The Intentional Structure of Moods

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1. Introduction: Moods and Intentionality

To fix ideas, let us start with a very partial list of phenomena often considered moods:

- Depression
- Euphoria
- Anxiety
- Serenity
- Irritability
- Calmness
- Melancholy
- Elation
- Gravity
- Levity
- Gloom
- Giddiness
- Foul mood
- Good mood

Three immediate warnings are in order. First, this list is surely not exhaustive; there are probably many other moods, including ones for which no dedicated English expression exists. Secondly, the list may not be exclusive either: some of the terms listed may turn out to co-refer (e.g., perhaps ‘elation’ and ‘euphoria’ denote the same mood). Thirdly, some of the expressions listed can surely be competently used to denote something other than moods (e.g., ‘irritability’ can be used to denote a character trait). They appear on the list because each can also be competently used to denote a mood.

Indeed, some of these expressions suffer from systematic ambiguity — notably ‘depression’ and ‘anxiety’. On the one hand, they can be used to denote an experienced dimension of a person’s state of mind...
that lasts typically anywhere between a few minutes and a whole day; these are the moods *sensu stricto*. Depression and anxiety in this sense are felt, or experienced, by their subjects, though they need not be noticed by them. On the other hand, the same terms can be used to denote a more persistent condition of a person, one which can last anywhere between a few days and many years. Depression and anxiety in this more clinical sense are not themselves experiential episodes, but are rather conditions responsible for, or at least correlating with, the systematic recurrence of the corresponding experiential episodes. Plausibly, the standing condition is a disposition of which the experiential episodes are the manifestations (but nothing I will say here will hang on this). With some brutality to ordinary language, we may describe a person in the grip of the enduring condition as being depressed and a person undergoing the experiential episode as feeling depressed. I will reserve the term ‘mood’ for the experiential episodes, and will essentially ignore the enduring conditions.

The modern history of philosophical theories of mood follows to some extent the pattern for theories of mind in general. First came behaviorist theories: To feel depressed is to be “in that peculiar state or condition which is such that: if you are in normal circumstances your movements will be slow, careless, listless, etc.” (Aune 1963: 199). Later emerged functionalist and computationalist theories, enriching the behaviorist’s entirely extra-mental causal profile of mood with intra-mental causal connections (Lormand 1985, Griffiths 1989, Sizer 2000). More recently, an intentionalist approach has gained momentum, trying to capture the nature of moods in terms of their distinct intentional profile, the kind of intentional directedness they exhibit (Solomon 1976, Tye 1995, Crane 1998, Seager 1999, Goldie 2000, Fish 2005, Price 2006, Mendelovici 2013).

Despite their success elsewhere in the philosophy of mind, intentionalist theories are thought to face a steep challenge when it comes to moods. Intentionalist theories type-individuate their targets in terms of their intentionality. For instance, an intentionalist theory of perception would claim that perceptual states $P_1$ and $P_2$ are type-identical perceptual states if and only if $P_1$ and $P_2$ are intentionally the same. (I will expand on ‘intentionally the same’ in §3.) By the same token, an intentionalist theory of mood would type-individuate moods in terms of their intentionality. But there are antecedent reasons to suspect that not only moods cannot be individuated by their intentionality, they have no intentionality to begin with. For moods feel somehow diffuse and undirected in a way belief and desire, for instance, are not. This is reflected very clearly in the way we speak about moods. If a person says “I want,” but when asked what she wants, replies “Nothing, I just want,” we suspect she does not fully master the words she is using. Similarly if she says “I think” or “I fear” but insists there is nothing that she thinks or fears. In contrast, a person may say “I feel depressed,” and when asked what about, reply perfectly appropriately “Nothing, I just feel depressed.” Similarly for “I feel irritable” and “I’m in a good mood.” Admittedly, a therapist may suggest to her patient something like: ‘Perhaps your depression is about the fact that your father never loved you.’ But this suggestion is clearly a comment on the causal origins of the patient’s mood, rather than on its subject matter or object. In the relevant sense of “object,” moods seem to have no object. In the sense in which my wife is the object of my affection, nothing is the object of my irritability.

One option for the intentionalist is to carve an exception for moods: All mental states are intentional — except moods (Searle 1983: 1–4).\(^1\)

\(^1\) Compare: ‘Your anger is not really about the fact that I didn’t do the dishes, it’s about the fact that I forgot your birthday, but I’ve already apologized for that twice.’ In this kind of statement, ‘about’ is used in an attempt to pick out the real causal antecedent of the person’s anger, not the intentional content of that anger.

\(^2\) Moods are of course not the only phenomena that have been cited as presenting a prima facie challenge to intentionalism. Still, it is for moods that intentionalists have been most amenable to carving an exception, perhaps thinking they can insulate moods as a category from the rest of the stream of consciousness. Consider, by way of contrast, Ned Block’s (1996) argument that phosphenes experiences — the kind of ‘spots’ we see in our visual field after rubbing our eyes — are non-intentional. To my knowledge, no intentionalist has reacted by saying “Okay, so phosphenes experiences are non-intentional but they are the exception to the rule — all other visual phenomenology is
Elsewhere, though, philosophical theories rarely tolerate exceptions. Perhaps this is because philosophical theories are typically interested in the nature of the phenomena they address, and to say that the xs are F with the exception of x, is to concede that it is not quite in the nature of an x to be F. Perhaps the reason is different. In any case, many philosophers of intentionalist bent have attempted to neutralize the threat of mood exceptionalism by arguing that moods exhibit a special and unusual kind of intentionality, rather than no intentionality at all. This is not meant to be motivated only by a theoretically driven preference for a unified account of mental states; there is also the observation that when one feels depressed, or anxious, or euphoric, this does make a difference to how things seem to one.

The extant literature contains a number of intentionalist treatments of mood. The leading account suggests that although moods do not represent anything in particular, they do represent the world as a whole, or everything indiscriminately. We may call this the “globalist strategy.” It has recurred with persistent regularity in philosophical discussions of moods, and has often been motivated by the thought that an undiscriminating representation could account for the distinctively diffuse character of moods. There are other intentionalist accounts in the literature, but I will not pursue them here. Thus, Michael Tye has suggested that moods are mental representations of “departures from the pertinent range of physical states” in which our body typically is (1995: 129); Carolyn Price (2006) holds that moods represent increased likelihoods of certain occurrences; Angela Mendelovici (2013) argues that moods represent certain free-floating properties, unbound to any object. The present paper brackets these other intentionalist strategies to focus on the globalist strategy.

There are in fact two strands in such passages: moods are said, in one breath, to be directed at the world as a whole, but also, alternatively, to be directed at everything indiscriminately. Both the world and everything are very global subject matters, but they are not exactly the same: One suggests an intentional content of the singular form <the world is F>, the other a content of the quantified form <every x is F>.

The “whole world” strand is defended by Tim Crane (1998: 242): “In depression, the world seems to the subject to be a pointless, colourless place.” Here, melancholic or depressive mood is construed as an awareness of the world as in some way devoid of any value or significance, a place filled with uninteresting, pointless things. Similarly, anxiety is construed as an awareness of the world as a menacing place, a place filled with potential dangers and constant threats; euphoria as an awareness of the world as just so very wonderful; irritability as awareness of the world as thoroughly annoying or consistently frustrating; and so on. What all these have in common is their directedness at the world as a whole; what distinguishes them from each other is the kind of property they ascribe to the world.
The “everything” version of the view, meanwhile, is defended by William Seager (1999: 183): “Being depressed is a way of being conscious of things in general: everything seems worthless, or pointless, dull and profitless.” Here there is not one specific object that is designated as menacing when we feel anxious — every object is represented as menacing. As noted, this casts mood contents as universally quantified rather than singular.

In any case, the absolute generality of the proposed target of representation seems somewhat inessential to the view, and may be profitably tempered. For one may well feel euphoric without experiencing as wonderful the slush one is currently forced to walk through, or anxious without experiencing as threatening the computer screen one is looking at. One option that seems to me phenomenologically appealing is to ascribe to moods not quite universally quantified contents but something more like generic contents. In language, generics are produced with so-called bare plurals, as in “Dogs have four legs.” The fact that some dogs are three-legged makes the universally quantified claim ‘All dogs are four-legged’ false; but depending on how many and which dogs are three-legged, it may not threaten the generic “Dogs are four-legged.” An intentionalist about moods could hold that the content of euphoria is akin to “Everything is wonderful” but rather to “Things are wonderful.” What the latter exactly means (i.e., what proposition it expresses) depends on how we interpret generics in general — a lively area of debate in linguistics and philosophy of language (see Leslie and Lerner 2016). But whatever the answer, it will surely allow the slush you must walk through to fall short of wonderfulness consistently with the truth of the proposition expressed by “Things are wonderful.” In this way, a move from universally quantified to generic contents may enhance the globalist approach’s phenomenological adequacy.4

It is epistemically possible, of course, that some moods bear singular worldly contents while others bear quantified or generic contents. Perhaps the class of moods tolerates a degree of heterogeneity in the contents it admits, so long as these contents are characterized by relative generality.5

Some authors have found global intentionalism phenomenologically inadequate. Davide Bordini (2015: 71), for example, argues that moods are experienced as more subjective than global intentionalism suggests. He points out that we can feel depressed without projecting our feelings onto the world — without blaming the world, so to

3. To be sure, some semantic theories of generics will fit an intentionalist theory of mood better than others. If we interpret generics to be quantifications over ordinary or normal instances (Nickel 2008), this would produce a bad fit for an account of certain forms of intense elation, which tends to make things feel sublime and extraordinary. (It would be odd to see such elation as bearing the content “every ordinary thing is extraordinary.”) It would be better, from this point of view, to interpret generics to be rather quantifications over

4. There are other variants that might be considered here. For instance, Bartek Chomanski (2017) holds that moods are about everything the subject is independently aware of during the mood episode, but not quite everything simpliciter; while Jonathan Mitchell (2019) argues that moods are about the subject’s “total environment,” which is something like the part of the world the subject does or may have any dealings with, whether or not that amounts to the entire world. I focus on the generic-content idea in the text not only because I have not seen it in the extant literature and it seems phenomenologically compelling, but also because it deals more decisively with the slush and screen cases brought up in the text. After all, the slush and the screen are part both of everything the subject is aware of during the mood and the subject’s total environment. That said, there are probably responses available to Chomanski and Mitchell, and all these approaches can be used by the globalist to temper the absolute generality of the content she attributes to moods.

5. In a classic study of emotion reports, of 83 subjects, 42 (over half!) described depression with “everything seems useless, absurd, meaningless” (Davitz 1969: 45–6); meanwhile, of 69 subjects, fully 66 described a cheerful mood with “the world seems basically good and beautiful” and 50 with “I’m in tune with the world” (Davitz 1969: 39). Now, these descriptors were among 556 statements offered to subjects by the experimenters (though based on interviews with an initial group of subjects), so it is hard to evaluate their independent phenomenological prominence. Nonetheless, the fact that an “everything”-descriptor was so often selected in connection with depression while “world”-descriptors were more salient with cheerfulness may be thought suggestive. Alternatively, it may be a relatively superficial artifact of the methodology used. We need not take a stand on this here.
speak, for our morose and wretched cast of mind. Amy Kind (2013: 126–7) argues that global intentionalism cannot account for the variation in phenomenal intensity in moods: A person’s euphoria can deepen without things being represented as steadily gaining in a certain quantity, “wonderfulness.” I will return to these critiques in §5.2. To my mind, however, globalist intentionalism faces a far more principled difficulty — to which we turn next.

3. The Problem of Shared Contents

The accounts considered above characterize moods, and their distinctively diffuse or undirected character, in terms of (singular) worldly contents or generic contents. But it is perfectly possible to be in conscious states with worldly or generic content without experiencing any mood, indeed without any experience of specially diffuse phenomenology. A person may be in a conscious state with the worldly content <the world is menacing>, or the generic content <things are menacing>, without feeling anxious in the least. She may instead consciously believe (or judge) such a content, say, or just consider it. This might be because her mood has not yet caught up with her insight; because she is effectively medicated; because she is a Spock-like “affection zombie”; or because she just shows extraordinary spirit. As Eric Lormand puts it:

I may believe, sincerely and strongly, that the world is un-speakably cruel … but I am not yet depressed if I don’t let these states (or something else) get me down. (Lormand 1985: 393; italics original)

Likewise, one may consciously contemplate the proposition that things are menacing, consciously wonder whether things are menacing, consciously wish that things be menacing, and so on. In all these cases, one’s conscious state is directed at things generically, and attributes to them the relevant property, and yet one need not feel anxious. This seems to show that what makes a person’s conscious state an anxiety is not just that it represents things as menacing; something more is needed. And the same point could be made with the other putative contents we have considered. Thus, nothing prevents us from thinking that the world as a whole is menacing or wondering whether the world as a whole is menacing. Call this the problem of shared contents.

The problem here is not only that the intentionalist has failed to account for the manifest difference between moods and other kinds of conscious state. It is more precisely that she has failed to recover the specially diffuse and seemingly undirected character of moods. For the belief that things are menacing and the hope that the world is wonderful do not exhibit this diffuse and undirected character. So while attributing those kinds of contents to anxiety and euphoria casts the latter as intentional, it renders mysterious the fact that even if they are intentional, they are surely so in a very different way than other conscious states.

There are two general approaches to this problem, which correspond to two versions of intentionalism: pure and impure (Crane 2003, 2009; Chalmers 2004). Pure intentionalism about conscious state-type T accounts for T in terms of T’s intentional content; impure intentionalism does so in terms of T’s intentional content plus attitude. A pure intentionalist would argue that upon closer inspection, intentional content is sufficient to characterize fully the nature of moods. An impure intentionalist would argue instead that what distinguishes moods from conscious states with the same contents has to do with special attitudes instantiated by moods. In the second half of this paper, I will develop a version of impure intentionalism about moods. Before doing so, however, I want to consider some of the pure intentionalist’s options — and argue against them.

One pure-intentionalist response might be to claim — as Solomon (1976) in fact does — that, upon reflection, moods really are just beliefs, or judgments. Feeling depressed really is just judging that things are worthless; feeling euphoric really is just believing that the world is wonderful; and so on.

Beside flying in the face of manifest phenomenology, however, this view faces a problem we might call the Reverse Frege-Geach Problem.
The Frege-Geach problem is the problem of understanding why moral commitments can embed in inference and reasoning if they are, as so-called noncognitivists have held, noncognitive states that are not truth-apt (see Geach 1960). The reverse problem, then, is to understand why moods do not embed in inference and reasoning, despite being, on Solomon’s view, cognitive states that are truth-apt. A person in the grip of anxiety cannot reason her way out of it simply by inferring from her existing beliefs that things are not entirely menacing. Assenting to the propositions that (1) interpersonal trust and cooperation are rife, and (2) if things were generally menacing, then interpersonal trust and cooperation would be sparse, she may draw the obvious inference and still not rid herself of her anxiety. Moods are more recalcitrant than that.6

A different pure-intentionalist response might be that the properties represented by moods are not quite menacingness, wonderfulness, and so on, but associated yet distinct sui generis properties — menacingness*, wonderfulness*, and so on (see Mendelovici 2013). The idea is that the real content of euphoria is not <things are wonderful> but <things are wonderful*>; the former is a content beliefs can share, but the latter can be had only by euphoria.7

Now, I am sympathetic to the notion that ‘menacing’, ‘wonderful’, and so on are only very imperfect terms for expressing the distinguishing characteristics of anxiety, euphoria, and so forth (more on this in §5.1). However, as a response to the problem of shared contents, the proposed move faces an immediate difficulty, namely, that we are perfectly capable of thinking (in a purely cognitive capacity) about the properties represented by moods — if only under that very description. Indeed, for the reader to have understood the proposal put forth in the previous paragraph, s/he had to think about the properties-represented-by-moods. If so, she can certainly form the belief, or contemplate the possibility, that “things” have one of those properties — without necessarily experiencing the corresponding mood.

What this point shows is that the issue for the pure intentionalist is not really the properties being represented by moods, but rather the modes of presentation under which those properties are represented. The pure intentionalist ought to distinguish different ways in which properties can be represented, and insist that the ways employed by moods are simply unavailable to belief and other mental states.

There are two ways this approach could play out. The first is to posit systematically different concepts employed by moods. The second is to claim that moods represent altogether nonconceptually. Both options are problematic, however.

Start with the first option. Just as we have two concepts under which we can represent Venus, a Phosphorescent concept and a Hesperescent concept, we may also have two different concepts under which we can represent wonderfulness, a doxastic content and a moodly (“humoric”?) concept. Let us mark these WONDERFUL, and WONDERFULm, respectively. The content of euphoria, on this suggestion, may be a structured proposition composed of two suitably linked concepts, say the world and WONDERFULm. A state other than euphoria may well refer to the property of wonderfulness, but only euphoria can do so through the concept WONDERFULm.

It is unclear why the use of one concept rather than another should yield the diffuse character distinctive of mood. But the suggestion also faces a deeper dilemma. The dilemma concerns how far the pure intentionalist wishes to generalize the strategy. Are we to posit different wonderfulness-concepts for hoping that the world is wonderful, wondering whether the world is wonderful, wishing that the world be wonderful, remembering that the world is wonderful, and so on? If we

6. It is possible to hold that such failures of link-up are due entirely to modularly-style contingent facts about our psychological architecture. But while positing an informationally encapsulated module is natural for subdoxastic states, the notion that a whole group of beliefs could be cognitively insulated in this way from ‘central cognition’ is harder to believe. Plausibly, it is part of what makes a mental state a belief that it is operative in central cognition.

7. Note well: this is not Mendelovici’s own view. Mendelovici rather holds (roughly) that these sui generis properties are represented by moods but represented as not being anything’s — the properties are represented, but not as instantiated by something.
do, we will end up with a great profusion of concepts in our theory of mind, each playing a relatively insular cognitive role. This would complicate considerably explaining, for example, how we pass from wondering whether a is F to judging that a is F, if actually wondering and judging never share the same content (because using different concepts of F). If instead we choose to posit only two wonderfulness-concepts, one for moods and one for everything else, the decision would appear arbitrary and ad hoc.

Might we posit not quite one wonderfulness concept for each attitude, but a number of different wonderfulness concepts corresponding to broad categories of attitudes (one cognitive concept, one affective concept, one motivational/conative concept, etc.)? This avoids the clearly unpalatable horns of the above dilemma, but in a way, combines the vices of both horns. On the one hand, it still posits a multiplicity of wonderfulness concepts where intuitively there is only one concept, capable of more or less open recombinant and redeployment. On the other hand, as long as moods use concepts available to non-mood states, nothing rules out their sharing a content. Suppose, for instance, that euphoria deploys an affective concept of wonderfulness and depression deploys an affective concept of pointlessness, but other affective states turn out to deploy these concepts as well: One may be glad that the world is wonderful, or fear that things be pointless. Gladness and fear are emotions rather than moods, yet they would share the same content.

The second option, as noted, is to claim that moods, unlike the standard propositional attitudes, have nonconceptual contents. Whereas a belief may represent wonderfulness conceptually, euphoria represents wonderfulness without applying the concept of wonderfulness. It is a purely nonconceptual representation of things’ wonderfulness. This spares us the need to posit sui generis moodly concepts, and may also explain why we cannot reason our way out of moods (thus solving the Reverse Frege-Geach Problem), since arguably nonconceptual contents cannot embed in inferences.

The problem with this, however, is that the phenomena which typically motivate casting a type of mental state as nonconceptual are absent in the case of moods. The notion of nonconceptual content has most often been adduced in the context of characterizing perceptual experience; often it has been claimed that the difference between, say, perceiving a red apple and thinking about a red apple is precisely that the thought employs the concept of red whereas the perception represents red nonconceptually. But what motivates such claims is typically the fact that our capacities of perceptual discrimination, and hence perceptual representation, far outstrip the concepts we possess (see, e.g., Tye 1995). Presented with a red and a green apple, we may see that they are not exactly alike in color. Yet we do not seem to possess the concepts red and green. Certainly we lack some capacities typically associated with the possession of such concepts. For instance, if presented with a red apple a fortnight later, and assured that it is either red or green, we cannot tell whether it resembles the left or right apple we saw a fortnight ago. That is, we cannot recognize red and across sufficiently distant circumstances. (Compare being presented with a red apple and a green apple a fortnight later. Here we very easily tell that it is the red apple which shares a color property with the earlier apple; this is because we do possess the concepts red and green.) Now, conceptualists about perception do have various replies, notably that there are some other concepts we apply when we perceive a red apple, e.g., the demonstrative concept this red. But the point I want to make here is just this: The phenomenon to which nonconceptualists appeal to motivate their view is that of our discriminatory capacities outstripping conceptual capacities. This phenomenon is totally absent in the case of mood. It is not part of the experience of feeling euphoric that through our euphoria we are aware of fine shades of wonderfulness, shades so fine as to outstrip our conceptual resources for representing wonderfulness. And similar remarks apply to anxiety and depression: The issue is not that they present us with such a wide panoply of fine-grained varieties of menace and pointlessness that
we must construe them as nonconceptually representing menace and pointlessness.

It might be objected that moods come in degrees of experiential intensity (some episodes are sharper than others) and that this involves a sensitivity to fine-grained shades of menace, wonderfulness, and so on, that parallels the way perceptual discriminations outstrip concepts. However, it is crucial to distinguish here between quantitative and qualitative fine-grainness. In the perceptual case, we can discriminate not only between brighter and less bright pure red, louder and less loud bagpipe sounds, and so on; we can also discriminate many different hues of red, many different bagpipe timbers, and so forth. It is this qualitative fine-grainness that motivates nonconceptualism about perceptual content; this is because quantitative fine-grainness may well be handled by concepts that correspond to so-called adverbs of degree, notably ‘very’.

In addition, it is unclear how the mere difference between (a) applying a concept of menacingness and (b) representing menace without applying any concept to it is supposed to capture the characteristic phenomenology of anxiety. Why would we be suffused with that unpleasant, tense quality of anxiousness just because we have not applied the concept of menace to whatever we are aware of? And why would applying that concept suddenly dissipate that quality? (If that worked, the best therapy for depression would be concept-acquisition therapy, a type of therapy as yet unexplored in the annals of clinical psychology.)

I conclude that pure intentionalism lacks the resources to distinguish moods from propositional attitudes with the right kinds of content. In the second half of this paper, however, I want to develop a version of impure intentionalism that manages to do so.

4. Content and Attitude: Impure Intentionalism

In the next section, I will argue that a specific version of impure intentionalism, which highlights the role of moods’ distinctive attitudinal profiles, paves the way to a satisfactory account of mood. What I want to do in this section is sketch an account of attitudinal profiles that will serve that purpose. After arguing against direction-of-fit and functional-role construals of attitudinal characters, I will present a more classical alternative, in terms of what I will call representational guises.

4.1. Direction of Fit

At the outset, the distinction between content and attitude reflects two different respects in which mental states may be similar or dissimilar. Does a belief that p resemble more a desire that p or a belief that q? The natural answer is: In one respect it resembles more the desire that p, in another the belief that q. We call ‘content’ the first respect, ‘attitude’ the second.

When we seek a more informative characterization of these notions, we quickly realize that while the theory of content is one of the most developed areas in philosophy of mind, the theory of attitude is comparatively underdeveloped. One prominent idea in the extant literature is that the belief that p and the desire that p differ in their direction of fit: In believing that p, the mind is supposed to “fit” itself to the way things are; in desiring that p, the mind “demands” that things fit themselves to it. The belief that p tries to get the world right, the desire that p tries to right the world.

Setting aside the difficulty in articulating these metaphors more literally (Zangwill 1998), the hope of accounting for the whole sphere of attitudes in terms of the sole notion of direction of fit is unpromising. For there appears to be a varied panoply of attitudes and only two or three directions of fit: a belief-like mind-to-world direction of fit, a desire-like world-to-mind direction of fit, and perhaps also a third, “null” direction of fit (see Searle 1983: 8). Thus, desiring, hoping, deciding, disliking, and wishing that p all have the same (world-to-mind) direction of fit, despite appearing to involve different attitudinal characters. So it would seem that while the notion of direction of fit may be useful in categorizing attitudinal features along a central fault line, it is far too coarse-grained to deliver an individuation of attitudinal characters.
Within the direction-of-fit framework, the only program for overcoming this difficulty has been the attempt to analyze all attitudes into logical combinations of belief and desire (this is "belief-desire psychology"). Disappointment that $p$ is analyzed as the combination of belief that $p$ and desire that $\neg p$, gladness that $p$ as the combination of belief that $p$ and desire that $p$, and so on. Now, there are many problems with this project in general, but it seems particularly far-fetched when it comes to moods. It is hard to see how irritability, for instance, could just be a specific combination of belief and desire. It is instructive, in this context, that prominent proponents of belief-desire psychology have shied away from applying it to moods. Notably, John Searle pursues the program for many attitudes, but explicitly exempts undirected moods (1983: 1–4); Robert Gordon (1987) offers a book-length application of the program to the emotions, but makes no attempt to address moods. This reticence is understandable: The claim that moods are just specific combinations of belief and desire would make it mysterious why moods exhibit that specially diffuse and undirected character of theirs.

4.2. Functional Role

Sometimes the notion of attitude is unpacked in terms of functional role: A “belief box” and a “desire box” are characterized by the different positions they occupy within the boxes-and-arrows flow-chart that captures the cognitive architecture of the mind. These “positions” are characterized by sets of dispositions. Roughly, the functional role of a mental state $M$ is an ordered pair of (i) the set of all mental states that $M$ is disposed to bring about in certain specified conditions and (ii) the set of all mental states that are disposed to bring about $M$ in specified conditions. Using this framework, the attitudinal characters of moods might be equated with ordered pairs of bundles of mood-specific dispositions.

The advantage of this approach is that it can accommodate as many sui generis attitudes as we find it theoretically necessary to posit. Take fear. If fear can be analyzed in terms of a particular logical combination of belief and desire, very well. But if it cannot, we can still identify the specific functional role of fear states, and equate the attitudinal character of fear with this functional role. And we can do the same for moods. Thus, the distinctive functional role of depression — its causal effects on motivational states, on future-directed emotions such as hope, on the experience of time, and so on — can be taken to constitute the attitudinal character proper to depression.

This functionalist approach faces, however, two major difficulties. The first is that moods are experiential episodes, and impure intentionalism cites moods’ distinctive attitudinal character to account for their distinctive phenomenology. But phenomenology is an occurrence, manifest property, whereas functional role is a matter of a bundle of dispositions. When the quality of euphoria appears in our stream of consciousness, something vividly happens; it is not a mere disposition for certain things to happen. (One could — perhaps should — identify euphoria’s attitudinal profile with the categorical basis of depression’s characteristic bundle of dispositions, rather than with that bundle itself. But this would give us a merely opaque characterization of attitude. We would naturally want to ask: Yes, but what is the categorical basis of depression’s dispositional functional role?)

Another problem with the functional-role account of attitude is that, strictly speaking, functional role does not seem to be an aspect of a mental state’s intentionality. In the 1980s, one of the main objections to so-called functional role semantics was that the very expression ‘functional role semantics’ is oxymoronic — functional role is syntax, not semantics. The idea is that a mental state’s functional role is a matter of the state’s relationship to other mental states, not a matter of its relationships to the extra-mental reality it represents. The problem here is not just that with a functional-role conception of attitude, impure intentionalism is a rubber duck (i.e., is not really a kind of intentionalism). More deeply, it is that the attitudes we take towards the contents of our mental states seem to make a difference to how those contents appear to us (more on this in §4.3).
In conclusion, a functional-role construal of attitudinal character implausibly extrudes attitudinal character from a mental state’s intentional structure. Furthermore, it casts attitudinal character as a dispositional property, whereas if a mood’s distinctive phenomenal quality is to be understood in terms of its attitudinal character, then the latter must be an occurrent property.

4.3. Representational Guises

In search of a more suitable conception of attitude, I propose we revert to a more classical approach, going back at least to Aquinas, that distinguishes the belief that $p$ and the desire that $p$ in terms of the guises under which they represent $p$: The belief represents $p$ sub specie veri — “under the guise of the true” — whereas the desire represents $p$ sub specie boni — “under the guise of the good”. Sergio Tenenbaum calls this the “Scholastic view”:

... just as theoretical attitudes such as belief express what the agent holds to be true even when the belief is false, the scholastic view claims that practical attitudes, such as [desire], express what the agent holds to be good. (Tenenbaum 2009: 96)

How are we to understand the relevant notion of guise? On the one hand, when a mental state represents $p$ under the guise of the F, there is a sense in which the state casts $p$ in an F-ish light. My desire that the restaurant have vegetarian options, for instance, casts the restaurant’s having vegetarian options in a positive light; my belief that the sun is shining casts the proposition <the sun is shining> in a “veridic” light; and so on. At the same time, this kind of “casting $p$ in an F-ish light” remains external to the content of the mental state — it is not part of what the state is about. A belief that $p$ may cast $p$ as true, but its content is still $\langle p \rangle$, not $\langle p \text{ is true} \rangle$ — on pain of vicious regress if nothing else. Likewise, what the desire that the restaurant have vegetarian options is about is the restaurant’s having vegetarian options, not it being good that the restaurant have vegetarian options. What the desirous subject desires is not that it be good for the restaurant to have vegetarian options; she desires that the restaurant have vegetarian options.

I propose that we capture this by saying that when a mental state represents $p$ under the guise of the F, the state does not represent $p$ as F, but rather represents-as-F $p$. Thus, a belief that $p$ does not represent $p$ as true, but represents-as-true $p$. That which it represents is simply $p$. Representing-as-true is a way, or mode, of representing — the mode characteristic of belief. (Indeed, it would not be far-fetched to hold that believing just is representing-as-true.) What this means is that in representing $p$ under the guise of the true, the belief that $p$ represents $p$ in a “truth-committal” manner. It takes a truth-y stance toward $p$. Similarly, a desire that $p$ does not represent as good, but represents-as-good $p$. Although goodness is not ordinarily part of that which is desired, a desire always represents $p$ in a goodness-committal fashion (where the relevant notion of goodness is the maximally generic notion, the one shared by “good person,” “good dentist,” “good news,” etc.). In the expression ‘represents-as-F’, the ‘-as-F’ denotes a modification of the representation relation; it does not qualify that which is being represented. It thus denotes a representational guise that remains external to content. My suggestion is that mental states’ attitudinal profiles just are such representational guises.

What do such constructions as ‘represents-as-F’ exactly mean? On the one hand, these expressions are thoroughly hyphenated for a reason: Understood strictly, the expressions ‘represents-as-true’ and ‘represents-as-good’ are not syntactically structured and do not include ‘true’ and ‘good’ as syntactic constituents (not any more than ‘pineapple’ features ‘apple’ as constituent). On the other hand, the use of ‘true’ and ‘good’ in those expressions is not arbitrary. Consider: Metaethical expressivists hold that when we say “x is good,” we are not really describing x, but are rather giving voice (“expressing”) a favorable attitude toward x (e.g., we are commending x — see Hare 1952); but if one asks why we use just the words ‘is good’ when giving voice to this attitude, the only possible answer is that the nature of the attitude we are trying to express (e.g., commendation) is such as to lend itself to expression...
in those words. The concocted term ‘representing-as-good’ uses specifically ‘good’ as a morphological (though not syntactic) part by way of paying homage to this fact about the natural way to express a propositional attitude such as desire. Ultimately, though, ‘good’ and ‘true’ function as winks of sorts in the expressions ‘represents-as-good’ and ‘represents-as-true.’ The message conveyed by the wink is just this: If you want to grasp the nature of the attitude of belief, say, think of truth-ascribing content and then rethink the “truthy” aspect of that content as pertaining rather to the psychological attitude taken toward that content.

There are at least four advantages to the representational-guise account of attitudes. One immediate advantage is that it makes clear why the attitude a mental state involves is an aspect of its intentionality, part of its overall representational character. For here attitude is not construed as a relation to other mental states, but as part or aspect of the subject’s representational connection to the external world.

Relatedly, the account explains nicely the complementary contributions of content and attitude to a mental state’s appropriateness, or fitteness, or correctness conditions. The division of labor is as follows: For any mental state M, M’s attitude selects the kind of correctness conditions relevant to M, while M’s content determines what needs to happen for those conditions to be met. Suppose M is the belief that p. Then in virtue of the attitude M involves, M’s correctness conditions are truth conditions, since it is fitting for us to take the belief attitude toward p just if p is true; which specific truth conditions the belief has is then fixed by the content <p>. This division of labor is elegantly explained by the representational-guise account. The reason the correctness conditions for mental states that involve the belief attitude are truth conditions, rather than some other conditions, is that the belief attitude is the attitude the very nature of which is to represent-as-true. A belief’s correctness is to be assessed by considering whether the belief’s content is true precisely because belief represents its content under the guise of the true.8 In this way, the representational-guise account of attitude provides an explanation of what is perhaps attitude’s most prominent theoretical role within the theory of intentionality.

A third important advantage of the account is that we can posit as many representational guises as we find necessary. If we think that fear that p analyzes into some combination of belief and desire, then we do not need to posit a guise special to fear; but if we think that fear that p goes beyond any combination of belief and desire, then we can posit a sui generis guise of the fearsome — or “guise of the dangerous,” if we prefer — and claim that fear that p represents p under that guise. Now, there may well be independent theoretical pressures to keep the number of attitudinal characters in our psychological theory to a minimum. But unlike the direction-of-fit account, the representational-guise account at least has the resources to accommodate more than just two or three types of attitude, in case that turns out to be theoretically necessary.

A final advantage is that there is nothing about the notion of representational guise that forces us to construe it as merely dispositional. Indeed, the representational guise a mental state employs may well be (part of) the categorical basis of that state’s functional role.

5. Moody Attitudes

This section applies the lessons of the previous section to the case of moods. In §5.1, I propose an impure-intentionalist account of moods because of the peculiarity that ‘true’ is an adjective we apply both to belief states and to the propositions that constitute their contents. With other propositional attitude this is not typically the case. If desire represents under the guise of the good, then S’s desires that p is correct or fitting just in case p is (or would be) good. But from the fact that p is good, it would not follow that S’s desire that p is good in the same sense in which from the fact that p is true, it follows that a belief that p is true. For this reason, we cannot say that desire’s correctness conditions are goodness conditions in the same sense we can say that belief’s correctness conditions are truth conditions. Still, it remains the case that desire’s correctness conditions are given by the content desired being good. In general, whenever a mental state represents-as-F content p, the state’s correctness condition is the condition that p really is F.

8. I confess that I choose the example of belief not only because belief is the propositional attitude most widely discussed among philosophers but also...
that attributes to them specific representational guises. In §5.2, I show how the resulting account solves the problem of shared contents.

5.1. Impure Intentionalism about Moods

Attempts to account for moods purely in terms of worldly or generic contents generate versions of pure intentionalism. An impure intentionalism, in contrast, will bring into consideration the distinctive attitudes exhibited by moods. The question is: What are the attitudinal profiles distinctive of moods? In the guise framework, this becomes the question: What are the representational guises deployed specially by moods?

I want to suggest that the answer is near at hand: Intentionalists are largely right to think of such things as menace and wonderfulness as distinctive of anxiety and euphoria, but they commit what Barwise and Perry (1983) have called the “fallacy of misplaced information” when they build these elements into the contents of anxiety and euphoria. These are rather dimensions of the attitudes employed by anxiety and euphoria. They constitute the guises under which such moods represent their contents: Anxiety represents under the guise of the menacing, euphoria represents under the guise of the wonderful, and so on.

In other words, what we should say is not that anxiety represents things as menacing, but rather that anxiety represents-as-menacing things; not that euphoria represents the world as wonderful, but that it represents-as-wonderful the world; not that irritability represents things as annoying, but that it represents-as-annoying things. Here menace, wonderfulness, and annoyingness are not parts of what anxiety, euphoria, and irritability represent, but aspects of anxiety, euphoria, and irritability’s distinctive ways of intentionally relating to what they represent. They modify these moods’ representational relations to the content instead of showing up in the contents.

The account I am proposing is effectively a form of impure intentionalism about moods. This account makes free use of the insights inherent in more standard intentionalist accounts, which stress the fact that when one is experiencing a mood such as anxiety or euphoria, there is a difference in how things seem to one. Arguably, the difference is picked out reasonably well, if somewhat tersely (more on this momentarily), by such expressions as ‘menacing’ and ‘wonderful’. The contribution of impure intentionalism — a contribution which, as we will see in §5.2, solves the problem of shared contents — is to claim that these expressions are better seen as denoting an aspect of attitude, not a component of content.

As before, expressions such as ‘represents-as-wonderful’ function as winks of sorts, with the wink’s message being: To grasp the nature of euphoria’s distinctive character, think of a wonderfulness-ascribing content and then rethink its “wonderfulness” dimension as pertaining actually to the subject’s attitude toward the content.9 Also as before, the choice of the word ‘wonderful’ as (merely) morphological part of the expression used to capture the attitudinal character distinctive of euphoria is not arbitrary. If a euphoric mood descends on you as you stroll down the street on a sunny April day, spotting a cherry blossom while licking a hazelnut gelato, it would only be natural for you to express your mental state by humming “What a Wonderful World!”

I should stress at this point that my use of ‘wonderful’ and ‘menacing’ in this context is self-consciously telegraphic. The manner in which anxiety casts its object is far more nuanced and textured than what is suggested by the sole word ‘menace’. Ditto for ‘wonderful’ for euphoria and, even more egregiously, for ‘pointless’ and depression. These words, on their own, are of course totally unsuited to capturing the experiential depth and texture of the moods. I work with them mostly for convenience, and because better ones are hard to come by, especially if they are supposed to be both literal and informative. We

9. Here we witness how the representational-guise account of attitudes serves impure intentionalism far better than the functional-role and direction-of-fit accounts: The latter could not simply point at certain aspects of the contents attributed to moods in standard intentionalism and say “Think of this as rather an aspect of attitude.” For saying that euphoria is characterized by a wonderfulness direction of fit, or a wonderfulness functional role, is utterly uninformative, whereas saying that it is characterized by representing-as-wonderful is quite useful.
might of course say that anxiety represents-as-anxiogenic, depression represents-as-depressing, and so on. This might be more accurate, but it would not bring into life any better the full phenomenological texture of feeling anxious or depressed. That is rather what we have literature for. Hamlet says “How weary, stale, flat and unprofitable, seem to me all the uses of this world!,” and not just “How pointless is everything,” because the former gets much closer to a faithful linguistic rendition of depression’s attitudinal character. And yet, even if we bothered to write that depression represents-as-weary-stale-flat-and-unprofitable, we would only be scratching the phenomenological surface. To that extent, expressions such as ‘represents-as-menacing’ and ‘represents-as-wonderful’ are profitably seen rather as merely suggestive labels.

This kind of impure intentionalism, highlighting the role of attitudinal character, has already been offered as a theory of emotional experience, notably by Deonna and Teroni (2012: Ch. 7). However, Deonna and Teroni’s conception of attitudinal character differs markedly from ours and does not have to do with representational guises as construed here. Moreover, although it is certainly natural to extend one’s account of emotion to mood, given the widely recognized phenomenological resemblance moods bear to emotions (more on this in §5.2), Deonna and Teroni do not actually extend their account to moods, which they regard as likely unintentional (2012: 4).

Placing wonderfulness, menacingness, and so on in the attitude of moods has important consequences for our conception of the contents of moods. For example, if we build wonderfulness into the attitudinal character of euphoria, euphoria no longer attributes the property of being wonderful to anything. Accordingly, it does not really bear a content of the propositional form <the world is wonderful>. Instead, it must have a content of the non-propositional form <the world> — which content is represented-as-wonderful. Such contents are sometimes referred to as “objectual contents” and the attitudes toward them as “objectual attitudes” (Forbes 2000). In this terminology, one consequence of the proposed version of impure intentionalism is that moods are objectual attitudes, in the sense that they take objectual rather than propositional contents.

Another consequence is that although moods are certainly evaluative states in the proposed version of impure intentionalism, they do not have evaluative contents. All the evaluating is done in the attitude. This marks an important difference from what is perhaps the only other version of impure intentionalism in the extant literature, developed recently by Jonathan Mitchell (2019). He, too, stresses the importance of mood attitude, which he describes as “felt valence” consisting of experienced favoring or disfavoring of the content; but he also insists that these are “type-specific evaluative contents.” Mitchell’s view is most naturally understood as implying that all positive moods have the same attitudinal character (what we might call “representing-favorably”) and all negative moods have another attitudinal character (“representing-disfavorably”), with differences between specific types of positive or negative mood coming from the content. On this interpretation, what distinguishes anxiety and depression is not their attitude — both represent-disfavorably — but their contents invoking menacingness or pointlessness. (Some passages in Mitchell suggest a slightly different interpretation, whereby the two generic felt-valenced attitudes come in different species, one for each mood. In this second interpretation, however, it is no longer clear why Mitchell insists that the contents of moods are evaluative, indeed type-specific evaluative contents. For this reason, I understand Mitchell as distinguishing similarly valenced moods on the basis of content.) In §5.2, I will argue that my version of impure intentionalism is better equipped to deal with the problem of shared contents.

It should be noted, in closing, that although our account highlights the role of attitude, it makes room for a certain division of theoretical labor between attitude and content in understanding the nature of mood. A philosophical theory of mood should do at least three things: (1) identify a feature which is common to moods, thus providing us with insight into the nature of mood as such, as opposed to this or that specific mood; (2) identify a feature which is peculiar to moods, thus
providing us with a general account of what separates moods from non-moods; (3) identify the dimension along which moods differ not just from non-moods, but from each other. Our version of impure intentionalism is most naturally understood as citing attitude in addressing (2) and (3) but content in addressing (1). The account grounds the difference between moods and other mental states in the difference between moods’ representational guises and the representational guises employed by other mental states. It also speciates moods via attitude, since it distinguishes the different types of moods in terms of the representational guises the different moods employ. At the same time, if we ask what is common to all moods on our account, the most natural answer is their specially global objectual content: say, the fact that all of them have the generic objectual content <things>. On this view, while some non-moods may have generic propositional content, and others may have non-generic objectual contents, moods always have contents both generic and objectual.10 (This appeal to content is natural, but not quite forced on the version of impure intentionalism proposed here. One might also try to argue that there is a certain distinctive phenomenal resemblance among all the moodly representational guises, such that they are rightly seen as species of a single guise-genus, and it is the instantiation of this generic guise that is common to all moods.)

5.2. Impure Intentionalism and the Problem of Shared Contents

The incorporation of representational guises into our picture of moods’ intentional structure solves straightforwardly the problem of shared contents. The problem was that of accounting for the difference between moods and beliefs with the same content (e.g., the belief that the world is wonderful), as well as desires with that content, hopes with that content, and so on. This problem dissipates as soon as we attribute to moods attitudinal characters that other mental states do not exhibit. A belief that the world is wonderful may be said perhaps to enjoy a certain “intentional overlap” with euphoria, insofar as both involve at some level a commitment to the world being wonderful. However, the belief involves this commitment at the level of content, whereas euphoria involves it at the level of attitude. Accordingly, the two still exhibit two completely different intentional structures. Using chevrons to signal content (propositional or not), we may display the two structures as follows:

- belief that the world is wonderful ::
  - represent-as-true <the world is wonderful>

- euphoria ::
  - represent-as-wonderful <the world>

Clearly, these are completely different states, with completely different intentional structures. In the euphoria, the “commitment to wonderfulness” is attitudinally encoded, as it were, whereas in the belief, it is an explicit part of the content. In consequence, euphoria does not share content with wonderfulness beliefs.

The difference in intentional structure seems to explain why moods are assessable for appropriateness but not for truth. Suppose a person believes that the world is wonderful. Then her mental state represents-as-true the proposition <the world is wonderful>. Accordingly, when we come to assess whether it is appropriate for her to enter this mental state, we evaluate whether it is true that the world is wonderful. After all, that is how her state represents the content that the world is wonderful — as true. But when a person feels euphoric, her mental state does not represent-as-true anything. This is why it is a category mistake to describe someone’s euphoria as false: Euphoria does not even attempt to represent-as-true. It rather represents-as-wonderful. In virtue of representing-as-wonderful, a person’s euphoria does admit of evaluation as appropriate or inappropriate, but this is not a truth-evaluation: When we come to assess whether it is appropriate for someone to be euphoric, we do not evaluate for truth the proposition <the world is wonderful>, but rather evaluate for wonderfulness.

10. Another variant, obviously, would designate <the world> rather than <things> as the relevant content.
anxiety the mood ::
represent-as-menacing <things>

anxiety the emotion (example) ::
represent-as-menacing <dentist appointment>

In this analysis, the mood and the emotion employ the same representational guise, so that is not what distinguishes them.\footnote{11}

There are two possible responses to this objection. One concedes that moods and emotions can share attitudes, but claims that they can never share contents. The idea is that mood and emotion belong in a single attitudinal category — we may call it affect — that employs representational guises no non-affective state does. But within this category, there is still a distinction between those affective states that have generic or worldly contents (the moods) and those that have more focalized or specific contents (the emotions). Consider a paradigmatic objectual attitude such as love. Typically, the objects of love are specific objects, such as one’s child or one’s spouse. With some effort, I can imagine or simulate experiencing loving the world (or things indiscriminately). But when I do, the imagined experience seems rather like a mood — diffuse and ethereal in that characteristically moodly way.

My preferred response, however, is to deny that an emotional experience can ever employ exactly the same representational guise as a mood. What you feel toward the looming dentist appointment, I am tempted to say, is some combination of fear and nervousness, which combination phenomenally resembles, but is not literally, anxiety. Accordingly, your emotional experience does not quite represent-as-menacing the dentist appointment, but rather represents-as-dangerous (qua fear) and represents-as-unsettling (qua nervousness) the

It might be objected that some emotions share attitude with moods, so the attitudinal approach to the problem of shared contents could not work for them. In addition to anxiety the mood, for instance, there is also anxiety the emotion. More specifically, although one can be in a generalized anxious mood directed at the world as a whole, or “things” indiscriminately, one can also experience a focalized anxiety, say, about the dentist appointment due to start in ten minutes. But both represent-as-menacing. Here the difference between the mood and the emotion may be represented as follows:

the world. This is not the same type of assessment, even if here too an evident “overlap” may be observed.

It is because moods are not assessable for truth that one cannot reason one’s way out of a mood. In order to embed into reasoning and inference, a mental state must be truth-apt, which in turn requires that it exhibit the attitudinal property of representing-as-true. Since according to impure intentionalism moods do not represent-as-true, the Reverse Frege-Geach Problem does not threaten it. Indeed, in holding that moods do not represent under the guise of the true, but rather under alternative sui generis moodly guises, impure intentionalism predicts that moods will not embed in reasoning. This explains, in turn, the unfortunate prevalence of recalcitrant moods, as when one feels depressed despite believing that many things in life are of great value and significance.

We can see, then, that even if there is an “intentional overlap” of sorts between moods and corresponding beliefs (an overlap similar to that between desire that \( p \) and belief that \( p \) is good), the difference in intentional structure imputed on them by impure intentionalism ensures that the central problems bedeviling standard versions of pure intentionalism about moods do not infect our impure version.

It might be objected that some emotions share attitude with moods, so the attitudinal approach to the problem of shared contents could not work for them. In addition to anxiety the mood, for instance, there is also anxiety the emotion. More specifically, although one can be in a generalized anxious mood directed at the world as a whole, or “things” indiscriminately, one can also experience a focalized anxiety, say, about the dentist appointment due to start in ten minutes. But both represent-as-menacing. Here the difference between the mood and the emotion may be represented as follows:

11. Cases of alleged shared attitude between mood and emotion need not invoke the same natural-language term. Thus, an anonymous referee suggested that the emotion of awe also represents its object under the guise of the wonderful. If this is true, then within our impure-intentionalist framework, both euphoria (a mood) and awe (an emotion) represent-as-wonderful.
apprentice. This view allows for the possibility of feeling afraid of the world as a whole, say, without this qualifying as a mood. Thus emotions can bear suitably global contents, but the attitudes they take toward these contents are not quite the same as moods. Nonetheless, there is a phenomenal resemblance between these attitudes, which accounts for the phenomenal resemblance between moods and emotions. But here the mood-emotion resemblance remains partly unanalyzed, insofar as it is accounted for not in terms of shared guises, but in terms of resembling guises. Of course, it is always more satisfying to explain a similarity between $a$ and $b$ in terms of the identity of some constituent $c$ they share. But simples also stand in resemblance relations, and theirs cannot be accounted for in that way. It must be treated, in some sense, as primitive. This kind of primitive resemblance between emotional and moody guises is part of the picture presented by the second response to the objection under discussion.\(^\text{13}\)

I conclude that our impure intentionalism has the resources to solve the problem of shared contents. What about Mitchell’s version, understood as the view that euphoria involves (i) a positively valenced attitude of favoring and (ii) a “type-specific evaluative content” invoking wonderfulness? In virtue of (i), Mitchell’s version can distinguish euphoria from the belief that the world is wonderful (or as Mitchell would have it, that the subject’s total environment is wonderful).\(^\text{13}\) But what about a conscious, felt wish that the world be wonderful, or an experienced hope that the world is wonderful? Such experiences presumably involve a felt valenced attitude of favoring their content, and invoke wonderfulness in their content. Yet they are not moods. In general, so long as the moody attitudes are insufficiently fine-grained, it is hard to see what prevents a non-mood state from sharing the same attitude, on the one hand, and having the same kind of propositional content, on the other.

This is why I am recommending a fine-grained individuation of moody attitudes, where the kinds of element typically cited as the “formal objects” of the different moods are reconceived as aspects of moods’ distinctive representational guises.

In addition to solving the problem of shared contents, our version of impure intentionalism speaks to Bordini’s and Kind’s concerns about intentionalism, aired at the end of §2. Bordini’s claim, recall, was that moods are experienced as more subjective and internal than pure intentionalism suggests — we can feel depressed without “blaming” the world for it. This is captured nicely by our impure intentionalism, since in it, depression does not ascribe pointlessness to the world; the pointlessness information is encoded rather in the attitude, which is part of the “subjective” or “internal” relatum of the intentional relation. Kind’s objection, meanwhile, was that a person’s euphoria could deepen without the world being represented as steadily gaining in a certain quantity, “wonderfulness.” I am not entirely sure the pure intentionalist would agree with this, but in any case the impure intentionalist can certainly accommodate it. She would just need to recast properties like representing-as-wonderful as phenomenal determinables admitting of many (infinitely many?) determinates. My five-year-old’s height changes continually, such that he continuously loses one determinate height property and gains another one, while his determinable height property (the property of having a height) persists unperturbed. A person’s euphoric mood, on this view, behaves through the day much the same way.

\textbf{12.} As for the awe challenge raised in the previous footnote, the present approach would have to say that awe does not quite represent-as-wonderful. To my mind, at least central cases of awe are naturally characterized as representing-as-sublime their objects (think of experiencing awe while standing before the Grand Canyon or looking at the aurora borealis). The sublime and the wonderful have certainly something in common, and likewise, representing-as-sublime and representing-as-wonderful are phenomenally similar. It is this, I suggest, that accounts for the phenomenological similarity between awe and euphoria on the present proposal.

\textbf{13.} According to Mitchell, the characteristically global object of moods is not the world as a whole, but something like the part of the world one has dealing with — “the broadest set of relations (and potential relations) between self and world” (2019: 124). This is what Mitchell calls the subject’s “total environment.”
6. Conclusion: Mind and Mood

I have argued that accounts of mood according to which moods are intentionally directed at the world as a whole, or “things” indiscriminately, are onto something, but require a crucial modification: They should construe the characteristic ways moods cast their objects — wonderfulness for euphoria, menace for anxiety, and so on — as aspects of moods’ distinctive attitudes, rather than their contents. An intentionalist account of a mood type M need not identify some property F that all and only M-tokens represent; it is better off claiming that what characterizes all and only tokens of M is that they represent-as-F whatever they represent. Only when this modification is introduced, I have argued, can the intentionalist account for the categorical difference between moods and propositional attitudes concerned with wonderfulness, menace, and so on.

In their unusual intentional profile, moods may contain an important lesson for us. Consider that one of the most influential ideas in the philosophy of mind of the last generation has been the so-called transparency of experience (Harman 1990). This is the idea, roughly, that when we introspectively examine our conscious experiences, the only thing we become aware of are their contents — what they represent. Thus, when you look at green grass, and then turn your attention to your visual experience of the green grass, the only greenish quality you are aware of is the green quality “pasted” on the grass. There is no second greenish quality pasted rather on your experience, or somehow “floating” between your experience and the grass. It is commonly thought, now, that while the transparency claim is highly plausible for perceptual experiences, and quite plausible for many other types of conscious experience, for mood episodes it is least antecedently plausible (see, e.g., Kind 2013). When you turn your attention to your euphoria experience, the distinctively euphoric quality does not seem “pasted” on the world quite in the same way the green quality does on the grass you visually perceive. And for my part, when I enter most intimately into what I call my melancholy, the melancholic quality does seem to attach rather to my experience, not to the world. Our impure intentionalism makes sense of these untutored impressions — without quite entailing them — insofar as it pins the relevant moodly qualities partly on attitudinal features, which are instantiated by the experiences rather than by that-which-they-are-experiences-of.

Interestingly, few pure intentionalists deny that these are the untutored phenomenological impressions regarding moods. But they find that the transparency claim is so plausible for perceptual experience, and the resulting conception of mind so elegantly unified, that they suspect the true phenomenological nature of moods must be importantly different from what untutored impression suggests — it must be exhausted, despite superficial phenomenological appearances, by a certain type of intentional content. It is unclear, however, why someone who started out from the opposite end could not reason in the opposite direction: Instead of accepting at face value the untutored impressions about perceptual phenomenology, and in light of these take a more revisionary stance toward untutored impressions about mood phenomenology, she would accept at face value the untutored impressions about mood phenomenology, and in light of them take a more revisionary stance toward untutored impressions about perceptual phenomenology. The symmetry between these two potential moves raises the suspicion that the preference for “rereading” mood phenomenology in light of perceptual phenomenology is based primarily on non-pertinent facts about philosophers’ prior interests and research agenda (e.g., the fact that questions about “perception and reality” and “perception and knowledge” are prominent in the philosophical curriculum, whereas one would be hard-pressed to find a mention of moods in the title of an undergraduate philosophy course). But the academic interest different phenomena hold has no implications for the nature of these phenomena.\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{14} Moreover, these interests change with time and context. Heidegger apparently held that moods embody the deepest relationship between self and world. Might Heideggerian philosophers working in Baden-Württemberg of the thirties and forties be tempted to rather “reread” perceptual phenomenology in light of mood phenomenology?
It seems to me that taking seriously the character of moods paves the way to a different — equally unified but more balanced — conception of mind. On this conception, all mental states, including all conscious experiences, have an intentional structure featuring two interlocking dimensions, a representational guise and a representational content. In some experiences, such as visual perceptions, the content dimension is phenomenologically overwhelming and the representational guise phenomenologically subdued. In other experiences, notably mood episodes, the representational content ‘does not loom large in the overall phenomenal character’ (Lycan 2006), while the representational guise is phenomenologically salient. In-between, however, is a vast spectrum along which different types of experience lie: Olfactory perception and episodic memory may be closer to visual experience than to mood, embarrassment and anger closer to mood than visual experience, and so on. But there is no such thing as an intentional structure consisting only of content or only of guise. Both make some contribution, however subtle, to the overall phenomenal character of mental states.

Obviously, I have not argued here for this wider picture of mental life. My point is just that taking moods seriously pulls us in that direction, and away from the content-centric picture recommended by transparency claims. From this perspective, what makes moods so important, theoretically speaking, is that they make it almost impossible to ignore the phenomenological reality of representational guises that outstrip representational contents.15

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