

## Kant on animal and human pleasure

Alexandra Newton 

Department of Philosophy, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Urbana, IL, USA

### ABSTRACT

Feeling, for any animal, is a faculty of comparing objects or representations with regard to whether they promote its vital powers (pleasure) or hinder them (displeasure). But whereas these comparisons presuppose a species-concept in non-rational animals, nature has not equipped the human being with a universal principle or life-form that would determine what agrees or disagrees with it. As humans, we must determine our mode of life for ourselves. Contrary to other interpretations, I argue that this places the human capacity for pleasure and displeasure outside of nature and in a realm of spirit.

**ARTICLE HISTORY** Received 31 January 2016; Accepted 14 November 2016

**KEYWORDS** Pleasure; aesthetic judgment; teleological judgment; organism; Kant; *Critique of the Power of Judgment*

### 1. Introduction

In his letter to Reinhold from 28 December 1787, Kant says that his discovery of an a priori principle for the capacity [*Vermögen*] of pleasure and displeasure led him to embark on a new project of writing a third *Critique*. Both the first and second introductions identify this principle with a ‘subjective’ or ‘aesthetic representation’ of the principle governing the reflective power of judgment (*reflektierende Urteilskraft*) in general: namely, the ‘purposiveness of nature’ for our faculty of cognition (KU 20:239, 5:189).

These remarks have led to a great deal of confusion among interpreters of Kant. A capacity is a capacity *for* something and is thus directed at its completion. The principle governing a capacity can be understood as a rule that must be followed in order to appropriately exercise the capacity, or to achieve its completion. But how can there be a capacity for pleasure and displeasure? Aren’t pleasure and pain mere sensations that passively happen to us, rather than exercises of a rule-governed capacity? What does it mean to say that pleasure or displeasure can be appropriate or inappropriate? Kant maintains that human

---

**CONTACT** Alexandra Newton  [amnewton@illinois.edu](mailto:amnewton@illinois.edu)

© 2016 Canadian Journal of Philosophy

feeling is a capacity governed not only by a principle, but by an a priori principle that enables judgments of beauty to lay claim to universal and necessary validity (KU 20:239, 5:190–1). Unlike the non-rational animals, humans are capable of feeling a kind of pleasure that involves a claim to be as it should be, not just for me, but for any rational subject (KU 5:210). The a priori principle of the capacity for feeling thus distinguishes human feeling from feeling in non-human animals: *their* faculty of feeling is not governed by this a priori principle. So the question about the possibility of an a priori principle of feeling can be reformulated as a question about the possibility of *human* feeling.

The paper has three parts. I begin (in Section 2) by developing an account of non-human feeling out of Kant's analysis of organisms, which he refers to as 'natural ends'. The faculty of pleasure and displeasure in non-human organisms must be understood from within the teleological context of a given natural end. In Section 3, I argue that human feeling must be approached differently, since nature does not give the human being a natural end. Human feeling belongs in this sense not to *nature* but to *spirit*, and must be approached through first-personal aesthetic, not third-personal natural-teleological reflective judgments. In Section 4, I show how this approach to human feeling, in contrast to other approaches in the literature, allows us to appreciate how the capacity for pleasure and displeasure is governed by an a priori principle that makes possible the universality and necessity of its exercises.

## 2. Pleasure and displeasure in non-rational animals

Kant's discussion of animals is relegated to a footnote in the *Critique of the Teleological Power of Judgment*. His focus in this passage is on those features that distinguish animals from plants. In the following, I will first discuss these *differentiating* features of the animal before turning to the *generic* features that it shares in common with the plant as a kind of organism or 'natural end'. As we will see, the differentiating features of animal life are properly understood only within the context of its genus, the 'natural end'.

In Kant's perfunctory discussion of non-human animals from the aforementioned footnote, he notes that animals engage in actions that bear similarities to human intentional or 'artistic actions': for instance, the beaver constructs a dwelling for itself, or a bird prepares its nest in anticipation of a coming storm. From observations such as these we can infer 'by means of analogy' that animals are able to produce things in accordance with representations. That is, we can infer by analogy with human actions that animals have a faculty of desire (KU 5:464n). For Kant, this means that we are entitled to think of animals as living things, since he defines life through the faculty of desire:

**Life** is the faculty of a being to act in accordance with the laws of the faculty of desire. (KpV 5:9)

Kant thus thinks only of animals, not plants, as living beings (*Lebewesen*), since plants do not engage in the type of actions that would warrant the conclusion that they maintain themselves through desire.

Since Kant is willing to ascribe life to the non-human animals, we can also assume that he would be willing to ascribe pleasure and displeasure to them. For in Kant's remarks on feeling throughout his lectures and published works, a recurrent theme is that pleasure and displeasure are not merely passive modifications of a subject's state, but are ways of being conscious of a representation's relation to our feeling of life:

[In the sensation of satisfaction] the representation is related entirely to the subject, indeed to its *feeling of life*, under the name of the feeling of pleasure or displeasure ... (my emphasis; KU 5:204)

In other passages, Kant specifies that pleasure is a feeling of the *promotion* of one's powers of life, while displeasure is a feeling of their hindrance (KU 5:278; cf. *Anth.* 7:231). Pleasure represents the '*agreement of an object or of an action with the subjective conditions of life*' (KpV 5:9n). This sheds light on Kant's definition of pleasure in §10 of the *Analytic of the Beautiful*:

The consciousness of the causality of a representation with respect to the state of the subject, **for maintaining** it in that state, can here designate in general what is called pleasure. (KU 5:220)

To be conscious of the causality of a representation to maintain itself is to be conscious of its *agreement* with one's living powers. For to live is to maintain oneself both as an individual and as a species (KU 5:370–1). Living is a self-sustaining, self-reproducing activity. An object or representation thus promotes one's vital powers when it agrees with the causal capacity of the subject to maintain itself, while it hinders them (and is unpleasant) when it disagrees with this capacity, causing the subject to leave its state. Since agreement/promotion and disagreement/hindrance are relations, pleasure and displeasure must be understood as fundamentally relational. To feel pleasure is to feel that things are 'right' or 'appropriate' as they are, in the sense that they agree with me or are purposive for my activity of living. Pleasure is in this sense a 'representation of a subjective purposiveness of an object' (KU 20:228, 227).

This relational character of pleasure and displeasure situates feeling somewhere between activity and passivity, or spontaneity and receptivity. An object or representation must be passively *given* to me if I am to feel its effect on me. But its effect in a feeling of pleasure consists in the active engagement of my vital powers. For to feel pleasure is to feel the furtherance of life activities; it is to feel *more alive*. Even displeasure can be considered a kind of activity, although it is a feeling of *diminishing* vital activity. Pleasure and displeasure thus are not merely passive sensory impressions; they are felt vital *activities*, i.e. vital activities that involve an (affective) awareness of themselves as such.

We are now in a position to see how it is possible – through analogy with human faculties – to ascribe both desire and a faculty of pleasure and displeasure

to non-human animals. However, these analogical inferences about the animals do not license cognitive, determining judgments – we cannot *know* that animals have desires or feelings. Instead, they license merely reflective, teleological judgments. Inference by means of analogy, Kant indicates in his logic lectures, is an operation of a merely reflective (not determining) power of judgment (JL 9:132–3). In particular, judgments about animals and animal feeling (as conclusions of such inferences) are a special case of reflective judgments about organic nature. So to understand what it would mean to ascribe pleasure and displeasure to non-rational animals, we must first understand what it means to think of them as the objects of teleological, reflective judgments.

In thinking of animals as objects of teleological judgment, we reflect not on the features that distinguish them from plants (namely, desire and feeling), but on the generic features they share in common as natural ends. For Kant's analysis of teleological judgment in the *Analytic of the Teleological Power of Judgment* prescind[s] from all talk of an organism's 'representations', or of 'desire', in order to include *plants* as natural ends. Kant does consider that the causality or self-organizing power in natural ends might be thought of as 'an analogue of life'. But he rejects this approach on the grounds that it would require either 'endow[ing] matter as mere matter with a property (hylozoism) that contradicts its essence, or else associat[ing] it with an alien principle standing in communion with it (a soul), in which case, however, if such a product is to be a product of nature, organized matter as an instrument of that soul is already presupposed' (5:374–5). The concept of a self-organizing being or 'natural end' doesn't presuppose the concept of life; rather, we must first understand the concept of a mere natural end (plant) before we can understand that of a *living* natural end (animal). So whereas reflection on the differentiating features of animals presupposes reflection on the human case (since the former are *analoga* of the latter), the generic features of animals presuppose reflection on the genus itself – as exhibited by the plant.

In the second introduction to the third *Critique*, Kant defines an end as 'the *concept* of an object insofar as it at the same time contains the ground of the reality of this object' (my emphasis; KU 5:180); later in the *Analytic of Beauty*, an end is said to be the '*object* of a concept insofar as the latter is regarded as the cause of the former' (my emphasis; KU 5:220). Both of these notions are operative in Kant's analysis of natural ends, since a natural end is both 'cause and effect of itself' (5:371). That is, we must regard organisms both as universals or 'concepts' (like Aristotelian species-forms), *and* as the objects caused by these universals.<sup>1</sup> If the organism acts in accordance with its universal nature, its acting in this way can be causally explained by its universal nature. If it fails to act as a being of this species generally 'acts', its failure must be explained by external causes. For instance, we regard the apple tree as doing what it does (blooming in the spring, producing fruit, shedding its leaves in fall, etc.) in virtue of its *being-an-apple-tree*, or because that is what apple trees *generally* do.<sup>2</sup> Put differently, this

apple tree behaves as it does because this is how it *should* behave.<sup>3</sup> The general concept guides and governs the life-processes in the tree, as though these processes were intentionally designed to conform to a general plan (KU 5:374, 227). When the apple tree fails to shed its leaves in the fall, by contrast, and thus fails to behave according to the plan, we must appeal to causes external to the tree to explain this (e.g. environmental factors).

To illustrate the kind of normative-teleological explanation made possible by the species-concept, consider that a natural end relates to its environment through 'separation and formation', or by separating out materials that do not contribute to its self-maintenance and assimilating (forming) those that promote its self-organizing powers (5:371). Now, the species-concept of the organism in question both sets a normative *standard* for acceptance and rejection and explains *why* certain materials are accepted, others rejected. The apple tree takes in the water and nutrients from the soil, but rejects the dirt, *because* the former agrees with its species-form, while the latter disagrees with it. That is, the nutrients promote the realization of the species-concept of an apple tree, or help this apple tree behave in accordance with its inner nature (as it should behave), and that is why they are assimilated.

How do these generic features of 'natural ends' exhibit themselves in animals? We've seen that what is distinctive of *living* natural ends (animals), in contrast with plants, is that they have desire. Desire, as Kant defines it, is a representation that is efficacious, or that has a causality to bring about what it represents:

The **faculty of desire** is a being's *faculty to be by means of its representations the cause of the reality of the objects of these representations*. (KpV 5:9n)

So to desire an apple is to have a representation of the apple that is productive, or such as to bring about the apple's presence to the subject (for instance by eating it). Living beings maintain themselves through representations that have a causality with respect to their objects in this sense. And pleasure is a feeling of the agreement of an object with this causality:

Pleasure is the *representation of the agreement of an object or of an action with the subjective conditions of life*, i.e. with the faculty of the *causality of a representation with respect to the reality of its object* (or with respect to the determination of the powers of the subject to action in order to produce the object). (ibid.)

To feel pleasure is thus to feel a promotion of desire. For example, when I feel pleasure in the eating of an apple, I am aware of the tendency of a sensation (the taste or texture of the apple) to maintain itself. But since I can be affected by the apple through a sensation of it only if the apple is given to me, the sensation's tendency to persist depends on the tendency of apples to continue to exist for me as a result of my desire for them. So it is through its promotion of desire that the sensation sustains itself and is felt to be pleasurable (*Anth.* 7:230).

To live is thus to maintain oneself not simply by separating out and taking in the materials needed for generation and reproduction (as with the plant), but by noticing what is needed through pleasure and pursuing what one needs

through desire. To say this is not to say that animals are plants – beings with a nutritive power – that have, in addition, a faculty of desire. It is to say that their nutritive powers are fundamentally different from those of plants, since nutrition is ‘informed’ by desire: desire is a ‘formative power’, or a specific way of being a ‘natural end’ (KU 5:374). Thus, although nutrition for animals involves acceptance and rejection of materials from their environment, just as it did for the plant, acceptance and rejection now take on a new form, appearing as desire and avoidance, and are accompanied by *awareness* that things agree or disagree with desire through pleasure and pain. As Kant says in the *Anthropology*, ‘(animal) life, as physicians also have already noted, is a continuous play of the antagonism of both [pleasure and pain]’ (*Anth.* 7:231).

The animal’s ability to become aware of what agrees or disagrees with it introduces a division within the animal where there was none in the plant: we can distinguish what is universally purposive for the life-form or species-concept of the animal from what the individual animal itself is aware of as purposive or counter-purposive for it through pleasure and pain. What is ‘in itself’ (*an sich*) agreeable to an animal (i.e. agreeable to its universal life-form) may not – e.g. in conditions of sickness – be felt as agreeable ‘for it’ (*für sich*, i.e. agreeable to the individual animal) through pleasure. For in addition to the universal ends of its nature, animals can have individual ends that may (in defective cases) or may not (in non-defective cases) oppose the former, namely, when they desire something in particular. When the individual animal desires something particular that (universally) agrees with its species-form, we can – in teleological judgment – explain *why* the animal feels pleasure by appeal to the species-concept of the animal. (For instance, we can say that a particular lion takes pleasure in eating an antelope because lions desire antelopes.<sup>4</sup>) But it is important to emphasize that the animal itself is not conscious of the universal ground or principle of its individual pleasures and displeasures. Our judgments about the species-universality of animal pleasure are judgments made from the third-personal perspective; they are teleological reflective judgments *about* animals that employ a general species-concept, but they are not judgments the animal makes about itself.

The natural end or species-concept of the animal thus not only determines what external things universally agree or disagree with animals of its kind; it also provides a normative standard for assessing its feelings as appropriate, or as they ought to be, in an animal of this kind. That is, it supplies a principle for the exercise of its faculty of feeling. The faculty of pleasure and displeasure in the animal thus cannot be understood as the kind of faculty it is outside of the context of the animal’s given natural end. But the animal itself is not aware of this natural end, or of how it enters teleological accounts of *why* it senses pleasure in certain objects (or representations) and pain in others. Its faculty of feeling is therefore always *empirical*, based on how a particular object affects it, and is not governed by an a priori principle of the purposiveness of objects for its vital powers. That is, the animal does not feel an object’s agreement with its

vital powers *from* a consciousness of the general principle determining what agrees with it and what does not.

### 3. Human pleasure and displeasure

We have seen that a non-rational animal must be thought of as capable, through pleasure and displeasure, of becoming aware of how one object, in comparison with another, agrees or disagrees with it. And since the life-form of the animal in question sets a standard for what agrees and disagrees with it, we can say that (in normal conditions) a bonobo feels pleasure in what agrees with its bonobo life-form, while a warthog feels pleasure in what agrees with its warthog life-form. It may seem that our analysis of *human* pleasure can simply continue in the same fashion: humans feel pleasure in what agrees with our *human* life-form. But things aren't quite that simple. Humans aren't natural beings who come into the world equipped with a life-form in the way that the non-rational animals are. Nature has not already laid out a path for us by giving us a 'norm' or 'standard' for determining what our mode of life will be, and that would enable us to compare things in our environment with regard to whether they are as they should be (through pleasure), or fail to be as they should be (through displeasure). Humans are called upon to determine for *themselves* how they ought to live and what they ought to be.

This can be seen from Kant's discussion of the place of human beings in nature at the end of the third *Critique* and in his *Anthropology* lectures. Like any living being, the human being strives for its own fulfillment or happiness, which (in light of our discussion above) can be understood as agreement with its species-concept or life-form. But nothing in our nature determines for us (humans) what our happiness will be: 'the concept of happiness is not one that the human being has, say, abstracted from his instincts and thus derived from the animality in himself' (KU 5:430). Instead, man 'outlines this idea [of happiness] himself', and in so many ways that we can assume 'no determinate universal and fixed law at all by means of which to correspond with this unstable concept and thus with the end that each arbitrarily sets for himself' (ibid.). This is not to deny that there are 'natural need[s]' and predispositions in man, 'concerning which our species is in thoroughgoing self-consensus' – such as the animal predispositions Kant mentions in the *Religion* for 'self-preservation', for 'the propagation of the species', and for 'community with others' (ibid., *Rel.* 6:26). Moreover, as 'living and at the same time rational being[s]', all human beings have an 'inclination to gain worth in the opinion of others' (*Rel.* 6:26, 27). But far from coming together to constitute a natural end (species-concept) or purposive unity in the life of the human individual and in the life of the species, these 'natural predispositions' create 'conflict' and even determine man to work 'so hard for the destruction of his own species' (KU 5:430). Our desires for sex or honor may lead to a loss of community and to our own demise; and our desire to preserve ourselves

may lead to a life without honor and purpose. Even if a stepmotherly nature were to satisfy all of our desires, we still would not achieve fulfillment, since our 'nature is not of the sort to call a halt anywhere in possession and enjoyment and to be satisfied' (*ibid.*). Nothing given to us by nature suffices to bring our powers, and all our desires, into the purposive unity of a self-maintaining and self-organizing system (or organism) – nothing in nature, that is, gives the human being a life-form.

All that remains to distinguish the human being from other animals and to 'assign his class in the system of animate nature' is our aptitude for setting ends for ourselves (*Anth.* 7:321; KU 5:431). That is, what is distinctive of humans is that they *lack* a determinate, given natural end and must constitute a life-form for themselves through the use of reason: indeed this indeterminacy in our nature can be taken as a sign of a capacity of reason within us. Even in the 'form and organization of his hand [...] nature has made the human being not suited for one way of manipulating things but undetermined for every way, consequently suited for the use of reason' (*Anth.* 7:323). Thus, in contrast with the traditional definition of the human being as a rational animal, Kant says that the human being is 'an animal endowed with the capacity of reason (*animal rationabile*) [that] can make out of himself a rational animal (*animal rationale*) – whereby he first *preserves* himself and his species; secondly, *trains, instructs, and educates* his species for domestic society; thirdly, *governs* it as a systematic whole (arranged according to principles of reason) appropriate for society' (*Anth.* 7:321–2). As Kant indicates in this passage, he does not think that we are born as animals who already competently preserve themselves, and then through human development, add knowledge and rationality to our animal formative powers (or enter a 'space of reasons'; see also MA 8:112).<sup>5</sup> Rather, he thinks that we begin as beings with the capacity of reason, and must find a way to use this faculty in order to constitute a formative vital power for ourselves, which will include determining how we preserve ourselves and our species.

This open-ended character of human nature does not mean that self-constitution can occur in a completely arbitrary manner. Practical reason supplies us with the idea of our highest good (happiness in proportion to virtue), which 'can be sufficient for itself independently of nature, which can thus be a final end, which, however, must not be sought in nature at all' (KU 5:431, see 5:436n).<sup>6</sup> However, although this final end *outside* of nature (the highest good) gives humanity a vocation or direction (*Bestimmung*) for self-constitution, it does not pre-determine what form of life *within* nature we live by. Whereas nature has already determined that non-rational animals will live in accordance with their vocation, we can only strive to 'make ourselves worthy of humanity' by progressively determining a mode of life for ourselves that agrees with the non-natural ends of morality (*Anth.* 7:324–5): whereas 'with all other animals left to themselves, each individual reaches its complete vocation [...] with the human being only the species, at best, reaches it; so that the human race can



work its way up to its vocation *only through progress in a series of innumerable many generations*. To be sure, the goal always *remains in prospect* for him [...] (my emphases; *Anth.* 7:324, see also 7:329). There is thus no determinate, pre-formed mode of life or being in the human animal, and as Kant suggests in the *Anthropology*, no definition of human nature (*Anth.* 7:322, 121). It is up to us to make the transition from nature to freedom, or from animality to morality, and to thereby engage in an eternal process of defining (and re-defining) ourselves. The 'human being is destined by his reason' to 'cultivate', 'civilize', and finally 'moralize' himself – or to effect a transition [*Übergang*] from nature to freedom – whereby he progressively strives to give himself a form of life (*Anth.* 7:324).

Since Kant identifies 'spirit [*Geist*]' with the 'animating principle in the human being', the *transition* from nature to freedom through which we strive to acquire a life-principle can itself be understood as belonging to spirit rather than to nature (*Anth.* 7:225, 246; KU 5:313).<sup>7</sup> Spirit is also defined as a 'faculty for the presentation of aesthetic ideas', which are sensible representations (intuitions) for which a determinate thought or concept can never be found adequate (KU 5:314). Since sensible representations are produced by the imagination, spirit can be understood as a talent of the imagination to go beyond concepts of nature and to 'create as it were, another nature, out of the material one which the real one gives it'; that is, nature can be 'transformed by us into something entirely different, namely into that which steps beyond nature' (KU 5:314). This aligns with Kant's claim in the resolution to the Antinomy of Taste that one is compelled to look 'beyond the sensible and to seek the unifying point of all our faculties a priori in the supersensible' (KU 5:341). The unifying point of all our faculties would be the point at which they come together to constitute a teleologically organized whole – what we have called a life-form or species-concept. However, this 'supersensible substratum of humanity' must remain an *indeterminate* concept, because the progress of determining a species-concept for ourselves through human history will never be complete (KU 5:340).<sup>8</sup>

So rather than feeling the agreement of a given representation with a determinate life-form or species-concept I find myself saddled with, pleasure in humans is a feeling of agreement with open-ended and indeterminate capacity to determine our own form of life through reason, broadly understood as a capacity for cognition. It is in this sense a feeling of the purposiveness of nature for our cognitive powers.<sup>9</sup> Whereas pleasure and displeasure in non-human animals are always species-specific and limited by their natural life-form, humans are (paradoxically) aware of the principle that animates the human animal only by transcending desire and so by transcending the animal life of nature, and all natural species-limitations. This is why the a priori principle of human pleasure isn't that a particular environment – such as the great plains or the lush Alps – is purposive for our cognitive faculties, but that *all of nature* is purposive. There are no given limits to the mind's world or environment [*Umwelt*], although the mind can draw limits for itself.<sup>10</sup>

The indeterminate character of the human capacity for feeling also reveals it to be an apperceptive or self-conscious faculty. Human pleasure is a feeling of agreement with vital powers I can call 'mine' because they are powers that I constitute for myself. This means that I, unlike the non-rational animal, can internally reflect on the a priori principle that gives necessity and universality to feelings of pleasure, from within the first-person perspective of feeling itself. If judgments about my organism, and my feelings, were made from an external, natural-teleological perspective, they would be based on an empirical concept that arises from external comparisons of different mental acts either in me, or in different members of the same species. But in the internal reflection of an aesthetic judgment, I become aware of something universal and necessary in a single act of the mind, by reflecting on its source *in me*.<sup>11</sup> For instance, in the aesthetic appreciation of beauty, I do not become aware of my pleasure's universal communicability by externally comparing this representation's affect on me now with its affect on me at different times, or by taking a poll on how others feel in response to the same object. There is no need to 'grope around [...] among judgments of others' (KU 5:282). Instead, I am aware of its universality directly by holding together (combining) this activity of the imagination (in the intuition of this particular object) with my faculty of cognition (understanding), and noticing that they agree – not merely for me, but in themselves (universally). I do not have to await an empirical comparison of an already given pleasure with others to determine its universal validity; the pleasure itself arises from an awareness of the universal agreement or harmony in the free play (holding together) of my cognitive powers, which I share with others.<sup>12</sup> The pleasure arises from this internal reflecting activity rather than preceding it (5:217ff).<sup>13</sup>

Similarly, the necessity of feeling pleasure is not something I become aware of by externally comparing how I am (or have been) affected by various representations, and noticing that I cannot help but feel pleasure in some of them. It is not an empirical awareness of necessity that arises from being repeatedly affected by objects in a certain way (like the necessity of a habit). Instead, I feel pleasure from an immediate awareness that I *ought* to feel it with regard to a given object – i.e. from a feeling that there is necessity in the agreement between my cognitive powers. Pleasure in the beautiful is thus (first-personally) felt *from* an awareness both of its universality and (exemplary) necessity, which awareness therefore is not empirical, or a posteriori, but pure and a priori. But unlike the pure apperception of thought and cognition, pleasure in beauty is a pure consciousness of *living* powers, or of the self-maintaining 'causality of a representation' (5:220). It is thus tied to affection in a way that pure apperception in cognition or reasoning is not. That is, pure pleasure is a consciousness not only of the universality of my inner state (its universal communicability), but also of its singularity (since I am affected), and it is a consciousness not only of its own necessity, but also of its contingency. The capacity for pleasure and displeasure is thus the aesthetic not of reason, but of a power of judgment

[*Urteilskraft*], broadly defined as a power that mediates between the universal and the particular, or between the necessary and the contingent (KrV A132/B172f).<sup>14</sup> Unlike the brutes, I can feel that an object agrees not just with me individually, but that it at once also agrees with me universally. Human feeling is thus given an a priori principle (purposiveness) by the power of judgment, just as the faculty of cognition is given a priori principles by the understanding (KU 5:196–198).<sup>15</sup>

It is significant that Kant does not restrict the scope of the a priori principle of purposiveness to a certain kind of pleasure and displeasure, although it finds its purest expression with pleasure in beauty. Rather, Kant says that the principle of purposiveness governs the entire human *capacity for pleasure and displeasure*, and hence all feelings, which include the agreeable (and disagreeable), the good (and bad), and the beautiful (and ugly) (e.g. KU 20:245, 5:205ff). Human feeling is an apperceptive capacity that is exercised from a consciousness of what it is a capacity *for* (namely, universally and necessarily valid pleasure). Implicit in all human feelings – even in feelings of the agreeable, which bring us closer to our non-human companions – is a consciousness of the purposiveness of nature for *indeterminate* vital powers. That is, all feeling involves an awareness of the perfectibility of our nature towards a more moral disposition. There are no feelings in humans that are ‘natural’, in the sense that they can be shared by non-rational nature, because feeling in the non-rational animal is not accompanied by a consciousness of the development and perfectibility of its vital powers in this sense.<sup>16</sup>

We can appreciate how this a priori principle governs all human feelings if we return to our characterization of the principle of purposiveness above as an expression of the transition from nature to freedom through the three stages of culture, civilization, and moralization.<sup>17</sup> Human feelings of the agreeable are peculiarly human in that they express the agreement of an object with a faculty of desire that can be *cultivated*. This is why our feelings of the agreeable can be refined (unlike those of the non-rational animals). Feelings of pleasure in food, wine, and in easy tasks (such as hunting a fly), do not require ‘exceptional talents’ or the development of skills, but are often short-lived and followed by a hang-over (BG 2:207). By contrast, pleasure in ‘resting after work’, which presupposes the cultivation of abilities in a human being, is more refined, and although it is usually preceded by painful effort, is more lasting and enjoyable (*Anth.* 7:276, 232).<sup>18</sup> Feelings of pleasure in the good ‘maxims or manners’ of others promote ‘sociability’ at the stage of mankind’s *civilization*, but they too can be refined and developed through the appreciation of exhibitions of virtue (e.g. in preferring benevolence over mere politeness, or honorableness over mere propriety) (*Anth.* 7:282; KU 5:210). Finally, the *moralization* of the human being is promoted through the liberating experience of the ‘play’ of our cognitive powers in the appreciation of beauty, which frees us entirely from the dominance of desire (including the desire to see virtue in others). Each of these stages of feeling

pleasure thus indicate that human pleasure is directed not at what sustains the animal life of the individual, but at what sustains the freely self-determining and universally shared life of spirit.<sup>19</sup>

Although from the perspective of (practical) reason the good always takes precedence over the beautiful, from the aesthetic perspective of life, the beautiful takes precedence over the moral sentiments (aesthetic judgments of the good or bad) as an expression of our vocation to become progressively more worthy of our own humanity. It is good to take pleasure in the virtues of others (and in oneself), and to feel an aversion towards vice; but it is even better, with regard to the development of our sentiments towards a more moral disposition, to be able to feel the contemplative pleasures of beauty.<sup>20</sup> For this disinterested pleasure, even more than evaluative moral sentiments, prepares us for a life of virtue in which we no longer judge others, but live in harmony with them. Kant can thus say that the 'aesthetic judgment on certain objects (of nature or of art) [...] is a constitutive principle with respect to the feeling of pleasure and displeasure' in general, because judgments of beauty provide an indeterminate *telos* or goal of completion to *all* human feelings of pleasure and displeasure (5: 197). In short, pure, disinterested pleasure in beauty (not pleasure in the good) is the highest stage of feeling in a living human being's transition from nature to freedom, and is thus already implicitly present as a *telos* in feelings of the agreeable and of the good.<sup>21</sup>

#### 4. The a priori principle of reflective judgment in recent literature

I have argued that reflection on universality and necessity in human feeling must proceed from within the first-personal perspective of feeling in aesthetic judgments, not from outside of the feeling itself, through the naturalistic, third-personal perspective of teleological judgment. What does this tell us about the relation between feeling and the a priori principle of reflective judgment in general? I will now try to profile my answer to this question by comparing it to other proposals that have been made in the literature.

Kant often emphasizes that feeling belongs to a *receptive* faculty (*Empfänglichkeit*) of the mind – or to our ability to be 'affected' by an object or representation (MS 6:211). Feeling is thus sometimes called an affect or sensation [*Empfindung*] (KU 5:206; KpV 5:23–4). Like the sensations that constitute the materials of outer sense (e.g. sensations of color or of sound), feeling involves *awareness* of being affected.<sup>22</sup> Kant thus classifies 'sensation' as a kind of 'representation with consciousness (*perceptio*)' in the famous *Stufenleiter*-passage of the first *Critique* (KrV A320/B376). A representation that involves sensation, or that rests on the object's affecting me, is said to be an 'empirical' representation (KrV A20/B34, A29/B44). Yet, Kant *also* maintains that the feeling of pleasure in a beautiful object is accompanied by an awareness of its own universality and necessity (KU 5:211ff). These are said to be marks of non-empirical, a priori

representation (KrV B3). So how can feeling be both an empirical representation, as a kind of sensation, and involve an a priori awareness of its own universal and necessary validity (KU 5:289)?<sup>23</sup>

It is not uncommon in the literature on Kant's third *Critique* to answer this question by separating the capacity to feel pleasure and displeasure from the capacity to judge its universal and necessary validity in the appreciation of beauty.<sup>24</sup> Whereas pleasure and displeasure are exercises of a passive faculty of feeling, the judgment is an exercise of a different, active faculty that is governed by an a priori principle: the reflective power of judgment (*reflektierende Urteilskraft*). This assumption has two important consequences. First, by detaching the pleasure from the judgment of its necessity and universality, the feeling of pleasure becomes detached from that aspect of it that makes it *human*. This reading thus gives us no reason to think that the capacity for pleasure and displeasure in humans differs as such from that of non-human animals.<sup>25</sup> The second consequence of the assumption is that it leads to a distinction, within aesthetic judgments, between two acts of judging. The first judgment is a reflection on the purposiveness of the object or of my representation of it, and is accompanied by pleasure. The second judgment reflects on the subject's feeling of pleasure, and judges it to be universally and necessarily valid.<sup>26</sup> Since the pleasure of the first judgment is distinct from the reflection on its validity in the second, these two acts cannot constitute a single act of judging.

In stark contrast to these two-act readings of aesthetic judgments, Hannah Ginsborg has persuasively argued that judgments of beauty consist in one act of reflective judgment that is identical with a feeling of pleasure. According to Ginsborg, human feeling is a capacity not only to feel pleasures that are universally and necessarily valid, but to feel pleasure in such a way that the pleasure itself is *conscious* of its own universal and necessary validity, and thus constitutes a judgment. To feel pleasure in the beautiful is to feel that my present state is as it should be, both for me, and for any other rational subject (i.e. that it is 'universally valid'). It is to feel that my response to the object is 'appropriate' or 'necessary', in the sense that it agrees with how things are, even if I lack a determinate concept for grasping how they are. This is sufficient to distinguish the human from a non-human faculty of feeling, since non-human feeling does not involve consciousness of its own universal and necessary validity, and hence is not a judgment.

Ginsborg links the power of judgment with the faculty of feeling by interpreting 'reflective judgment' as 'the capacity to take one's mental state in perceiving a particular object, to be universally valid *with respect to that object*' (my emphasis; Ginsborg 2015, 146). The power of reflective judgment searches for concepts (rules for judging) by reflecting on my behavior of sorting or classifying objects as universally valid or correct even prior to the discovery of a determinate concept. That is, I judge that any other rational subject would classify the objects in the same way. This subjective universality of one's own mental state is grounded

not on any prior recognition that objects are constituted in a particular way, but instead on a 'primitive' sense that one's own mental activities are appropriate or apt (Ginsborg 2015, 212). In aesthetic judgments of beauty, the mental activity judged to be appropriate is a feeling of pleasure, which is reflectively aware of itself *as* appropriate. But pleasure is not a mere consciousness *that* my state is apt or valid; it also sustains itself *because* of this consciousness: we 'linger over the consideration of the beautiful because this consideration strengthens and reproduces itself' (KU 5:222).<sup>27</sup>

Notice that on Ginsborg's reading, the normativity of pleasure consists not merely in an awareness that the *object* is as it should be, but in an awareness that my aesthetic response to it (feeling of pleasure) is as *it* should be on the occasion of perceiving an object. This suggests that our faculty of pleasure should rest *not merely* on the purposiveness of nature for our faculties of cognition, but also on the purposiveness of our faculties of cognition for being adequate to the objects of nature.<sup>28</sup> Indeed, Ginsborg seems to take this appropriateness not of the object, but of my own state of mind *in response to the object*, to be the source of the universal validity of aesthetic judgments:<sup>29</sup> 'to be aware of the appropriateness of my own state of mind under my present circumstances *is* to be aware that anyone else in the same circumstance ought to be in the same state of mind that I am' (my emphasis; Ginsborg 2015, 30).

How exactly must we understand judgments about the appropriateness or inappropriateness of a feeling? According to Ginsborg, we should understand these judgments to be about the appropriateness of the pleasure in relation to the *object*; the object thus sets an indeterminate standard for appropriateness and inappropriateness of feeling.<sup>30</sup> But it is more in line with Kant's assessment of these judgments as merely subjectively valid to understand them as judgments about the appropriateness of pleasure in relation to the *subject*. For instance, we may judge that a feeling of the agreeable is inappropriate in certain circumstances because it disagrees not with the object, but with my higher interest in living a moral life; the judgment about my pleasure is thus itself a higher level feeling of displeasure (subjective counter-purposiveness) in my own lower level feeling of pleasure, and can thus be said to express '*bitter joy*' (*Anth.* 7:237). Or again, we may judge that a feeling of pain is appropriate for our moral vocation, as when we allow ourselves to grieve the loss of a spouse – this is '*sweet sorrow*' (*ibid.*) In these cases, lower level aesthetic judgments of the agreeable (or disagreeable), which express the subjective purposiveness (or counter-purposiveness) of an object merely for me individually (and thus have mere 'private validity' [*Privatgültigkeit*]), are accompanied by higher level, universally valid [*allgemeingültig*] aesthetic judgments of the goodness (or badness) of these feelings, which express their agreement or disagreement with my higher (moral) self (KU 5:212).<sup>31</sup> What is distinctive of pleasure in beauty is that it is self-reinforcing and self-approving, and thus does not rest on any higher-level

feelings of its own appropriateness. To feel pleasure in beauty is to directly feel that an object is appropriate for me, not just as an individual, but as a universal.

The reading I have proposed agrees with Ginsborg (in contrast, for instance, with Allison and Guyer) that the human capacity for pleasure is identical with a capacity to bring to consciousness its universal and necessary validity. There is a single act of the mind whereby I feel pleasure in the beautiful and am conscious of the universality and necessity in this feeling, which is to say that the faculty of pleasure and displeasure is the aesthetic of a power of judgment. But my reading disagrees with Ginsborg's understanding of the *source* of universal and necessary validity. According to Ginsborg, it is because my cognitive faculties are 'appropriate to the object' that the pleasure in the purposiveness of the object is universally and necessarily valid (Ginsborg 2015, 248).<sup>32</sup> By contrast, I have argued that it is merely because the object is appropriate or purposive for my cognitive faculties, faculties I share with any other rational subject, that my feeling of its purposiveness is universally and necessarily valid. My reading thus locates the source of the universal and necessary validity in agreement with the principle governing the faculty of pleasure and displeasure, which provides an indeterminate measure or standard for the assessment of all human feelings.

The principle of purposiveness thus enables us to become aware, through the faculty of feeling, that nature, and our own inner feelings, are purposive for our self-determined activity in making a life for ourselves.<sup>33</sup> It does not tell us that a certain feeling would be fitting with the object (not even in a primitive way that cannot be articulated through rules), but instead tells us that a certain feeling is fitting with ourselves, or that it is worthy of our humanity. Those who fail to appreciate beauty cannot be faulted for responding in the wrong way to the object; but they can be faulted for being *less spiritually alive* than those who take pleasure in beauty. Insofar as our final end (the highest good) demands that we progress to higher stages of spiritual life (on the path from nature to freedom), there is a normative demand internal to any feeling of pleasure – even if only latent and implicit – that we learn to appreciate beauty. Cultures without an appreciation of beauty in nature and in art witness a slow death of spirit, a symptom of their failure to advance the ends of humanity.

The difference between these readings is significant, because it corresponds to two divergent ways of understanding the place of human beings in nature. Ginsborg's reading suggests that human life is integrated in, and serves the universal ends of, nature in general; it is as though our cognitive faculties were purposively designed to conform to the nature around us, just as nature is designed to be purposive for our cognitive faculties. There is a reciprocal dependence between nature and the life of the human mind. By contrast, I have suggested that there is an asymmetric dependence of nature on the universal ends of our cognitive powers. Nature serves the ends of cognition, not the other way around – for the final end of our cognitive powers lies not in cognition of nature, but in the fully self-sufficient end of morality (an end that expresses

self-cognition), which can be realized only outside of nature.<sup>34</sup> A non-rational animal may have a life-form that evolves in response to the demands of the nature surrounding it. That is, the standards that determine when objects are purposive or counter-purposive for it, and that give its faculty of pleasure and displeasure a governing principle, may undergo a natural evolution in response to its environment. By contrast, we are the agents, and not mere spectators, of human history. What is universally pleasing to mankind may change over time, giving aesthetic judgments a historical dimension. But insofar as changes in the standards of taste and other pleasures occur, they are due not to processes of adjusting to the *nature* surrounding us, but rather are due to the struggle we face in adjusting to *ourselves* by making ourselves worthy of our own humanity.

## 5. Conclusion

It is often thought that what distinguishes a human faculty of pleasure and displeasure from this faculty in non-human animals is that human emotion is attuned to something indeterminate in nature (beauty) that non-human animals cannot appreciate. If the argument in this paper is correct, the opposite is true: human emotion is attuned to something indeterminate in *ourselves* that is absent in non-human animals. To feel pleasure in beautiful objects is to feel that nature is as it should be, not for some determinate purpose or end specified by a given human life-form, but for our (indeterminate) faculties of determining for ourselves what our form of life will be. Because we determine what our vital powers are for ourselves, we are capable, as the non-human animals are not, of becoming aware of the universality and necessity of our pleasures from within the feeling of pleasure itself. Our faculty of feeling is governed by an a priori principle because it is an apperceptive faculty that reflects internally on our self-constituted vital powers.

The aesthetic of the power of judgment thus concerns the use of this power in the self-consciousness of human vital powers (the proper topic of the first half of the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*), while the *logic* of the power of judgment (the second half of the *Critique*) concerns its use in reflecting on non-human organic nature. Human life cannot be investigated as belonging to nature (from a logical, third-personal perspective), but must instead be approached from within the engaged, first-personal perspective of human beings who narrate (or invent) a life-form for themselves. In German, this might be expressed by saying that the humanities are *Geisteswissenschaften*, not *Naturwissenschaften* – sciences of spirit, not of nature. Perhaps it can be argued that the self-consciousness of spirit, as manifested in aesthetic judgments, is a prerequisite for reflection on non-human organic nature, just as self-consciousness was prioritized and shown to be a condition for the possibility of theoretical and practical cognition in Kant's first two *Critiques*. But that is a topic worthy of another paper.



## Notes

1. Kant suggests that natural ends should themselves be understood as concepts in the following passage: 'we adduce a teleological ground when we ascribe causality in regard to an object to a concept of the object as if [that concept] were to be found in nature (not in us) [...] and hence we conceive of nature as **technical** through its own capacity' (KU 5:360). Aquila has suggested that if organisms are represented as concepts, they must be non-discursive concepts (synthetic, not analytic universals): 'natural purposes' should be regarded as themselves 'thoughts on the part of a non-discursive intellect' (Aquila 1991, 148). But although Kant thinks that these concepts should be regarded as 'found in nature', he also allows them to be used by finite intellects in teleological judgments, which suggests that they are *discursive* concepts.
2. Michael Thompson offers a contemporary account of this kind of general statement, which he labels a 'natural historical judgment'. In such judgments, the generality of the species-concept, such as the concept 'apple tree', cannot be analyzed distributively in terms of what each individual apple tree happens to do; instead it is a generality that is presupposed by the doings of any particular apple tree (Thompson 2008, 63ff).
3. In Kant's words, in teleological judgment we 'think of a product of nature that there is something which it *ought to be*, and [...] judge it according to whether it indeed actually is that way' (KU 20:240).
4. Notice that these explanations are possible even though there may be defective cases where a lion fails to take pleasure in antelopes. The fact that there are defective cases, where teleological explanations do not work, does not show that teleological explanations in non-defective cases are impossible.
5. That is, reason is not a 'natural power' in the sense that it emerges out of nature. (It does not belong to second nature, if this is understood as a nature that arises out of first nature.)
6. Although I cannot argue for this here, this is a point at which Kant distances himself from Rousseau. Rather than thinking of human perfectibility as culminating in culture (as for Rousseau), Kant thinks of human perfection as a highest good outside of nature that overcomes the antagonisms inherent in culture and civilization.
7. Foucault helpfully describes the transitional character of spirit (which contrasts it with the established character of natural life-forms) as follows: '[spirit] does not organize the Gemüt in such a way that it is made it into a living being, or into the analogon of organic life, or indeed into the life of the Absolute itself; rather, its function is to vitalize, to engender, in the passivity of the Gemüt, which is that of empirical determination, a teeming mass of ideas – the multiple structures of a totality in the process of becoming that make and unmake themselves like so many of the half-lives that live and die in the mind. Thus, the Gemüt is not simply 'what is' but 'what it makes of itself' (Foucault 2008, 63).
8. The cultivation, civilization, and moralization of the human being essentially rests on education. Thus, 'a human being can become human only through education. He is nothing but what education makes of him' (*Ped.* 9:443).
9. The development of human sensibility in general – all the way up through the development of *contemplative* pleasure – begins with a feeling of *wonder* in nature's intelligibility. Kant does not explicitly mention the ancient concept of wonder (*thaumazein*) in this context, but I take it to be implied by the original conception of pleasure as an awareness of purposiveness. For nature to be

purposive for our cognitive powers, it must be *contingent* that it is intelligible; yet there is also *lawfulness* in this contingency: this distinguishes wonder from mere contentment, on the one hand, and from mere surprise, on the other.

10. Spirit does not know any *natural* limits, but Kant does suggest that taste can discipline spirit, since it is through a contemplative attitude towards nature in the appreciation of beauty that the life of the mind acquires order, discipline, and unity (KU 5:319ff).
11. Kant implicitly draws this distinction between internal and external comparison or reflection in the following passage:

**To reflect** (to consider), [...] is to compare and to hold together given representations *either* with others *or* with one's faculty of cognition, in relation to a concept thereby made possible. (my emphasis; KU 20:211)

External reflection consists in comparing a representation with others, while internal reflection consists in comparing it with one's faculty of cognition. This reading is corroborated by Kant's logic lectures, where he distinguishes between the internal and external use of 'marks' [*Merkmale*], which are features of a thing that enable me to notice [*merken*] similarities and differences in things: 'The *internal* use consists in *derivation*, in order to cognize the thing itself through marks as its grounds of cognition. The external use consists in *comparison*, insofar as we can compare one thing with others through marks [...]' (JL 9:58; see also BL 24:107; VL 24:836). Marks used internally are *concepts*, through which I cognize the inner, universal ground that explains why the thing is as it is (*ibid.*). Non-rational animals are capable only of the external use of marks, or their use for classifying or sorting things in one's environment (see FS 2:60). For lack of internal reflection, they do not cognize the inner nature of a thing through a concept.

12. This priority of the universality of the pleasure over the feeling of pleasure itself is emphasized in §9 of the *Analytic of the Beautiful*, where Kant says that 'it is the universal capacity for the communication of the state of mind in the given representation which, as the subjective condition of the judgment of taste, must serve as its ground and have the pleasure in the object as a consequence' (KU 5:217).
13. In this regard, pleasure in beauty shares something in common with the moral feeling of respect. Both arise as effects of an act of judgment; respect arises from a judgment about what I ought to do, or about what is lawful or obligatory. Pleasure in the beautiful arises from reflection on the harmony between my cognitive faculties in the intuition of an object. But only the former, not the latter, immediately gives rise to an interest or desire.
14. Kant characterizes the 'power of judgment' in its *logical* employment as a 'faculty of subsuming under rules', or of subsuming particulars under universals (KrV A132/B171). For this to be possible, it must discern what is universal *in the particular* (A137/B176). But in its aesthetic employment, it is a faculty for discerning the universality of the particular, and the necessity of the contingent. It thus mediates between the universal and particular more fully in its aesthetic employment.
15. To place humans on an increasingly complex chain of being (*scala naturae*), with plants at the bottom of the chain, would be to think of the human being in the same, third-personal way that we think of the plants and the animals. But part of what I am urging here is that human life can only become conscious from 'within' the first-personal activity of living it; judgments about human

pleasure therefore must be first-personal aesthetic judgments, not third-personal teleological judgments. Kant was dissatisfied with a physiological approach to human nature, because it cannot represent the human being as free. He preferred an anthropology from a pragmatic point of view because it studies 'what the human being as free agent makes, or can and ought to make of himself' (*Anth.* 7:119). Similarly, we must study human pleasure from an aesthetic (first-personal) point of view, since only in this manner can we become conscious of the a priori principle governing the entire capacity for pleasure and displeasure.

16. This is not to deny that a notion of the agreeable 'is also valid for nonrational animals', as Kant suggests (5:210). As we noted above, we can develop this notion of a non-rational feeling of the agreeable by analogy with our own human feelings of life. But we cannot start our investigation with some non-human, generic notion of the agreeable that would equally apply to humans and to non-rational animals. For there is no access to a feeling of the agreeable that is not a feeling of agreement with a particular (even if indeterminate) form of life.
17. I thank two anonymous reviewers for urging me to say more about this.
18. I thank Stephen Engstrom for pointing me to these differences in feelings of the agreeable.
19. In his lectures on Metaphysics, Kant is reported to have said that 'life in a human being is twofold: animal and spiritual life' (M L<sub>1</sub> 28:286). Just as the former should not be identified with non-human animal life, the latter should not be understood as non-human intellectual life, but as a higher stage of living in which we are prepared for death (the loss of the body) (M L<sub>1</sub> 28:285ff). The distinction between taste and spirit in the third *Critique* can be understood as two moments in spiritual (as opposed to material or animal) life: spirit is an animating power that overextends the material conditions of life, while taste disciplines spirit and involves an awareness of our limits. While an undisciplined spirit may *leap* to death through feelings of the sublime, taste is important as a *preparation* for death through the appreciation of life and beauty. Spirit (not sensible appetite) is what drives Goethe's Werther to suicide; taste motivates Goethe's Wilhelm Meister to a quiet life of work and contemplation (See note 10).
20. It is important in this context to distinguish aesthetic judgments of the good, which are *evaluative* moral judgments, from the feeling of respect for the moral law, which is a moral feeling that determines me to action (through *deliberative* moral judgments). My claim here is that evaluative, aesthetic judgments of the good rank lower than aesthetic judgments of the beautiful in 'promot[ing] the receptivity of the mind for the moral feeling' (i.e. for the feeling of respect) (KU 5:197).
21. As noted at the beginning of this paper, all capacities are directed at their completion (what they are capacities for).
22. But unlike external sensations, feelings do not express 'the material (the real)' in outer objects (5:189). For instance, the external sensation of redness expresses the redness in the object, but the sensation of pleasure does not express anything real in the thing and so 'cannot become an element of cognition at all' (*ibid.*).
23. 'It is an empirical judgment that I perceive and judge an object with pleasure. But it is an a priori judgment that I find it beautiful, i.e. that I may require that satisfaction of everyone as necessary' (KU 5:289).
24. For instance, both Paul Guyer and Henry Allison distinguish the capacity for pleasure and displeasure from the power to make judgments – either about objects, or about one's feelings (Guyer 1997, 74ff; Allison 2001, 70ff).

25. In contrast to Paul Guyer's analysis of pleasure as a merely passive sensation, Henry Allison maintains that human pleasure is an awareness of the 'aptness or subjective purposiveness [...] of a given representation for the proper exercise of our cognitive faculties' (Allison 2001, 71). So Allison might insist that although pleasure thus defined is not to be identified with a judgment of its universal and necessary validity, it *is* distinctively human, since non-human animals do not become aware of the subjective purposiveness of their representations. But as we've seen above, this is not sufficient for distinguishing human from non-human pleasure. The feeling of pleasure even in non-rational animals can be understood as a kind of awareness that an object is purposive for it, or that it is as it *should* be. Moreover, to distinguish human from non-human pleasure, it is not sufficient to point out that our 'life-form' differs from that of animals (e.g. that we have 'cognitive powers'). For as we have seen, humans lack a species-concept; human pleasure thus is not the feeling of an object's purposiveness for the realization of a given life-form or species-concept.
26. Both Paul Guyer and Henry Allison hold two-act readings of aesthetic judgment. According to Guyer, I feel pleasure *because* I notice, through the power of judgment, that an object is (unexpectedly) purposive for my faculties of cognition, or that it induces a harmonious interplay of my faculties of imagination and understanding. 'This discovery falls into a larger class of events, the attainment of objectives, which are invariably coupled with pleasure – at least when contingent' (Guyer 1997, 74). Once this discovery causes me to feel pleasure, I then make the judgment that my pleasure has its source in the attainment of objectives that I can reasonably expect others to find pleasurable as well (Guyer 1997, 140f). Allison maintains that aesthetic judgment first involves a comparison of the representation of an object with my cognitive faculties, which brings the imagination and understanding into a 'free play'. Through pleasure, I evaluate this act of reflection as harmonious, and discriminate it from acts that are disharmonious: 'whereas it is judgment that reflects, that is, compares, it is feeling that appraises the results of this reflective activity' (Allison 2001, 70). Consequent upon this initial, first-order reflective judgment, which is accompanied by pleasure, there is a further, second-order reflective judgment about the universality and necessity of the pleasure. While it is *one* thing to feel pleasure in reflecting on an object's purposiveness, it is a *further* step, according to Allison, to judge that we speak with a 'universal voice' in calling something beautiful, and thereby lay claim to the agreement of everyone (Allison 2001, 107).
27. Zinkin has suggested that her account of pleasure, unlike Ginsborg's, makes consciousness of validity constitutive of the self-maintaining, self-causing properties of pleasure: 'Thus, contra Ginsborg, the feeling of pleasure is not merely the feeling *that* our mental state is the right one, but it is the feeling that *makes us stay* in this mental state' (Zinkin 2012, 442). However, Ginsborg does also emphasize that 'a state of mind which consists in the awareness of its own appropriateness with respect to an object is one that can be described as the cause or ground of its own maintenance' (Ginsborg 2015, 31). It maintains itself because it is aware of itself as appropriate.
28. 'Pleasure in taste, then, appears to consist both in the ascription of formal purposiveness to one's own activity of judging and in the ascription of formal purposiveness to the object which is judged' (Ginsborg 2015, 235–6).
29. Like Ginsborg, Zuckert interprets pleasure as a self-directed intentional state about its own purposiveness, but for Zuckert this means that feelings of pleasure are future-directed states that aim to maintain themselves in time (Zuckert 2002,

pp. 245ff; 2007, pp. 231ff). It is not clear why non-rational animals should not have the future-directed, anticipatory states that Zuckert says are made possible only by the a priori principle of purposiveness. I have proposed, with Ginsborg, that pleasure maintains itself from a consciousness of its own universal and necessary validity. This suggests that human pleasure has a temporal dimension that is entirely missed by the brutes. Not only can we anticipate the future (which the non-human animals can do as well); we can also feel something eternal (corresponding to something universal) within time, something that *resists* (and not merely something that *informs*) the flow of time.

30. This assumption is shared by the contemporary discussion of the reasons-responsiveness of emotions. In these discussions, 'reasons' are commonly thought to be objective states of affairs. For instance, the death of my mother may give me a reason to feel grief. However, some proponents of this way of speaking have acknowledged a problem that arises when we say that a person, after years of grief, no longer has a reason to grieve. How can the reason to grieve expire, given that it is an objective state of affairs that still obtains? If we instead think of the grief as 'appropriate' to the subject (rather than to the object), we can avoid this sort of problem. For now we can say that grief is appropriate at one stage of moral life, but inappropriate at a later stage of it, once it is time to 'move on' (see Raz 1999, 19, 75 and Marusic *forthcoming*).
31. In Kant's words, 'we [...] judge enjoyment and pain by a higher satisfaction or dissatisfaction within ourselves (namely, moral): whether we ought to refuse them or give ourselves over to them' (*Anth.* 7:237). This contrasts with Ginsborg's claim that with regard to the agreeable, 'the issue of appropriateness does not even arise' (Ginsborg 2015, 249).
32. According to Makkai, this aspect of Ginsborg's view suggests that 'the judgment of beauty, which on Ginsborg's construal is the claim that the object merits the relevant imaginative activity, is then an objective judgment in those terms, a judgment that ascribes an empirical feature to an object' (Makkai 2009, 399). Of course, Makkai grants Ginsborg that there is no determinate feature in the object that makes it beautiful, but as Makkai rightly points out, this does not make the judgment less objective. My reading reverses this focus on the object (in both Ginsborg and Makkai) and instead locates the indeterminacy of judgments of beauty in the subject: it is because it is not pre-determined what my vital powers or life-form will be that we cannot say determinately what things will agree with me universally (i.e. what things are beautiful).
33. This is not to deny that the principle of purposiveness can serve as a standard for adequate responses to nature in the *logical* employment of the power of judgment: we exercise this power in a manner that is appropriate to nature when we judge nature to be a system of empirical laws under common principles, and when we make teleological judgments about organisms.
34. Ginsborg's reading is more amenable to a Darwinian evolutionary account of human feeling. My reading suggests that human feeling does not evolve out of nature, as a response to pressures to conform to one's natural environment. On the contrary, it is nature that must evolve to conform to the life of the mind (spirit). For a contemporary defense of a non-evolutionary account of human consciousness that draws from the German Idealist tradition, see Nagel (2012).

## Acknowledgments

For inspiring conversations on topics related to this paper, I wish to express my gratitude to Sebastian Rödl, Matthias Haase, Irad Kimhi, Stephen Engstrom, Ian Blecher, Wolfram Gobsch, Beri Marusic, Doug Lavin, Andrea Kern, Rachel Zuckert, Melissa Zinkin, Hannah Ginsborg, and the audiences of the Midwestern NAKS meeting at Northwestern University, 2015, the Eastern NAKS meeting at Yale University 2015, and at the annual conferences at the University of Leipzig. Thanks also to two anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments and criticisms. I thank the University of Illinois at Urbana/ Champaign for a course release during the completion of this project.

## Notes on contributor

**Alexandra Newton** is an assistant professor of philosophy at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She works primarily on Kant, German Idealism, and philosophy of mind.

## ORCID

Alexandra Newton  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-7491-9728>

## References

- Allison, Henry. 2001. *Kant's Theory of Taste. A Reading of the Critique of Aesthetic Judgment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Aquila, Richard E. 1991. "Unity of Organism, Unity of Thought, and the Unity of the Critique of Judgment." *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 30 (Supp.): 139–155.
- Foucault, Michel. 2008. *Introduction to Kant's Anthropology*. Translated by K. Briggs and R. Nigro. Los Angeles: Semiotext(e) foreign agents series.
- Ginsborg, Hannah. 2015. *The Normativity of Nature. Essays on Kant's Critique of Judgment*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Guyer, Paul. 1997. *Kant and the Claims of Taste*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Makkai, Katalin. 2009. "Kant on Recognizing Beauty." *European Journal of Philosophy* 18 (3): 385–413.
- Marusic, Beri. forthcoming "Do Reasons Expire?"
- Nagel, Thomas. 2012. *Mind and Cosmos*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Raz, Joseph. 1999. *Engaging Reason: On the Theory of Value and Action*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Thompson, Michael. 2008. *Life and Action*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Zinkin, Melissa. 2012. "Kant and the Pleasure of 'Mere Reflection.'" *Inquiry: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Philosophy* 55 (5): 433–453.
- Zuckert, Rachel. 2002. "A New Look at Kant's Theory of Pleasure." *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 60 (3): 239–252.
- Zuckert, Rachel. 2007. *Kant on Beauty and Biology. An Interpretation of the Critique of Judgment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

All references to Kant's writings are cited using the relevant volume and page number from the standard "Akademie" edition of Kant's works: *Kants gesammelte Schriften*, edited by the Königlich Preussischen (now Deutschen) Akademie der Wissenschaften (Berlin: G. Reimer [now de Gruyter], 1902–).

The following abbreviations are used:

- Anth.* *Anthropologie in pragmatischer Hinsicht* (1798). (Ak. 7) Translated by Robert B. Loudon, under the title *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*. Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant, *Anthropology, History, and Education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- BG* *Beobachtungen über das Gefühl des Schönen und Erhabenen* (1764). (Ak. 2). Translated by Paul Guyer under the title "Observations on the feeling of the beautiful and sublime". Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant, *Anthropology, History, and Education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- BL* *Logik Blomberg* (from the 1770s). (Ak. 24) Translated by J. Michael Young. Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant, *Lectures on Logic*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.
- FS* *Die Falsche Spitzfindigkeit der vier syllogistischen Figuren* (1762) (Ak. 2). Translated by D. Walford in collaboration with Ralf Meerbote under the title "The False Subtlety of the Four Syllogistic Figures". Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant, *Theoretical Philosophy 1755–1770*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.
- JL* *Jäsche Logik* (1800). (Ak. 9). Translated by J. Michael Young. Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant, *Lectures on Logic*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.
- KpV* *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft* (1788). (Ak. 5) Translated by Mary Gregor, under the title *Critique of Practical Reason*. Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant, *Practical Philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- KrV* *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (first (A) edition, 1781 (Ak. 4); second (B) edition, 1787 (Ak. 3)). Translated by Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood under the title *Critique of Pure Reason*. Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- KU* *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (1790). (Ak. 5) Translated by Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews, under the title *Critique of the Power of Judgment*. Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- ML<sub>1</sub>* *Metaphysik L<sub>1</sub>* (Ak. 28). Translated by Karl Ameriks and Steve Naragon. Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant, *Lectures on Metaphysics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- MS* *Metaphysik der Sitten* (1797) (Ak. 6). Translated by Mary Gregor, under the title *The Metaphysics of Morals*. Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant, *Practical Philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- Ped.* *Über die Pädagogik* (1803). (Ak. 9). Translated by Robert B. Loudon, under the title *Lectures on Pedagogy*. Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant, *Anthropology, History, and Education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- VL* *Wiener Logik* (from the early 1780s). (Ak. 24) Translated by J. Michael Young, under the title "Vienna Logic". Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant, *Lectures on Logic*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.