist for their sake; if not, God's decision is intrinsically defective, since, in the pursuit of their goals, free beings must make use of nonfree beings.

Still, it can be asked why an appetite oriented to what things are must not evaluate some means more highly than others, when the means are higher and lower on the scale of being. The answer lies in an aspect of the human rational appetite mentioned only briefly so far. In selecting goals for our pursuit, our wills are always selecting among the goals of other human faculties and inclinations. For example, in seeking the beatific vision, we are seeking a goal to be accomplished through the intellect. In seeking self-preservation, we are fulfilling an inclination of our underlying nature and seeking a goal to be enjoyed by the totality of our being, not just by the will. In the case of preferring a flower to a dog, the goal is a form of aesthetic pleasure to be experienced through a variety of human faculties, not just our intellects and wills. If our faculties are so disposed that flowers give us more pleasure than dogs, there is nothing wrong with the will evaluating the flower as more of a means to that kind of pleasure. When we evaluate a dog to be less of a means to our aesthetic pleasure than is a flower, we are not violating the finality of the will because we are not evaluating the dog to be other than it is. On the contrary, there are situations where it could be unjust to prefer a dog to a flower. For example, a flower might be more important to our child than a dog is to us, and we could have empirical evidence for this. If some circumstance forced us to choose between them, it would be defective, all other things being equal, to make the child give up the flower so that we could keep the dog. Or we could be forced to choose between keeping our animals and having enough water to drink. Here, more than aesthetic satisfaction is at stake. Sufficient water is a necessary means without which we cannot pursue our goals, including the goal of aesthetic satisfaction. Even though the water is lower on the scale of being than animals, the water deserves a higher place in our evaluations.

In other words, the place a means has in our evaluations is determined by its contribution to a being that is not a mere means but is an end-in-itself. And given the complexity of our nature, the place various means have in our evaluations can differ from the place they have in the scale of being. The features our nature possesses in addition to the will are features belonging to an end-in-itself. In selecting between means, the first consideration for a rational appetite is not their place in the scale of being but their relation to the goals the rational appetite has or will select. And those goals are either goals of other inclinations and faculties belonging to the free being or goals of other beings who are ends-in-themselves. To be obliged to choose on the basis of what the means are, apart from their relation to the inclinations and faculties of free beings, would amount to being being obliged by the nature of things that are means, from the perspective of the will's finality, rather than by the nature of things that are

end-in-themselves. The means would "justify" the end, and choices of ends would be defective for that reason. The finality of the will is to evaluate things according to what they are, and to evaluate is to make things ends or means in our system of values. Since rational beings are to be evaluated as ends and subrational beings as means, we would not be evaluating things according to what they are if our choice of specific goals was determined by the nature of subrational beings independently of their relation to the nature of rational beings and the goals rational beings are oriented to through the various features of their nature.

What, for example, if someone argued that the higher place of a dog on the scale of being would obligate the flower lover to find some way to restructure her aesthetic priorities? Would this demand conform to our rational knowledge of what things are? No, because reason knows that aesthetic sensibilities involve faculties other than reason and reason knows what these faculties are sufficiently to know that their nature does not give them the inherent finality of valuing things according to what reason knows about things. Rather than conforming to what reason knows, it would be unreasonable to attempt to so change the nature of these faculties that they were oriented to what things are as known by reason. It would be particularly unreasonable, that is, defective, to attempt to change their nature for the sake of a subrational being such as a dog. For these faculties are part of the nature of a rational being and, hence, of a being that is an end-in-itself for the rational appetite.

Reason does govern the rational appetite's choices with respect to our subrational faculties. For example, our knowledge of the calories and cholesterol in an ice cream cone can affect the validity of a decision to satisfy our sensory desire for an ice cream cone, since that decision can have effects on the health of an end-in-itself. Likewise, we may learn that our favorite flower is causing a serious allergic reaction in us. That knowledge would have ethical implications because it concerns an end-in-itself. But those implications would not include changing the subrational nature of the faculties that give us a desire for ice cream or for the flower, since those faculties belong to the nature of an end-in-itself just as they are.

It does not follow, however, that our treatment of subrational beings has no ethical significance. It would be defective for the rational appetite to make destruction its end and take satisfaction in destruction for the sake of destruction. The object of reason is being, that which exists. Therefore, the rational appetite is oriented to valuing being, rather than valuing nonbeing, absence, or privation. The removal of some mode of being is regularly called for by the will's finality, but called for in view of some end other than the removal itself. The removal is desired because what is removed is an obstacle to the existence of some other state of affairs.

Choosing destruction for its own sake would violate the will's finality of deciding for ends according to reason's knowledge. And since reason knows the difference between levels of being, making the destruction of a higher form of being an end would, all other things being equal, be more defective for a rational appetite than would the destruction of a lower form, since, by hypothesis, the destruction of a higher being is more destructive. It is worse to destroy a dog for the sake of destruction than to destroy a stone. But would it be worse to destroy a dog than to destroy the Grand Canyon? Other things would not be equal, by the standard of the rational appetite's finality, because the Grand Canyon gives ends-in-themselves immense delight,

because it sustains various higher forms of being, because its destruction would have a deleterious effect on the human and natural environment, because it is irreplaceable while dogs multiply, and so on.

To the obligation not to seek destruction for its own sake, there does not correspond a right in the subrational being not to be destroyed, in whole or in part. We have the right to destroy them, since they are not ends-in-themselves. But we only have the right to destroy them for the attainment of goals that do not violate the will's intrinsic finality, as taking satisfaction in destruction as such would.

Can it be responded that this analysis does not exclude the inflicting of pain for its own sake, since pain is not mere absence? Pain is not identical with destruction; pain is a consciousness that accompanies destruction in certain cases. Therefore it would seem that to make pain our end would not be defective in the way making destruction our end would be defective. In fact, pain in itself is a good, since it informs a conscious being of the privation of some other state that is good by the standard of the conscious being's appetites.

But by that very fact, pain is by nature a means through which a conscious being is informed of a privation of some good, for the sake of taking action to restore that good. And reason is aware of the fact that pain is such a means. Therefore, making pain an end would violate the will's finality of making things ends and means according to reason's knowledge. To will pain as such is to will something of intrinsically less worth for an appetite than whatever is destroyed in order to cause the pain. For by the nature of pain, its value for an appetite is subordinate to the good whose privation pain is a consciousness of. Therefore, to will destruction, not as an end, but as a means to pain, is to will contrary to reason's knowledge of what pain and destruction are as ends and means for appetites. The place pain has in our evaluations is contrary to what pain is and what appetites are.

There need be nothing wrong in willing pain as a means to the attainment of some other end. We do this when we deny race horses pain killing drugs so that their pain can tell us that they are injured. In such a case, what pain is in our evaluations is what it is in reality. Nor need there be anything wrong with the deprivation of a lower end for the sake of a higher, as when we deprive the horse of the feeling of well being that the drug would procure in order not to harm the horse. But to will the deprivation of the feeling of well being for the sake of the existence of a something that is a means to the feeling of well being, as well as to other ends, is take satisfaction in the failure of a means to achieve its end; for the pain exists if and only if the end for which it exists is not achieved. We cannot place our satisfaction in the existence of this means without placing satisfaction in its failure to achieve its end. And to take satisfaction in its failure to achieve its end for the sake of its existence as a means to the end is defective for an appetite governed by reason's knowledge of what appetites, ends, and means are.

However, even in the absence of defective ends like delight in destruction or pain for their own sake, it cannot be the case that the pursuit of just any otherwise ethical end would justify the choice of a means involving the abuse of animals. In this context, the earlier statement that pain is in itself a good needs to be qualified. Sometimes we overemphasize the privation theory of evil. It is true that any positive mode of being has value for the rational appetite. But from the perspective of an appetite oriented to particular modes of being, a given positive state of affairs can

be undesirable because of what it is. Pain is such a positive condition; for pain is a consciousness of an evil, either of the privation of a good (an end or a means necessary for an end) or the presence of another evil (another positive state opposed to an appetite's finality). However, pain is not a consciousness like our disinterested consciousness of objects other than ourselves. Pain is a form of the conscious subject's self-awareness as a conscious subject. And pain is so linked to the conscious subject's affliction by an evil of which pain is a consciousness that pain cannot exist with the conscious subject's being afflicted by some evil. Therefore, it is not only the painful condition that is an evil for an appetite; pain itself is an evil relative to the appetite for which the painful condition is evil. That is, pain is something the appetite necessarily evaluates as to be avoided and eliminated. For the satisfaction of a cognitive appetite is achieved through awareness of the existence of the appetite's end. And pain is the opposite of that awareness. Hence, the appetite necessarily desires the cessation of pain. Given what pain is and what a cognitive appetite is, pain cannot not be an evil for the appetite whose end is interfered with by the painful condition.

If pain were an objective awareness, it would not have to be evaluated by an appetite as an evil. When I look at my hand, sometimes I see it wounded, sometimes I do not. The nature of the consciousness is the same in both cases; that is, the nature of the consciousness is indifferent to that which are aware of through it. But the kind of awareness of the wound we have through pain is not indifferent to what we are aware of through it. A sensory appetite can recoil at the sight of a wound; that is not the same as evaluating the visual consciousness itself as evil. But as a subjective awareness, pain is both epistemologically and ontologically linked to a condition interfering with the subject's finalities as a conscious subject. Such an awareness is intrinsically an evil for an appetite whose satisfaction requires the subject's consciousness of the existence of its ends.

As a rational appetite, therefore, the will is governed both by our knowledge of pain as a good, insofar as it is a means to the removal of something evil, and by our knowledge of pain as something evil, relative to an appetite whose frustration pain is the consciousness of. Hence, to evaluate pain for what it is we are obligated to evaluate it as something to be eliminated except where it functions as a necessary means to a good of more value for the rational appetite than the good whose loss causes the pain. For example, we have a natural inclination toward entertainment that precedes our free choices and provides one kind of matter for our choices, since the will is always selecting among the ends of other faculties and inclinations. A certain amount of entertainment should even be considered a normally necessary condition for our successful functioning as pursuers of goals, because the psychological state of one deprived of sufficient entertainment can interfere with her pursuit of other goals. Since the inclination toward entertainment belongs to an end-in-itself, would we be justified in abusing animals for the sake of, say, making a movie? Not if there are other ways to provide the entertainment we need; if there are other ways, the pain is not necessary.

But since we are ends-in-ourselves, why can we not make such a movie our end, in which case abuse of an animal would be necessary for our end? The function of free choice is to select concrete ends that satisfy natural inclinations, inclinations which usually do not require this or that concrete way of satisfying them. Not all the concrete ends we can choose fulfill the



rational appetite's own finality of valuing things according to reason's knowledge of what they are. The will is not obligated to select a particular end satisfying a natural inclination, when the satisfaction of that inclination does not constitute a need for us as pursuers of goals or when the inclination can be satisfied in other ways. The abuse of an animal is not necessary to satisfy our natural need for entertainment. Therefore, the abuse of an animal is not necessary to fulfill the rational appetite's function of selecting concrete ends satisfying natural inclinations. To satisfy the inclination for entertainment by abusing an animal would fail to evaluate pain for what it is, a relative evil that, by that fact, is something to be avoided unless it is necessary for a good that is higher or more necessary for a rational appetite.

There could be cases where the choice of such a means was not defective. Stranded people might have no way short of abuse to kill an animal they need for food. What is at stake would constitute a need imposed by the nature of ends-in-themselves; they cannot be pursuers of ends without it. And since there is no other way to fulfill the need, there is no question that the goal achieved makes it reasonable to sacrifice the well being of the animal. But if there were another way to satisfy that need, choosing to abuse the animal would violate the will's finality of evaluating according to reason's knowledge of what things are. Medical experiments, also, are cases where there the end achieved can justify inflicting pain on animals, as long as the amount inflicted does not exceed that required by a medical purpose that serves the needs of ends-in-themselves.

#### 6. Ethical Values Other than Fairness

For many, where justice in the sense of fairness toward another human is not at stake, no ethical value is at stake. The fact that we are ends-in-ourselves (whether because we are free beings or because our consciousness can attain the infinite fullness of being) imposes obligations toward ourselves and toward others that go beyond fairness. Justice means given something its due, that is, what is due it according to the finality of the rational appetite. Equality of treatment is not the only thing due an end-in-itself from a rational appetite. Even where equality is not an issue, we are capable of misevaluating both ourselves and other humans with respect to our character as ends-in-ourselves. Just as we can fail to give ourselves due credit at the level of belief and of psychological attitudes, and just as such failures are intrinsically defective for not achieving the goal of conformity to what we are, we can fail to give what we are the credit due it from a rational appetite and thus fail to achieve the appetite's intrinsic finality.

Ethical theories have to avoid the following potential problem. Seeking a basic principle that can be used as an ethical standard, a theory abstracts a principle from some agreed upon ethical examples. The theory then assumes it has the principle it needs only to find that applying the principle to other cases produces unwanted results. Is there a danger of that happening as I extend the analysis from fairness to other cases? There could be such a danger if this were a matter of deriving consequences from a principle. But I have put forward no such principle. In effect, I have treated the principles, "Treat other humans equally," and "Do not use other persons merely as means," not as foundations of ethical decisions but as something in need of foundation. That foundation was located not in a further principle but in a factual situation. The obligation to treat equals equally is not derived from that situation but consists in that situation.\*

Similarly, in the examples to follow, I will not be deriving ethical consequences from a principle but will be pointing a factual situation like that I pointed to in the case of fairness, namely, a defect in placing evaluations on things, a defect measured not by a standard external to the act of deciding but by a decision's intrinsic finality of treating things as if they exist the way they are evaluated. If someone wishes to concede the occurrence of the defect but refuses to call it a moral defect on the grounds that it does not involve fairness in the usual sense, I can only reply that we are free to use words any way we want. However, the opponent will have to find something that the moral obligation to be fair consists in other than the defect in question, since the defect occurs in each of the cases.

Furthermore, since the defect is culpable, the guilty party deserves punishment as she does for her other ethically defective decisions. A defective decision freely deprives us of an end called for by our nature, since the defect consists in the decision's failure to achieve an end called for by the nature of the rational appetite. An all-powerful being aware of such a culpable defect would Himself make an intrinsically defective decision, if He did not allow us to suffer the consequences of the defect in our evaluations. In fact, God would be unjust to us, His will would be defective, if having given us free choice, He did not allow us to suffer the deprivations that we freely choose, along with any necessary consequences of those freely chosen deprivations.

For example, if a condition for achieving our ultimate end of knowing God is rectitude of will toward ends that are less than our ultimate end, the absence of that rectitude would require God to deprive us of our ultimate end. Why would rectitude toward lesser ends be necessary for achieving our ultimate end? Achieving our ultimate requires rectitude of will toward God, and a freely chosen lack of rectitude toward a lesser good can prevent us from having rectitude of will toward the source and exemplar of the lesser good.

We have seen how lack of rectitude occurs in the case of fairness toward our equals. The question is how it could occur in other cases. I will now indicate how it occurs in the cases of artificial contraception, drunkenness, and suicide. I discuss contraception in Section 6.1. Drunkenness and suicide are discussed in Section 6.2.

### 6.1. Artificial Contraception

Appetites cause us to evaluate things as ends or means to ends. The will causes us to evaluate things as ends and means according to our rational knowledge of what those things are. When we choose to use our sexuality, we choose to use it as a means to some end. But at times of fertility, human sexuality is, by nature, a means for bringing into existence beings that are ends-in-themselves. Human persons are ends-in-themselves and must be so evaluated by the rational appetites of other persons.

To evaluate something as an end is to give it a place in our system of values such that the thing's value does not derive from its relation to some other value. An end is an object of desire that is not desired for its relation to some other object of desire. For example, in willing that other humans have an opportunity equal to ours to pursue goals that not both of us can attain, we give them a place in our evaluations that does not derive from their relation to some other end we are seeking. Since its value for a rational appetite is not bestowed by its relation to anything else, an end-in-itself is an ethical absolute. Given something that is an end-in-itself, the rational appetite cannot fail to be defective if it does not value the thing as an end.

Does it follow that we have an obligation to make our goal the existence of all the ends-in-themselves that our sexuality could produce? That is, does it follow that we should all choose to bring into existence the maximum number of children whose conceiving and rearing would be compatible with other conditions without which we cannot conceive and rear (working to provide for food, shelter, and clothing, getting enough sleep, etc.)? To put it another way, from the fact that sexuality is a means to the existence of ethical absolutes, does it follow that we all have the obligation not to be celibate?

No. The rational appetite's obligations are determined by our rational knowledge. Reason knows the difference between the actual and the potential. It is one thing to know that another human being exists. That knowledge imposes the obligation to will that this being actually have an equal opportunity to pursue goals. It is another thing to know that if a child is conceived, another human being will exist. That knowledge imposes only the hypothetical obligation to will that, if a child comes into existence, she be treated equally. For example, it imposes the obligation to will that, if a child is conceived, she not be aborted.

The truth of "Another human being exists" is categorical; its truth is caused by the actual existence of the being, an existence that is independent of our knowledge of it. That same existence causes the being to have an actual right to equal treatment from us. That is, the finality of the rational appetite obliges the appetite actually to will the thing's equal treatment. On the other hand, the truth of an essential predication like "If a being has a rational appetite, it has freedom of choice" is hypothetical; its truth is not caused by the actual existence of anything. Still, its truth is caused by something independent of the cognition by which we know the truth, namely, the nature of the rational appetite. For the rational appetite is not caused to be what it is by this cognition of it. And the connection between the nature of the rational appetite and freedom depends on the rational appetite's being what it is; it does not depend on our awareness that the rational appetite is what it is or our awareness that the rational appetite's nature gives it freedom.

But the nature that causes the truth of such a statement may have no actual existence outside of our cognition. That is why the truth is hypothetical. The nature must actually exist in knowledge in order to be known. But what is necessary for knowledge of the statement's truth is one thing; what causes the statement to be true is another. The nature is not a cognition-independent cause of truth insofar as it exists in cognition but insofar as it is capacity for being more than a term of this knowledge relation, specifically, a capacity for having an existence that is not constituted by our cognition of it. For the hypothesis in a truth like "If a being has a rational appetite, it has freedom of choice" is an hypothesis about the cognition-independent existence of beings with rational appetites.

A nature can cause an obligation for a rational appetite only in the way it causes the truths that reason knows. If a nature actually exists, it can cause a categorical obligation. If a nature's capacity of cognition-independent existence is unfulfilled, any obligation associated with it is only hypothetical, just as the nature's existence is only potential. The object of reason is being, actual and potential. The rational appetite's finality is to value the objects of rational knowledge as known by reason. And reason knows the difference between the actual and the potential. To call such obligation hypothetical can be misleading. The obligation

is not hypothetical in the sense in which teleological ethics is sometimes accused of making obligation hypothetical. That is, a means can be obligatory on the hypothesis that you wish to obtain the end that only this means can bring about; but there would be no way to make the end itself obligatory except in terms of the hypothesis of a further end which itself is nonobligatory. In fact, however, all obligation consists in the fulfillment of the rational appetite's intrinsic relation to the end of valuing things according to reason's knowledge. As such, no obligation is hypothetical. The choice of another end for the rational appetite could not escape this obligation, since the choice would be an act of the rational appetite. But the knowledge which nonhypothetically governs the will's decisions may be the knowledge of a hypothetical truth. The nonhypothetical obligation corresponding to such a truth would not be the obligation to will the actual existence of anything but the obligation to will that some state of affairs obtain if the hypothesis of the truth is fulfilled.

The fact that human sexuality is, at times of fertility, a means to the existence of an ethical absolute, therefore, does not impose the obligation to make that existence actual by using our sexuality. Does the fact that human sexuality is a means to an ethical absolute impose any other obligation on the rational appetite? Human sexuality is a means to other potential ends besides persons, for example, pleasure. Could one ethically decide to frustrate sexuality's function of producing absolute ethical values in order to use it solely for another value like pleasure? If we employ contraceptives, we are not evaluating sexuality as a means to an end-in-itself. The place it has in our system of values is that of a means to some end less than an ethical absolute, since we are precisely choosing to prevent the coming into existence of an ethical absolute while using our sexuality. As a result, my evaluation of my sexuality as a means to ends, my placing of sexuality in my system of values, is defective. I am evaluating my sexuality to be other than it is by reducing it to being less than a means to an end-in-itself.

How does an unconscious fact about sexuality's orientation to the production of human beings imply moral obligation? That unconscious orientation becomes conscious at the level of the rational appetite which makes the action of the sex faculty its own. That consciousness requires me to take a stand at the level of the rational appetite regarding the value sexuality as a means to ends. I am evaluating my sexuality as if it were a mere means to things that are not ends-in-themselves, since that is how I am consciously using my sexuality. In so doing, I am evaluating my sexuality to be other than it is as a means to ends that have an absolute value by the standard of the rational appetite's intrinsic finality.

My obligation not to interfere with this goal of the sex act is not one of justice to the potential child. I owe no debt of justice to a being that may never exist; otherwise, the obligation would be to bring the new human into existence. We would be obliged to perform the sex act. The obligation not to interfere with the coming into existence of a new human being only occurs if I am performing a sex act. For it is only then that preventing conception requires that I treat the sex act as if it were not ordered to the existence of something that is an end-in-itself. In other words, the merely potential nature of the end-in-itself to which sexuality is ordered imposes only a hypothetical obligation toward the use of sex for that purpose. If we use sex, the decision to interfere with the production of a person is defective as an act of the rational appetite. In making choices, the rational

appetite's nature requires it to evaluate things as ends and means to ends. I am not obligated to make the future existence of a human an end I pursue. But when I undertake an action, I cannot avoid evaluating the action as a means to ends. Hence, the problem of whether sexuality is evaluated as a means to ends-in-themselves does not arise until the rational appetite chooses a sex act and must evaluate the act as a means to rationally understood ends. If I employ contraceptives, I am not evaluating the act as a means to an end of unconditional ethical value.

The difference between someone who prevents the existence of a person by abstaining from sex and someone who prevents it by using contraception is that the abstainer does not evaluate her sexuality to be less than a means to a thing that is an end-in-itself for the rational appetite. If I refrain from sex in order not to have children, the place sexuality has in my evaluations need not be that of a means to ends that are less than ethical absolutes. In fact, I sacrifice the other ends I would attain through the sex act rather than treat sex as if it were not naturally oriented to a goal that is an end-in-itself and an absolute ethical value.

This way of distinguishing those who prevent conception by refraining from sex from those who do so by other means is an important difference between the present analysis of the evil of contraception and other analyses. Other analyses make it difficult to see why, if you can choose to abstain for the purpose of contraception, you cannot achieve the same purpose in other ways. For example, where it is recognized that contraception denies the other person her fertility and yours, it needs to be made clear why couples cannot mutually agree to deny each other their fertility. Mutual agreement appears to make the arrangement fair and, therefore, ethically valid; one party is not asking the other to give up something she is not willing to give up herself. And if we can mutually agree to deny each other our sexuality by abstaining, why can't we mutually agree to deny each other our fertility? Because doing so violates the will's finality by evaluating sexuality to be other than what it is as a means to an end of absolute value for the will.

The fact that the absolute value is only potential does not preclude obligation; it merely renders the obligation hypothetical: if you use your sexuality, do not interfere with its production of an end-in-itself. For the existence of our sexuality is not potential; it is actual. Hence, the existence of sexuality's orientation to a potential thing that would be an end-in-itself is actual, not potential. That orientation is nothing other than sexuality's nature, what sexuality is, since the orientation of any cause to its effects is, ultimately, identical with what exists when the cause exists.

Therefore, in evaluating sexuality to be less than a means to an end-in-itself, I am treating some actually existing ends-in-themselves unjustly, namely, myself and my sex partner. I am evaluating our nature as sexual beings to be less than what it is as a means to something of absolute value for the rational appetite; I am not giving our sexual nature the place in my evaluations that is due it from the point of view of the rational appetite's intrinsic finality. As a result, my decision is defective with respect to giving actually existing persons, ends-in-themselves, what is due them from a rational appetite. To misevaluate our sexuality is to misevaluate ourselves.

In Section 4.4.3, I pointed out that, from the perspective of God's justice, our intentions are more important than the carrying out of our

intentions. The first good due things from the rational appetite is their proper place in the evaluations of the rational appetite. If we do not give things the place due them in our evaluations, an injustice has been done even if we do nothing else. Therefore, if we freely choose to treat ourselves as less than what we are, if we choose not to give our nature the evaluation due if from an appetite oriented to making things ends and means according to reason's knowledge of what the evaluated things are, God would make an intrinsically defective decision if He did not allow us to be deprived of our true ends in proportion to our culpable failure to give ourselves as sexual beings the place we are due in our own evaluations. God would be unjust to us if He did not give us what we choose along with any necessary consequences of that choice.

In other words, the decision for contraception would deserve divine punishment in the same way that a decision to deny another person equal opportunity to pursue their ends would deserve it. Punishment for contraception would not restore equality between persons. But from God's perspective, that is, in reality, it is disordered willing that is constitutive of moral evil and deserves punishment. A decision for contraception is just as much disordered as the intention to treat others is, even when we cannot carry out the intention. In neither case is an end-in-itself actually deprived of an equal opportunity to pursue goals. But in each case, our willing is disordered with respect to giving an end-in-itself the place its nature is due in our evaluations.

Another implication of the evil of contraception needs to be pointed out. A decision for contraception is intrinsically defective because it misevaluates sexuality as less than a means to an ethical absolute. But such a misevaluation could occur in two ways. One way would be through ignorance of the fact that children are produced by sex acts. That source of the misevaluation is excluded in the present case. For one thing, the situation under discussion is that of taking measures to prevent conception; so knowledge of what sex can produce is assumed. More fundamentally, inculpable ignorance would excuse from moral obligation, because obligation concerns evaluating things as they are known by reason. When we are analyzing the finality of the rational appetite, rational knowledge must be presumed.

But if the fact that human beings are produced by sex is known, the only way to evaluate sex as less than a means to ethical absolutes is to evaluate the existence of a human being as less than the existence of an ethical absolute, an end-in-itself. When we use contraception, we are treating sex as if it were not by nature an orientation to the production of something of absolute ethical value, which is the same as treating the results to which sex is oriented as not being of absolute ethical value. The rational appetite is always engaged in directing the activity of other faculties. How the rational appetite evaluates a faculty with respect to being a means to ends implies an evaluation of the products of the faculty. For ends and means are correlative as objects of rational consciousness; my conscious evaluation of means as such implies an evaluation of its results as ends. Hence, the way I evaluate my sexuality requires an evaluation of the results to which my sexuality is oriented. If I so evaluate my sexuality that I can use it for one result while preventing another, I am evaluating the prevented result as something other than an end-in-itself. If I pick and choose between the ends of an action, I am not evaluating those ends as absolutes. In using contraception, I knowingly make an act oriented to an

end-in-itself defective with respect to the production of an end-in-itself; therefore my decision is also defective with respect to the rational evaluation of an end-in-itself as such. Again, the status of the child as potential makes any obligation hypothetical. The only actual beings to whom I have an obligation are my sex partner and myself. But in misevaluating our sexuality as less than a means to an ethical absolute, the existence of a child has already been misevaluated as less than the existence of an ethical absolute. Therefore, the misevaluation of the ethical value of children begins before abortion; it begins in contraception. Not that those who decide for contraception are logically committed to decide for abortion. Logic is the domain of necessity; decisions are the domain of freedom. But the misevaluation of our sexuality does logically imply a misevaluation of its results. Hence there is nothing inconsistent with taking the next step and deciding for abortion when contraception fails.

Note that this analysis of contraception does not obligate us to refrain from sex at times of infertility. The fact that sexuality is a means to the existence of an end-in-itself does not even require us to have procreation as our primary psychological purpose. As long as we do not use sex with the intention of preventing the production of a child by an act that could otherwise produce it, we are not giving a means to the existence of children a place in our values that denies it the place of being a means to the existence of children, since we are not deliberately interfering with the production of a child when that production could occur. Therefore, our evaluation is not defective for lack of identity between what sex is as a means to ends in reality and in our evaluations. The relation of sex to children is not an ethical absolute in the sense that we must only use sex for that purpose. Rather, that to which sex is related, when it is able to produce children, is something of absolute ethical value. Therefore, we are obliged not to frustrate that purpose when it could be achieved; for we would be giving sex a place in our values that would deny it the place, in reality, of being a means to ends-in-themselves.

It is also important to make clear that this analysis does not locate the moral evil of contraception in the frustration of the primary natural end of a faculty. We have many faculties whose primary function can be frustrated morally. The frustration becomes morally evil when the natural end of the faculty is something of absolute ethical value; for the location of moral evil as such is in the act the rational appetite, not the act of another faculty directed by the rational appetite. Moral evil is privation with respect to the will's intrinsic finality. The privation of another faculty's end can have moral significance only to the extent that it implies a privation in the will with respect to the will's own end. There is a perverted faculty in moral evil, but that faculty is the rational appetite itself. In unfair behavior, the perversion consists in evaluating other persons as if they were not ends-in-themselves. In contraception, the perversion consists in evaluating the sexual being of ends-in-themselves as if it was not naturally a means to the existence of an end-in-itself, that is, as if its natural end was not something of infinite value. Openness to the production of persons is not obligatory by virtue of being the faculty's natural end. Rather, openness to this natural end is obligatory by virtue of the end's being the production of persons. Otherwise, the fact that a means is related to a particular end would have more moral significance than the fact that the end is something of infinite value. For instance, the fact that our olfactory faculties have

smell for their end would be more important for ethics than the fact that the end of our reproductive faculties is the existence of an infinitely valuable being.

Although the preceding argument does not depend on whether procreation is the primary end of sexuality, the fact is that procreation is sexuality's primary end; and that fact has ethical significance, at least for those who know that God exists. Even when conception cannot occur, sexuality is what it is primarily in order that conception can result at other times. Just as a person is still a person when she is sleeping or drugged, sexuality is always something that exists so that it can sometimes produce children. That is, just as a person is always what she is primarily so that she can do the things she does when she is awake, so also sexuality is what it is primarily for the times when it can produce children.

To ask what is the primary end is to ask what is the most important end. The most important end sexuality accomplishes, the most important thing it contributes to us, is our existence. Sexuality contributes many other things to us but none of them is or can be as important as our existence, since without existence, nothing else is possible. That everything else sexuality can accomplish presupposes existence seems too obvious to say. Yet that fact is implicitly, though unintentionally, denied by those who deny that procreation has primacy among the ends of sexuality. For those who know that God exists, the primacy of existence means that procreation is the primary reason sexuality is what it is even at those times when procreation cannot result from the sex act. God made sexuality what it is primarily so that it can sometimes produce human beings. If not, then God is ignorant of the fact that existence is more important than any of the other things sexuality contributes to us. Since God designed sexuality to bring human beings into existence and since He knows that nothing else sexuality accomplishes can be as important as existence, He designed sexuality for the primary purpose of bringing us into existence. Likewise, our faculties of nutrition are what they are primarily for the sake of maintaining us in existence, even though we can use them to draw pleasure from substances with no nutritional value.

(\*But the existence nutrition maintains is the existence of an end-in-itself. Does that fact oblige us not to interfere with the primary end of nutrition by ingesting something without nutritional value? Not unless ingesting the substance would harm us in some way. For unless the substance would harm us, its lack of nutritional value would no more oblige us not to ingest it than the fact that conception cannot now occur would oblige us not to engage in sex. And if ingesting the substance did harm us, the moral evil would not consist in misevaluating the nutritional faculty as a means to a potentially achieved end. The moral evil would consist in depriving already existing ends-in-themselves, namely, ourselves, of conditions necessary for our pursuit of goals, including goals like gustatory pleasure. (See Sections 4.4.1 and 5.3.) If our continued existence imposes an obligation, the reason is not the nature of the nutritional faculty as oriented to that end but the fact that what already exists is an end-in-itself. (See Section 6.2.2.) If it were not already an end-in-itself, the nutritional faculty would not be maintaining the existence of an end-in-itself.)

The fact that God made sex what it is primarily to bring children into existence has ethical implications even at times of infertility. Since human sexuality is what it is primarily in order to produce ends-in-themselves, the marital relation exists because we have faculties whose primary purpose is



procreation. The basis of the marital relation, our sexuality, is what it is primarily to be a means to the existence of ethical absolutes. Even when that purpose cannot be achieved, ethical meaning of the marital relation is the use of faculties that exist primarily to sometimes produce beings of unconditional ethical value. Therefore, the sexual union should take place through genital faculties even when conception is not possible. If the sexual union does not take place through organs that are what they are for the sake of procreation, couples are evaluating their sexuality to be something other than it is; for they are treating it as if it is not always what it is for the sake of procreation. They are evaluating their sexuality as if it were not always what it is primarily to produce, from time to time, things of unconditional ethical value. If couples do not use their sexuality in ways consistent with that purpose, the place sexuality has in their values is inconsistent with what sexuality is. When sexual union does not take place through genital organs, sexuality is not evaluated as always being what it is primarily for procreation. But if we are to make things ends and means according to our knowledge of what they are, our evaluation of sexuality must never deny its being what it is for the sake of procreation.

## 6.2. More Ethical Values Other than to Fairness

Two more examples outside of the domain of fairness will illustrate how far the analysis of obligation by the intrinsic finality of the rational appetite extends.

### 6.2.1. Drunkenness

Ordinarily, drunkenness and other drug-induced states contain a threat of unfairness, since our behavior can affect others at any moment. But consider the person shipwrecked and isolated on a remote island. The possibility of unfairness to another is nil, but her decision to get drunk is not ethically neutral.

The difference between drug-induced states like drunkenness, on the one hand, and drug-induced unconsciousness, on the other, is that while drunk we continue to perform activities that would otherwise be under the control of reason and the rational appetite. Drunkenness, however, impedes reason and weakens our ability to direct these activities by decisions based on rational knowledge. Either we cannot make decisions based on rational knowledge, since rational judgment is lacking; or we can make rational decisions but cannot carry them out, since the rational appetite's control over other faculties is impaired. On either analysis, the decision to get drunk is defective by the standard of the will's intrinsic finality. In the first case, our decision would be to enter in a state in which we would make decisions but would not make them according to our rational knowledge. But the nature of the will is to make decisions according to rational knowledge. Therefore, the decision would seek an end contrary to the end of the faculty that produced the decision. The decision would evaluate the will to be something whose finality was other than it is, since the decision would be opting for future decisions contrary to that finality.

In the second case, the decision is to deprive ourselves of conditions necessary to carry out a set of future decisions. But to will that we not be able to carry out our decisions is to will that the finality of the rational appetite not be achieved. The ends selected by the rational appetite are selected as ends whose achievement is to be pursued; otherwise our decisions are merely wishes. Where conditions beyond our control prevent the pursuit of

an end, a wish can be a way of selecting an end. But an end is not truly our end if we fail to pursue it when ethical means of doing so are available. A decision to pursue an end includes in its finality the carrying out of the decision; that is, the carrying out of the decision is aimed at in deciding to pursue an end. For the intention of actually attaining an end is an integral part of the decision for an end.

The production of a decision is not the ultimate goal aimed at by any appetite. The decision is merely a necessary step toward the goal, since the goal does not yet exist. Here, however, we are choosing conditions that prevent the carrying out of decisions and therefore choosing not to fulfill the finality of the rational appetite. A decision that the goal of the appetite producing the decision not be achieved would be defective for any appetite. It is especially defective for an appetite that has the finality of evaluating things, including itself, according to rational knowledge of what they are. On either analysis, then, in choosing drunkenness, we would be valuing some state such as pleasure or forgetfulness of our troubles more highly than the state of being able to accomplish the intrinsic finality of the rational appetite.

Another way to put it is that, in deciding to get drunk, as in deciding for contraception, we are unjustly evaluating an end-in-itself; we are evaluating ourselves to be less than what we are as ends-in-ourselves. In fact, we are evaluating ourselves in the same way that we evaluate others when their value for us is not that of beings whose action is directed to ends they set for themselves. The place our orientation to ends, while drunk, would have in the evaluations we make in choosing to get drunk would be the place of an orientation to ends not determined by the being that has those orientations; that being will be directed to ends unconscious nature sets for her, either because she will not have free choice or will not have free control over her behavior. For the sake of a goal like pleasure, we would sacrifice our ability, while drunk, to pursue freely chosen goals. And that is what we do when we treat another person unfairly: deny them the opportunity to pursue a freely chosen goal for the sake of some goal we have chosen. And just as unfairness to others is defective for not valuing them as ends-in-themselves, so the decision to get drunk is defective for not valuing ourselves as ends-in-ourselves. In one case, we use others as means to some goal of ours without allowing them to pursue their goals; in the other case, we use our faculties as means to a goal that will prevent us from having free control over the pursuit of other goals.

The goals I choose for myself do not have to be ends-in-themselves in the sense of things the rational appetite is obliged by its intrinsic finality to will as ends. For example, pleasure can be chosen as an end, rather than as a means, but its value derives from its relation to faculties other than the rational appetite. The fact that a being with a rational appetite also has faculties oriented to pleasure does not make pleasure something the rational appetite is obligated to value as an end, since the rational appetite could choose to forgo pleasure without violation of its own intrinsic finality. The value of pleasure derives from its relation to faculties of desire other than the rational appetite as such. Therefore, that nature of neither pleasure nor the will make pleasure an end-in-itself for the will, even though we can choose pleasure as an end.

Although the nature of the rational appetite allows it to choose ends that are less than ends-in-themselves, such a choice acquires ethical

implications in circumstances where the finality of the rational appetite would be at stake, for example, when choosing comfort would require us to violate someone's rights. And the finality of the rational appetite is at stake in a choice, like the choice of drunkenness, which would require the rational appetite to evaluate pleasure more highly than the ability to have free control over our behavior.

#### 6.2.2. Suicide

A final example of obligation that does not involve unequal treatment of other persons. Our ethical status as ends-in-ourselves derives from our power of choosing our own ends. Does that status give us the right to choose suicide? For instance, as the determiner of my own goals, should I not have the right to choose physical comfort as an end and therefore to die rather than face a life of pain?

No, because this choice of an otherwise ethical end would here violate the finality of the rational appetite. By choosing death over pain, we would be putting the existence of a being experiencing comfort higher in the evaluations of the rational appetite than the existence of an end-in-itself, a human being. We would be evaluating the existence of a being without pain as higher, for the rational appetite, than the existence of a being capable of selecting the ends of her own existence. In other words, we would be treating the existence of an end-in-itself as if it were a means to the existence of a being without pain, so that if the goal of eliminating pain cannot be achieved, the means to that end can be dispensed with.

But our status as ends-in-themselves derives from our freedom of choice. Therefore, this criticism of suicide seems to make freedom of choice alone an end-in-itself, since we are sacrificing comfort for the sake of preserving a being with freedom of choice. And it seems that (self-referentially inconsistently) we are preserving our ability to choose ends at the price of not allowing ourselves to choose comfort as an end.

However, the end-in-itself is not freedom of choice; it is the entity who has freedom of choice. The fact that a thing's nature gives it freedom of choice makes the thing an end-in-itself for an appetite that evaluates according to reason's knowledge of what things are. Reason knows that free choice is subordinated to the being who has free choice as that which exists secondarily is subordinated to that which exists primarily, as the instrumental cause is subordinated to the principal cause, and as the means is subordinated to the being whose end the means procures. For our underlying nature produces freedom of choice as a means to the ends it, our nature, gives us.

But what natural end do we accomplish by choosing to remain alive through debilitating pain? At least the end of evaluating things according to reason's knowledge of what they are, in this case, the knowledge that a human being is an end-in-itself. Is this reasoning circular since the knowledge that we are ends-in-ourselves is, ultimately, the knowledge that we have an appetite with the finality of evaluating things according to reason's knowledge of what they are? No, because to take one's life to avoid pain would be to evaluate the existence of a human being as less than that of an end-in-itself, since we would be sacrificing human life for something that is less than an end-in-itself. The rational appetite's evaluation of things as ends or means must extend to an evaluation of itself and of the being that possesses it; otherwise, the rational appetite would not be a faculty of evaluating things according to reason's knowledge of them.

For the rational appetite, the existence of a being capable of evaluating things according to reason's knowledge of them must have a higher value than the existence of a being with comfort. If not, there is no ethical obligation at all. If I can evaluate my own being as a means to the existence of comfort, why can I not evaluate the existence of another free being as a means to the existence of comfort and so prevent her from pursuing her ends in order to achieve my own comfort? The reply will be that the crucial question is whose comfort is at stake. As a free being, she can choose comfort as her end, and I do not have the right to interfere with her choice. The true crucial question, however, is why I do not have that right; why do I owe it to her to allow her to pursue her goals? In other words, what is the nature of obligation; on what is it founded?

If we can evaluate ourselves as means to the existence of comfort, or anything else we may choose, without violating the will's finality, then free choice is an end-in-itself, not the being that has free choice. The free choice of an end is the ultimate measure of the value possessed by anything other than the end, since there is no finality pre-existing the choice of an end by which the value of the choice would be measured. Free choices would not exist to fulfill the finality of the appetite producing them and, ultimately, of the entity that produced the appetite. In particular, free choices would not have the finality of valuing things according to reason's knowledge. In other words, if my evaluation of another person (or myself) stops at the behavior of making a choice, like the choice of comfort, and does not go on to value the entity making the choice as an end-in-itself, I am not evaluating according to reason's knowledge of the existence of choices, dispositions to choice, and beings whose natures give them orientations to ends to be achieved through making choices. I am not evaluating according to what I know these things to be. But if my choices do not have the finality to value things according to reason's knowledge of what they are, why am I obligated to treat the other person as if her choices were ends-in-themselves? The value that everything else has for me would derive from my choice of ends, not from my rational knowledge of what she is as a being whose nature gives her freedom of choice.

In short, it is the objection, not my explanation of the evil of suicide, that would make free choice an end-in-itself. And in so doing, the objection would eliminate all obligation, including the supposed obligation to value free choice as an end-in-itself. The same argument, by the way, applies to those who would justify infanticide at any time before the child develops the proximate ability to make free choices. Is it the proximate ability to make decisions that bestows value on a child? If so, we must ask "Value for what, by what standard?" The answer must be, "Value relative to the arbitrary decision of another freedom to bestow a value on the child's freedom, even though the opposite decision would not be defective by any intrinsic standard." The answer cannot be, "Value for an appetite whose finality is to make things ends and means according to reason's knowledge of what they are." For the value of free choice is no longer that of a means by which the underlying entity achieves the ends inscribed in its nature; its value is not that of an instrumental cause relative to a principal cause, nor is the being which exists primarily and which causes that which exists secondarily of more value than that which exists secondarily. But in all these ways, reason knows the existence of the underlying entity has primacy, ontological and causal primacy, over the existence of the proximate ability for choice. In se

particular, reason knows that the existence of faculties fulfills orientations found in the underlying entity and that, therefore, faculties exist as means to the achievement of the ultimate fulfillment of the entity's orientations. (This is not an anthropomorphic importation of conscious finality into nature but an ontological analysis of the requirements for behavior to be caused. Conscious finality is just a particular instance of the universal requirement for effects to be produced by causes disposed to produce those effects.) If suicide and abortion are made permissible, respectively, by the presence and absence of free choice, everything is permissible; there is no ethical obligation.

To return to suicide. For those who do not know the existence of God and the afterlife, the fact of being ends-in-ourselves may be small consolation for a life of pain. But we are stuck with that fact and its ethical implications, just as we are stuck with the rational appetite. And if that fact may not motivate some secular individuals to continue life, it should motivate even a secular society to prohibit euthanasia for the sake of preserving the foundation of public morality, namely, the societal commitment to the ethical value of human life.

On the other hand, those who do not know that God exists can still understand the nature of ethical obligation as here explained, since this explanation does not presuppose the existence of God. And even though a child mature enough to know that the choice to be unfair is defective probably also has an implicit awareness that contingent things require an uncaused cause, that awareness need not be directly involved in her grasp of the obligation to be fair. If an atheist can understand ethical obligation, however, why could she not be happy choosing life over comfort as a result of knowing that she was giving her life the value due it because of what it is? Conversely, why would the choice of comfort over life not make her unhappy as a result of knowing that the choice was unworthy of a being who makes decisions based on rational knowledge of what things are? Also, why should she not be happy knowing that she was helping other ends-in-themselves by reinforcing society's commitment to the value of human life, since she would know that by choosing death she would contribute to the weakening of that commitment and thus violate the rights of other ends-in-themselves.

But even if understanding the ethical value of human life were not sufficient to motivate the atheist to choose life over comfort, this explanation of obligation, in general, and of the obligation not to commit suicide, in particular, would stand. The argument to the contrary is that the analysis of obligation in terms of the rational appetite cannot answer the question "Why be moral?" Since knowledge of the ethical value of life would not motivate her, making the moral choice would not make her happy; happiness is what results from the accomplishment of that which motivates us. "To be happy," therefore, would be an insufficient answer to "Why be moral?" for an atheist faced with a life of pain.

The objection fails on two counts. First, the nature of obligation does not consist in the fact that something will or will not make us happy. If it were possible for us to be truly happy while knowingly doing the unethical thing, it would remain the case that our action would be intrinsically defective and would deserve to be so judged by ourselves and others. Second, the nature of obligation is to evaluate according to reason's knowledge of what things are. Therefore, to judge the consequences of obligation's being what it is, we must assume that a person has accurate knowledge of whatever is

relevant to a particular decision. From the fact that an understanding of obligation does not require knowledge of the existence of God and the afterlife, it does not follow that such knowledge is irrelevant to all questions that can be asked about obligation. The hypothesis of the present example is that the person is ignorant (inculpably, let us say) of the existence of God and of the afterlife. Hence, while we are assuming that she understands the nature of ethical obligation, we are not assuming that she is fully aware of what is at stake in the decision to commit suicide. For a person aware of the nature of obligation and also of the existence of a just God and an afterlife, "To be happy" would be a sufficient reason for not committing suicide. Likewise, a person can understand the nature of obligation without knowing anything about the destructiveness of atomic bombs or arsenic. Such a person could be happy with certain decisions made in ignorance of those facts, but she could not be truly happy with same decisions made in full knowledge.

Since I can ethically desire a goal that is less than an end-in-itself, however, I can wish for death to occur by ethical means. That is, I can wish for death to occur while at the same time willing that life continue until terminated by means out of the rational appetite's control. Wishing we were dead for the sake of a goal less than an end-in-itself is not the same as so evaluating human life that we will human life to be sacrificed, or even to be eligible for sacrifice, for the sake of that goal. For example, wishing we were dead to avoid pain does not require us to evaluate being comfortable as on a par with being an end-in-oneself, since it does not require us to will that our life as free beings be sacrificed for the sake of comfort. Rather, in choosing to remain alive, in spite of our wish for death, we are sacrificing other ends -- as does the person who prevents conception by sexual abstinence -- for the sake of our existence as ends-in-ourselves.

Some goals for the rational appetite are worth the sacrifice of life. For example, if I sacrifice my life to save the life of another person in circumstances when both lives cannot be saved, my goal is, unlike comfort, the existence of an end-in-itself. Nor am I evaluating myself to be less than the other person as a free pursuer of goals, since I am pursuing my own freely chosen goal, not death, but the life of an end-in-itself. But not all methods of sacrificial death are worthy of the rational appetite. Specifically, I do not have the right to be my own executioner, as opposed, say, to risking my life for another person or accepting death from a third party in another's stead. In the situation of risk or acceptance, I am not the principal agent of the destruction of an end-in-itself; I am not the principal cause of the events that will lead to the death of an innocent human. To knowingly be such a cause is to evaluate oneself as a means to the destruction of an end-in-itself. When we know that such a cause exists and that we cannot ethically stop it, allowing it to take our life instead of another person's life is not to evaluate ourselves as a means for the death of an end-in-itself; that is not the place we are giving ourselves in our evaluations. Rather, we are evaluating ourselves as means to the existence of an end-in-itself, something we cannot consistently do if we take our own life to save another's. The rational appetite evaluates things according to reason's knowledge of what they are. Reason knows the difference between being the principal cause of one's own death and accepting or risking death when other causes have made the death of a human ethically unavoidable.

## Notes

It will be objected that the predicates of different languages reflect radically different linguistic structures, structures that derive from the language and not from what is expressed in language. True, but such structures are characteristics accruing to the objects of our knowledge as a result of having become objects. And we do not attribute to things in their cognition-independent existence characteristics they are associated with only from the perspective of their being objects of knowledge. For example, the fact that the meaning of a predicate has the attribute of logical universality does not imply that when we assert a predicate of an individual, we assert that the individual is a logical universal. Likewise, we can use different linguistic structures to assert the same thing, as in 'This is red' and 'This has redness'. In neither case do we attribute to the thing the properties of the linguistic structure by which we make the assertion.

I have used 'good' as the opposite of 'defective' in a non-moral sense to describe a true belief. If the moral connotations associated with 'good' or 'correct' are too strong, I could use a rather awkward circumlocution like 'successful'.

This is not a 'paradigm case' argument which moves from the given existence of a word to the necessity for a known referent of the word. My argument moves in the opposite direction; it first points out the existence of something and then notes that this thing is the referent of a particular word.

For the present discussion, I abstract from the question of things in nature being given their ends by God. I address that question in Section VIII. In contrasting a person as giver of its own ends to things given their ends by the impersonal universe, I do not mean to deny that the universe is the way it is because God so planned it. However, there are many ethical values that can be recognized as such by those who do not know that God exists. For such values, it is necessary to explain how they are recognized in the absence of knowledge of God's existence. But for those who know that God exists, examples such as those in Section VII involve justice in a deeper sense than fairness, the sense of giving to each thing what is due it from an appetite adapted to the being of things. What is due an infinitely actual being from a rational appetite is obedience to His will. For He is an ethical absolute, an end-in-Himself, in an infinitely superior way than is a human person. He is an end-in-Himself in the sense of possessing in a superabundant manner all the actuality that is able to become an end for an appetite adapted to what exists.

I am not implying that our treatment of animals has no moral significance. Again, to illustrate the unconditionality, objectivity, and knowability of ethical values, I am using the example justice without denying the existence of other ethical values. The ethical significance of our treatment of animals would not be a matter of justice in the sense of fairness.

If my analysis has been correct, then one who has followed it derives his philosophic understanding of the obligation to treat equals equally from the analysis of that situation, but deriving our philosophic understanding of this obligation from X does not imply that the obligation stands to X in a relation of logical derivation from prior principles or of causal derivation. How we derive our understanding of obligation is an epistemological matter; what obligation consists in is an ontological matter.

\*We have desires that are not responses to the cognition of objects. Often, it is not the thought of food that makes us hungry but hunger that makes us think of food.

\*It can be objected that the ability to produce ethical decisions admits of degrees since the rational knowledge admits of degrees, and the rational

appetite is defined as the ability to esteem things according to our rational knowledge.

But assume the orientation to produce a desire consists of a set of characteristics, A and B. Assume also that the desire was rendered defective by the presence of other characteristics, Y and Z. Then Y and Z have an influence on the desire's being what it is; for without them, the desire would not have whatever features make it defective. Therefore, why should we not say that the appetite, the orientation to produce the desire, consists of the entire set, A, B, Y, and Z? Because in the absence of Y and Z, be they tiredness or sickness or whatever, A and B could still produce a desire. A and B constitute an orientation for something that does not exist; hence they produce a desire. But because of the presence of Y and Z, the desire evaluates a thing to be that which A and B constitute an orientation for although the thing is not that.

\*That would amount to saying that the end we are aiming at in every desire is the achievement of our end. And that would be like the truism that a thing is known only insofar as it is known. The latter truism has been used to defend idealism, or at least subjectivism, in knowledge. It has been claimed that we cannot know things as they are outside of knowledge because we know them only by bringing them within knowledge. But from the fact that we know something, it does not and cannot follow that it is known under the aspect of being known, that what is known is that something is known. The aspect under which a thing is known must always be something more than that it is known and something causally prior to the fact that it is known. The alternative is an infinite regress, since something must already be known in order for it to be known as known; in other words, the thing would have to be known before it could be known. Similarly, the fact that something other than the appetite is valued only insofar as it terminates the appetite's relation of being oriented to this thing proves no more in ethics than the fact that a thing is known only insofar as it is known proves in epistemology. We cannot desire something without relating it to our desires. But the characteristic because of which an appetite is oriented to a thing is not and cannot be the fact of the thing's being that to which the appetite is oriented. The thing must be that to which the appetite is oriented because it possesses some other characteristic, a characteristic capable of provoking desire by being known. Otherwise, the reason why something satisfies desire would be that it satisfies desire. Desires are relations to characteristics in things, characteristics other than that of satisfying desire.

How do I know they are mine? The question incorrectly assumes I have some knowledge of myself other than as the cause of my behavior or some knowledge of decisions other than as emanating from the source I designate "me."

In fact, my awareness of my own existence is basically awareness of myself as the source of conscious acts like sensations, beliefs, desires, and decisions.

\*Should I therefore value the elements that make me up more highly than human nature, since they are foundational for human nature? I evaluate myself as equal or unequal to her with respect to being causes of decisions. None of the elements making me up have dispositions whose achievements include the ability to make ethical decisions. Those dispositions belong to the whole made up of elements.

Footnote on Finnis, Nozick, Aristotle, and Veatch concerning wishing to be a cow.

Freedom is not randomness. Randomness is a form of determination. The



next digit in pi is not predictable before it is calculated, but it is entirely determined and necessary.

## Abstract

Is falsehood a defect for a belief? Yes. Is the standard by which falsehood is counted a defect something accidental to beliefs, something only contingently related to beliefs? No. What if we have an appetite oriented to valuing things according to reason's knowledge of what they are? Then failure to do so would be defective just as falsehood is, that is, non-contingently or accidentally. For example, if we know that an infinitely perfect being exists, it would be a defect not to value Him accordingly, that is, to love Him completely. If we know that another being is equal to us in possession of the nature that makes us possessors of an appetite by which we make rational decisions, it would be a defect to choose to pursue goals in a way that did not give her an equal opportunity to pursue her goals.

Specifically, in pursuing my interests at the expense of hers, I evaluate my reality, the reality of the being who is the source and subject of the desires being pursued, as though it were higher on a scale of reality than hers.

## Appendix

This is true of aesthetic values as well as ethical values.

The preceding analysis of desire and the relation of values to desire allows us to answer the question whether goodness, be it ethical or aesthetic, is a characteristic of things in their own existence.

We are equal not only in having a similar nature but in having a nature that makes us free beings. Free beings are ends-in-themselves.

In either case, our evaluation is defective because the places things have in our evaluations, with respect to being evaluated as ends or as means to ends, is inconsistent with what the relation that holds between them in reality.

To show the consequences of the concept of rational appetite for ethics, I will compare ethical decision to belief. Specifically, I will argue that just as in truth there is identity between what is an object of knowledge and what some extra-cognitionally existing thing is, so there is identity between what is a value for us and what some thing, action, or state is in itself.

Do we know why we are desiring the end itself? And if so, how do we know it? We know why we desire an end because a desire for an end is a conscious evaluation of the end as the kind of thing the appetite is adapted to, the kind of thing whose existence will satisfy the appetite's preconscious orientation. That is what a desire is.

Explaining this difference between our treatment of rational and subrational beings will show why the concept of free beings as ends-in-themselves is needed for the analysis of obligation.